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PART I

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FIRST SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

1. Let us meditate upon the Supreme Spirit who is real; from whom emanate the creation etc. (i.e. creation, preservation and destruction) of this (universe), (as can be inferred from) his presence in all that exists and his absence from all that is non-existent; who is omniscient and self-refulgent; who extended (i.e. revealed) to the first knower (or wise one) viz. god Brahmā, through his heart, the Veda about which even the learned ones are perplexed; in whom (i.e. resting on whom) the creation of the three attributes (viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) appears real like the apparent transmutation of the light, water and earth (for example, appearance of water in the heat and light of the sun as in the mirage etc.); who by his lustre has always dispelled illusion.[1]

I. This verse has been differently interpreted by different commentators.

(1) ŚR. (Śridhara), the oldest commentator on the Bh.P. (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) states that he is recording the traditional interpretation of the Bh.P. in his Com. (commentary), the *Bhāvārtha-dīpikā*.

sampradāyānurodhena paurvāparyānusārataḥ /
Śrī-Bhāgavata-Bhāvārtha-dīpikeyam pratanyate //

According to ŚR., the Supreme Spirit or Reality is both immanent and transcendent. The universe originates from the Supreme Spirit. is sustained therein and finally dissolves into the same Spirit. During this world process, the Supreme Spirit is eternally established in its original grandeur, the world process being traceable to cosmic illusion.

He interprets the verse as follows :

(i) Let us meditate on the Supreme Lord (who is) real; in whom (i.e. depending on whom) the creation of the three attributes of the Cosmic Illusion (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*)—though unreal—appears to be real, just like the transmutation of Fire, Water and Earth *enter se* (For example, a mirage wherein water, though non-existent, appears to exist in the blazing heat and light of the Sun.). In him, this three-fold creation is unreal. By his own lustre, He has dispelled delusion. (Let us contemplate on) him from whom is the creation (preservation and destruction) of the universe (as can be) inferred by logical concomitance and discontinuation.

OR (ii) the Supreme Being is the cause and the universe the effect. He, being the cause, is in (all) things and is different as the things are effects.

OR (iii) This universe being composed of parts, its creation etc. is due to him as can be deduced from positive and negative proofs, but he should be distinguished from the primordial nature (*prakṛti* or *pradhāna* as he is self-refulgent and omniscient (of his own accord.) Hence neither *prakṛti* nor *jīva* are worth meditating. Nor so is god Brahmā as) he—the Supreme Being—revealed to the first sage (god Brahmā), through his mind, the Vedas which have perplexed the learned ones.

ŚR. concludes that the word *dhīmahi* in this verse shows that this *Purāṇa* deals with the science of the Supreme Being. He quotes other Purāṇas in his support.

ŚR. is obviously a follower of non-dualism (*advaita*) of Śaṅkara.

(2) VR. (Vīra-rāghava), a follower of Rāmānuja explains his ontology succinctly in his com. *Bhāgavata Candrikā*. According to Rāmānuja. Brahman or the Supreme Reality is qualified by sentience and non-sentience (*cidacid-viśiṣṭa*). Brahman enters the world of sentient and non-sentient things which emanate out of him and are sustained by him and enter into him. This relation of Brahman to the sentient and non-sentient creation has been elaborated by Rāmānuja in his concept of *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* (body-Soul relation), *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-bhāva* (substance-attribute relation), *śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāva* (dependent and –'depended-upon' relation), *aṁś-āṁśibhāva* (part-whole relation), *ādhārādheyabhāva* (supporter-supported relation), *niyantṛ-niyata-bhāva* (ruler-ruled relation) and *rakṣaka-rakṣyabhāva* (redeemer-redeemed relation).

The interpretation of this verse as gathered from VR's exposition is as follows :

Let us meditate on that real Supreme Brahman from whom emanate the creation etc. of this sentient-cum-non-sentient universe, both as the material cause and the efficient cause (as he is different from the Primordial Nature *prakṛti*—and individual Souls—*Jīvātman*) ; him who is omniscient. independent (not controlled by *karmas*), self-resplendent; who by his will-power revealed to God Brahman, the Vedas about which learned sages (like Kapila, Kaṇāda etc.) get perplexed; from whom proceeds the combination of the elements such as Fire, Water and Earth; about whom the three-fold creation (of the attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) is unreal (*guṇa-traya-sṛṣṭaḥ prapañcaḥ... yasmin...mṛṣā, mithyā*); who has dispelled delusion by the light of His infinite knowledge.

(3) VJ. (Vijaya-dhvaja), a follower of Dualistic (*dvaita*) Vedānta of Madhva, in his com. *Pada-ratnāvalī*, construes this verse differently and interprets as follows:

Let us contemplate on that eternally blessed Nārāyaṇa from whom come forth the creation etc. ('etc.' includes sustenance, destruction, control, bondage, liberation) of this existing universe as evidenced by logical positive. and negative proofs (and by *Śruti* and *Smṛti*); who thoroughly comprehends all objects; who is his own Lord (or who manifests himself at his own will) and is not subordinate to anyone else; who, out of affection, extended to the first sage (god Brahmā) the Veda (along with its auxiliaries—*aṅgas*).

About whom (the past, present and future) gods like Brahmā and others have no knowledge. In whom the three-fold creation of Īśvara, individual souls and non-sentient things is of no avail like the combination of Fire, Water and Earth (They are real due to His support), who has dispelled illusion (Viṣṇu does not create the universe as an illusion but as a reality).

(4) The word *dhīmahi* in this verse seems to have led the writers of the *Matsya* and other Purāṇas to equate this verse with the sacred *Gāyatrī Mantra* (RV. III, 62.10 and occurring in other Vedas). This Vedic verse is in the Gāyatrī metre and is addressed to Savitṛ (the Sun who is the source and inspirer of everything). It literally means 'We contemplate upon that longed-for refulgence of the divine Savitṛ who may inspire our intellects.' (For the sacredness of the *Gāyatrī mantra* see P.V. Kane—*Hist. of Dharmaśāstra* Vol. II, 1.303-304). Commentators of different schools of Vedānta endorse the above view of the Purāṇa-writers. VJ. spells out this equation between the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and this verse (Bh.P.1.1.1) as follows :

Gāyatrī	*Bh.P.* 1.1.1
tat savitur devasya	: *Janmādyasya yataḥ*
vareṇyam	: *param*
bhargaḥ	: *dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakam*
	: Also *svarād*
dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt	: *tene Brahma hṛdā Ādi-kavaye*
dhīmahi	: *dhīmahi*

VJ. states that the Bh.P. verse is an 'explanation or elucidation' of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*.

(5) SD. (Śuka-deva) in his *siddhānta-Pradīpa* presents the point of view of the Nimbārka or the dualistic-cum-nondualistic (*Dvaitādvaita*) Vedānta. Here significant differences in the interpretation of the words in this verse (from that of ŚR.) are briefly noted.

janmādyasya—This refutes the schools which deny the existence of Brahman.

satyaṁ dhīmahi—Let us meditate on the Lord who is described by Śruti as being 'Real, Infinite knowledge, Brahma'.

param—cause of the universe.

janmādyasya yato'nvayād itarataḥ—Herein *janmādi*—means creation, preservation, destruction and liberation. The Lord is within all (*sarvātmā*) both by positive and negative proofs (*anvaya* and *vyatireka*).

yo'rtheṣvabhijñaḥ—This refutes the *Sāṁkhya* theory that the primordial Nature (*pradhāna*) is the cause of the world. He knows all objects while they are being created.

muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ—Though He is the cause of the world, Kapila and founders of other schools of philosophy do not know him and are deluded.

tejo-vāri-mṛdāṁ yathā vinimayaḥ—Hereby he refutes Vaiśeṣika theory of the creation of the universe. Just as the effects of Fire, Water and Earth viz. sparks, bubbles and pitcher are created out of some positive—existing—substances, the threefold creation is also real. This refutes the doctrine of

the *māyā-vādins* (believers in cosmic illusion) who regard the three-fold creation as illusory.

dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakam—Faultlessness of Brahman. • Owing to his inherent refulgence, the Supreme Lord is never soiled by the faults due to the three-fold creation.

(6) VB. (Vallabha), the exponent of pure non-dualistic (Śuddhādvaita) Vedānta, declares in his Com. *Subodhinī* that the world is real and is subtly Brahman. The individual souls and the inanimate world are in essence one with Brahman. He admits that individual soul (*jīva*), time (*kāla*), *prakṛti* or *māyā* are eternal existences. Brahman can create the world without any connection with *māyā*. He (Brahman) is not only an agent (*kartā*) but also an enjoyer (*bhoktā*). According to VB., the highest goal is not liberation (*mukti*) but rather eternal service of Kṛṣṇa and participation in his sports in the celestial Vṛndāvana. Non-difference alone is said to be real.

This philosophical stand of VB. is found forcefully maintained in the Commentaries of Puruṣottama, GD. (Giridhara) and Others.

The following are the important differences in explanation from ŚR:

janmādi asya yataḥ—(i) That from which the sky is created. (ii) That of which (sustenance and destruction) creation is the beginning.

asya—One assuming the form of crores of worlds and one who is beyond the capacity of the mind to cognize.

yataḥ—*Brahman*, though the 'seed' (cause) of the universe does not undergo a modification just as the wish-yielding cow, tree or gem remain unchanged when they give the desired object.

anvayād itarataḥ etc.—Brahman is both the material and instrumental cause of the world.

svarāṭ—(i) Due to His self-splendidness (omniscience—GD.) He is not interested in objects of enjoyment etc. (ii) One who is absorbed in the joy of His own Self. has no worldly occupation (*kleśa*).

hṛdā—Along with the Purāṇas—'Purāna is regarded as his heart' (*Purāṇaṁ hṛdayaṁ smṛtam*)

yatra-mṛṣā—The characteristics of non-sentients and individual souls (*jada-jīva-dharmāḥ*) are not found in the Supreme Lord. GD. (Giridhara) in his Com. *Bālaprabodhinī* explains: In the Supreme Lord's person, the creation of three attributes of the primordial nature (*prakṛti*) viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, are false.

dhāmnā svena etc.—(i) Destroyer of the nescience of all by manifesting himself.

kuhaka—Fraud, viz. false identification of the body and sense-organs with the soul.

satyam.....dhīmahi—Let us love or meditate on the Supreme Man, who is unaffected by Time and well known in the world and described in the Vedas.

(7) The Bengal School of Vaiṣṇavism with their emphasis on Rādhā and the *Parakīyā Preman* cult shows great reverence to ŚR. who in fact

knows nothing of Rādhā and never advocated *Parakīyā Preman* (love between a man and a woman who is the wife of another person).

Caitanya had to develop this concept to absorb the Buddhist Sahajīyas and their followers in orthodox Hindu fold. JG. (Jīva Gosvāmī), a great exponent of this school, states that his Com. on the Bh.P.—*The Krama Sandarbha*—is complementary to ŚR. elucidating some points omitted or briefly explained by him.

Svāmi-pādair na yaa vyaktaṁ yad vyaktaṁ cāsphuṭam kvacit /
Tatra tatra ca vijñeyaḥ Sandarbha-Krama-nāmakaḥ /

Actually they differ so much from ŚR. They admit of five principles: God, souls, *māyā* or *prakṛti*, the inherent power of God (*svarūpa śakti*) with its elements of *jñāna* (knowledge), *śuddha-tattva* (pure matter) and *kāla* (Time). The ultimate reality is Viṣṇu. the personal God of love and grace, possessing the usual attributes of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. He is both *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa* as he inheres the qualities of omniscience, omnipotence etc.

According to JG., this verse enjoins meditation upon the Supreme Being who is the creator, omnipresent, free from all defects, full of inherent knowledge and the giver of liberation. The Com. of JG. is too big to be summarised here.

GS. (Gaṅgāsahāya) in his Com. *Anvitārtha-prakāśikā* maintains that this verse is pregnant with the contents and meaning etc. of the entire Bh.P. All the 10 characteristics of *Purāṇas* are found herein. Obviously he accepts the Sk. terms of the characteristics mentioned in the Bh.P. II.10. 1., viz. (1) Sarga, (2) visarga, (3) sthāna, (4) *poṣaṇa*, (5) *ūti*, (6) *manvantara*, (7) *īśānukathā*, (8) *nirodha*, (9) *mukti*, (10) *āśraya*.

The characteristics are found in this verse as follows:—

Text of the verse	*Signifies the characteristic*	*In Skandhas*
janmādyasya yataḥ /	*sarga*	III, IV, V
	visarga	
	sthāna	
tene brahma hṛdā	*poṣaṇa*	VI
ya ādi-kavaye /		
muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ /	*ūti*	VII
	manvantara)	VIII
	īśānukathā)	IX
tejo-vāri-mṛdāṁ vinimayaḥ /	*nirodha*	X
dhāmnā svena sadā	*mukti*	XI
nirasta-kuhakam /		
satyaṁ paraṁ /	*āśraya*	XII
dhīmahi	The use of 1 p. atm. pada shows 'the rightful claimant' and the meditation suggested in this.	I, II

2. Here, in this celebrated *Bhāgavata* composed by the Great Sage[2], is explained the highest Duty (*Dharma*), completely free from deceit, (viz. interest about this world and even the desire about liberation—ŚR). (It is the *Dharma*) of the righteous who are devoid of envy (and hence kindly to all beings—ŚR.). Here the thing to be known is the absolute Reality (*Or* it is the individual soul, when a part of this thing or Reality is meant; it is *māyā* or Cosmic Illusion, when the power of the thing is implied; it is the universe when its effects are understood—the non-difference of these all from the absolute Reality can be easily understood—ŚR.) It gives the highest bliss and destroys the three kinds of misery[3]. Can the Supreme Lord be realized in the heart immediately by the teachings of other (treatises)? No. (But in this (*Bhāgavata*) he can be so comprehended at once by the meritorious who have a desire to hear (and study) this (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*).[4]

2. The great sage Nārāyaṇa is regarded as the original author of the *Bhāgavata*. The four verses in the-Bh. P. II.9.32-35, narrated by the Supreme Lord to God Brahmā are regarded as the nucleus of this big epic. But VR. takes this sage as Vyāsa.

3. The following is the traditional classification of miseries : (i) *ādhyātmika*—The internal and external pangs and miseries suffered by the body and/or the mind. (ii) *ādhibhautika*—miseries from contact with gross elements and their products, e.g. accidents, tortures etc. (iii) *ādhidaivika*—tortures meted out after death, in the other world, according to one's misdeeds.

GD. (Giridhara) however limits these miseries to life on the earth and classifies : (1) caused by fever, grief etc., (2) caused by evil influence of stars, ghosts etc., (3) caused by heat, cold, tigers, serpents etc.

4. The Sk. commentators, hold that this verse describes the four requisites of the Bh.P., viz. (1) *adhikārin*—Persons qualified to read the Bh.P. (2) *Viṣaya*—The main topic of this work. (3) *Prayojana*—The object or the 'Why' of the treatise. (4) *Sambandha*—The relationship of (2) and (3).

The following are the summaries of the Sk. commentaries of the principal schools of the Vedānta :

(1) VR. explains

The main subject of discussion in this *Purāṇa* is *dharma*. It is twofold : (1) *siddha* (established) viz. the Supreme Soul described herein 'from *Vedya... tāpatrayonmūlanam*'. (ii) *sādhya* (to be achieved) is the 'devotion' described in *nir-matsarāṇāṁ satām*. The objective is two-fold: Direct—The revelation of the presence of God in the heart and, Indirect—destruction of three types of misery.

(i) *sādhya-dharma*—In this Purāṇa the highest Duty of the non-jealous saintly persons is described. It being the 'highest', is above exorcizing or magical practices and fruit-yielding actions prescribed in the Vedas

and implies virtues like tranquillity, self-restraint, essential for aspirants to Liberation. Grace and pleasure of the Supreme Lord is its objective and achievement.

(ii) *siddha-dharma*—This Purāṇa is called *Bhāgavata* as it deals with the form, nature, inherent qualities and powers of the Lord. It is composed by Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa. Herein is described the Thing which is the Reality, giver of the auspicious bliss of Liberation, destroyer of the three types of misery. This Reality is to be comprehended by the good, saintly persons.

Other false scriptures are of no use. People in whom the desire to hear the Bhāgavata arises become blessed immediately and the Lord at once enters their hearts as soon as they listen to this Purāṇa.

(2) According to VJ., this verse describes the main topic of the Bh.P., the means to achieve it, the qualifications of the listener-and the objectives of this Purāna.

Here in the beautiful profound *Bhāgavata* is taught the Path which leads to the attainment of the Supreme Lord (or that which controls the 'falling' man or destroys the sins) and completely absolves one from hypocrisy, i.e. the ego of being the doer of acts, and makes him perform acts without any desire to enjoy their fruits. This path or *Dharma* is the highest due to the doer's offering of all the acts to God (*OR* It destroys the enemy (*para*) viz. the cycle of the transmigration of the soul). Hence this Path is characterised by devotion (*bhakti-yoga-lakṣaṇaḥ*). Persons of pious actions and free from envy are eligible for this. The object of knowledge is the eternally existing flawless Reality imparting the highest bliss and uprooting three types of misery. Here, the relation characterised by the path of devotion (*Bhakti-Yoga*) and its object, i.e. God are expounded. There is no propriety in recounting other paths which may lead to heaven. When this treatise called the *Bhāgavata* composed by the great sage is properly studied by persons with disciplined intellect and adopted in serving the spiritual preceptor and such other great ones and the Lord, God is seen 'fettered' in their heart at once, by the ties of devotion. Persons duly equipped with *sādhanā* can visualize the Lord the very moment they are introduced to the *Bhāgavata*.

(3) JG. states that this verse establishes the superiority of the Bh.P. to other treatises dealing with (religious) acts, knowledge and devotion. The repetition of the word 'here-in' (*atra*) is for emphasizing this speciality of the Bh.P. over other scriptures.

The Bh.P. teaches about the great religion viz. devotion to the Supreme Lord. This devotion is so motiveless that the devotee does not hanker after liberation also. The envylessness of the devotees implies kindly feelings to all beings so that the devotees refrain from animal-sacrifices. The Reality described herein is so powerful that it destroys three types of misery caused by *Māyā* (illusion) and nescience and gives the highest bliss. The adjective 'Śrīmad' in 'Śrīmad Bhāgavata' implies its great potentiality. Its author is the great sage Nārāyaṇa who composed it originally in 4 verses. The greatness of the author establishes the superiority of this work. By following other scriptures men may attain liberation with difficulty but the superiority

of the Bh.P. lies in its power to put its listeners in immediate communion with God. Thus this being the science of immediate God-realization, the Bh.P. is the greatest of all scriptures.

(4) SD. explains :

This verse establishes the superiority of the Bh.P. over other scriptures from the point of its *anubandhas* (viz. the main topic, objective, the relation between the two and the qualifications of the listener of the Bh.P.). The Bh.P. is qualified by the adjective 'Śrīmad' as it contains the beautiful description of the person, qualities etc. of the Supreme Lord. This is composed by the great sage Vyāsa (the son of Parāśara), the knower of the Vedas and an incarnation of the Supreme Lord. The greatness of the authorship shows the superiority of this scripture over others. Herein is to be known the great religion of devotion (*Bhakti*) which is selfless (motiveless) and which is adopted by pious person free from jealousy. The Thing (the Reality) the principle called Śrīkṛṣṇa which uproots the three kinds of misery and blesses with liberation, is to be understood here. The Reality consisting of the three principles, viz Brahma, the sentient individual soul and the non-sentient are to be comprehended. Thus this scripture is superior to others due to its authorship, topic of discussion and the qualification of its listeners. The meritorious who have a desire to listen to the Bh.P. at once find Śrīkṛṣṇa 'stabilised' (present) in their heart.

This verse gives the five objectives :

(1) The Thing (Reality, Śrī-kṛṣna)—object of devotion.
(2) The Sentient, individual soul, the devotee.
(3) Liberation—the fruit of the grace of the Lord.
(4) The sentiment of devotion (*bhakti-rasa*).
(5) 'Opposition' suggested by the word (*para*).

The other scriptures, their injunctions, the eligibility of their followers etc. are different or opposite to those of the Bh.P.

The envyless devotee is the eligible person (*adhikārī*) and liberation is the objective (*prayojana*).

(5) GD. (Giridhara), a descendant of VB. and an exponent of pure non-dualistic (*Śuddhādvaita*) school of Vedānta lucidly explains as follows:

As there are number of works dealing with paths of Knowledge, Action and Devotion, the superiority of the Bh.P. over all other works and from the points of four *anubandhas* is given. Here in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* is taught the best path of Duty, of all those described in other scriptures. It is free from deception and is of the nature of nine-fold devotion. The singular *dharma* is used as all these varieties of devotion result in one—viz. attainment of Liberation. The *adhikārin* of the Bh.P., being jealousy-less, kindly disposed, pious person, it is superior to *Karma-kāṇḍa* which gives scope to jealousy. Reality, the object to be known, is a bestower of the highest bliss and destroyer of three kinds of misery. That this pure principle called Vāsudeva who liberates all, is understood by women and Śūdras (i.e. by persons not eligible for Vedic rites) and by all irrespective of their intellectual equipment, shows the superiority of this treatise to others. The author—Bādarāyaṇa Vyās

3. *This (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) is the (ripe) fruit of the wish-yielding tree[5] of the Vedas, that has been dropped down from the mouth of (the sage) Śuka (as from the mouth of a parrot=Śuka); that is full of (lit. endowed with) ambrosial juice[6] (viz. the highest bliss). Oh appreciators of beauty, the connoisseurs of its (the Bh.P.'s) peculiar excellences[7], you do drink[8] constantly this Bhāgavata—a fruit which is entirely

or the Supreme Lord—is also the most authoritative one. This shows the greatness of the Bh.P. among treatises of Jñāna Kāṇḍa.

The desire to listen to the Bh.P. does not arise without meritorious action. Lord Vāsudeva described in the 1st verse gets instantaneously bound in the heart of those who desire to listen to the Bh.P. What of those who are intent on hearing (and studying) it? The repetition of the words showing instantaneousness (viz. *sadyaḥ* and *tatkṣaṇam*) shows how very quickly His presence is established in the heart. This immediate fulfilment of the objective proves that the Bh.P. is superior to other scriptures. Hence its superiority to other treatises dealing with *upāsanā kāṇḍa*.

GD. repeats the four *anubandhas* of the Bh.P. like other Commentators.

*VJ. interprets as follows :

'Oh men of the world who can appreciate excellence ! Till the fall of your material body (*liṅga-Śarīra*) you do drink again and again the delicious juice of the ripened fruit called the *Bhāgavata* which was made to fall by me (Vyāsa) from the wish-yielding tree, viz. the Vedas, the sweetness of which s increased due to its flow from the mouth of Śuka ('the sage') and 'the parrot.' It is wellknown that the parrots eat only the ripe fruit.

5. *nigama-kalpataroḥ*—*Kalpataru* is a mythological wish-yielding heavenly tree. The Vedas are the means of obtaining the objectives of human life (*puruṣārthas*). As the Vedas are thus productive of all desires, they are compared with *kalpataru*—ŚR., VR. As the Bh.P. contains the essence of the Vedas, it is called the 'fruit' of the Veda-Tree—VR.

6. *amṛta-drava-saṁyuta- -amṛta*—(i) The highest bliss—ŚR. (ii) Liberation—VR., VJ.

(a) mixed with the essence of liberation. Devotion full of the joy of experiencing (the presence of) the Lord—VR.

(b) That which leads to Liberation (*mukti*)—VJ.

(iii) The essence of the sports of Hari—JG.

7. *bhāvukāḥ*—(i) Expert judges of qualities of special kinds of tastes —ŚR.

(ii) Persons devoted to the enquiries about the glorious Lord—VR.

(iii) The abode of the highest auspiciousness (*parama-maṅgalāyana*) —JG.

8. *pibata rasam*—It is not possible 'to drink' a fruit. But the Bh.P is like a fruitwhich is entirely full of juice without any seed.

a sweet juice—here and in the state of the Final Beatitude.[9]

4. In the Naimiśa[10] forest, a sacred place of Viṣṇu, sages whose leader was Śaunaka[11] held a sacrificial session lasting for one thousand years, for attaining the heavenly abode of Viṣṇu.[12]

5. The sages, who had offered the morning oblations[13]

(i) The word *rasa* is used as a correlative of *phala* as juice when fallen down cannot be drunk—ŚR., VR.

(ii) *Pā* (*pib*) means 'to eat' as well—VJ.

9. *ālayam*—(i) upto death—VR. (ii) till the fall of the physical body (*liṅga śarīra*)—VJ. (iii) *laya* or *pralaya* is the 8th *sāttvika* stage. Till one reaches that stage—VC. (Viśvanātha Cakravartī). (iv) Which is the cause of the dissolution of the cycle of births and deaths (*prapañca*)—VB. Or it (The Bh.P.-juice) should be drunk disregarding the desire for liberation

10. ŚR. and VB. record the popular etymology of the word "Naimiśa" as "a place where the felly of the wheel (created by god Brahmā) was broken" : *Brahmaṇā visṛṣṭasya cakrasya nemiḥ śīryate kuṇṭhībhavati yatra* / ŚR. quotes the authority of the Vāyavīya which states that when some sages went to Brahmā for a suitable place for performing penance, he created a wheel and asked the sages to follow it till it came to a standstill. The wheel owing to the breakage of its felly stopped at a place which came to be known as Naimiśa:

The alternative spelling of this word is "Naimiṣa" which according to the quotation of the *Varāha P.* given by ŚR. is derived from Viṣṇu's exploit of destroying an army of Dānavas (demons) within the twinkling of eyelids (*nimiṣa*).

Modern Nimsar, on the bank of the Gomatī in the Sītāpur district of the Uttar Pradesh is regarded as the site of the old sacred place called Naimiṣāraṇya (Vide *Śiva P.*, *P.* 432, F.N.).

11. He belonged to the Bhṛgu clan according to MBH. He was the leader of the sages who performed the great sacrificial session in the Naimiṣa forest and to whom the MBH, and the Purāṇas were recited by the Sūta. (Vide Śiva P. 1, F.N. 1).

12. According to ŚR., *svarga* means the God Viṣṇu, He explains *svargāya lokāya* as follows :

svaḥ svarge gīyata iti Svargāyo Hariḥ, sa eva loko bhaktānāṁ nivāsa-sthānaṃ, tasmai tat-prāptaye /

VJ. slightly differs. He interprets *svarga* as Viṣṇu *Svarato Viṣṇuḥ tena gato loko Vaikuṇṭhākhyaḥ tasmai* /

VB. also disapproves the explanation of ŚR. and explains "Bhagavadānandāṁśa-bhūtah svargaḥ /Lokātmakastu mahān aiśaḥ /Sa hyatra phalam /"

13. In the place of *huta-utāgnayaḥ*, VJ. accepts the reading *huta-hutāśanāḥ* which is better, though we have followed ŚR in the above translation.

(both of the daily routine and the special ones of the sacrificial session), once[14], respectfully asked the Sūta[15] who was hospitably received and (comfortably) seated :

6. Oh sinless one ! Mythological epics (*Purāṇas*)[16] along with history (*Itihāsa* e.g. the *Mahā Bhārata*) and [17] Law-books (like Smṛtis composed by sages, e.g. Manu, Yājñavalkya and others) as well[18], have been not only studied but also expounded by you.

7. Oh Sūta ! Whatever the venerable Bādarāyaṇa[19], greatest among the learned ones, knows and whatever other sages who

14. *ekadā* : VB. interprets as "the time of singing or reciting the Kṛṣṇa-legend" (*Hari-Gāthopagāyana-kālaḥ*). It is at this time of the sacrificial session that the Sūtas come. VB. thinks that this Sūta is not a Brahmin and though as per formalities, he was expected to stand in the assembly of those Brahmin sages, he was specifically asked to sit comfortably for narrating Kṛṣṇa's life. (vide *Subodhinī* 1.1.5, page 8).

15. A.D. Pusalkar thinks that this narrator of the Purāṇas is a Brahmin, a view accepted by the editor of the Śiva P. (vide P.1, FN. 2). But I think it is still an open question.

The Sūta who narrated the BH.P. was the son of Romaharṣaṇa, the disciple of Bādarāyaṇa (BH.P. 1.1.6-8).

16. *Purāṇa*—'Ancient legendary history'. Name applied to 18 well-known sacred works containing the whole body of Hindu mythology; supposed to be composed by Vyāsa. Each *Purāṇa* treats of the following topics: The creation, the destruction and renovation of the universe, the genealogy of Gods and ancient heroes, the reigns of Manus and the narratives of their descendants. These are enumerated thus :

Sargaś ca Prati-Sargaś ca Vaṁśo Manvantarāṇi ca /
Vaṁśānucaritaṁ caiva Purāṇam pañca-lakṣaṇam //

Different lists of the 18 Purāṇas are available. ASD 67 gives the following titles :

1. Brahma, 2. Padma, 3. Viṣṇu, 4. Śiva, 5. Bhāgavata, 6. Nārada, 7. Mārkaṇḍeya, 8. Agni, 9. Bhaviṣya, 10. Brahma-Vaivarta, 11. Liṅga, 12. Varāha, 13. Skanda, 14. Vāmana, 15. Kūrma, 16. Matsya, 17. Garuḍa, 18. Brahmāṇḍa.

For a succinct statement about the epics and Purāṇas vide A.D. Pusalkar's *Studies in the Epics and the Purāṇas*, (Bombay, 1963).

17. Ca, VJ. include *Upa-Purāṇas*, 18 in number, but *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti Kośa* (Vol.I, P. 667) enumerates 51 titles.

18. *Śāstrāṇi*—VB includes secular sciences like *artha-Śāstra* under this.

19. A name of Veda Vyāsa, the reputed author of the *Brahma Sūtras*. Authorship of all *Purāṇas* and *Upa-Purāṇas* and the *Mahābhārata* is attributed to him.

know the *saguṇa* (possessing attributes) and *nirguna* (attributeless) [aspects of] Brahman[20], know,

8. Oh gentle one ! You know all that (completely and) accurately through his (Bādarāyaṇa's) favour. Teachers disclose even their deepest secrets to an affectionate pupil.

9. Oh long lived one ! You are fit to tell immediately what is entirely for the good of men, as has been properly decided by your honour directly from the (Purāṇic) text.

10. Oh honourable one ! In this Kali age, men are generally short-lived, lazy, of dull intelligence, unfortunate and victims of diseases.

11. Numerous are the religious rites (requiring a number of technical performances) which deserve to be heard in details. Hence, Oh righteous one ! After determining the essentials out of these by your keen intelligence, tell them to us, the reverentials, so that our minds will be thoroughly soothed.

12. Oh Sūta ! God bless you. You know (the objective) why the venerable Lord of the Sātvatas[21] (or the protector of His worshippers—ŚR) was born of Devakī[22] and Vasudeva.

13. Well, Sir ! You will be pleased to describe to us who are desirous of hearing about him who se incarnation is for the good and prosperity of all beings.

20. I followed ŚR in interpreting the words *para* and *avara*. The other commentators differ as follows :

VR. The Supreme Soul (*paramātma-tattva*) and the lower self or *prakṛti-puruṣa-tattva*.

VJ. takes these as two aspects of Brahman and as an alternative explanation "One who knows the past and the future"—an explanation endorsed by VB. VB. also thinks that *para* signifies Gods like Brahman while *avara* means men like ourselves. GS. takes *para* as 'Brahman' and *apara* as *prakṛti* etc.

21. *Sātvata*—Name of the Yādava clan. It is also interpreted as 'Worshipper'.

22. *Devakī*—Wife of Vasudeva, mother of Kṛṣṇa and cousin of Kaṁsa; regarded as an incarnation of Aditi and Pṛśni. According to *Padma P.*, in Devaki's marriage a voice from heaven predicted the death of Kaṁsa at the hands of the 8th child of Devakī. As a precautionary measure, Kaṁsa imprisoned both Vasudeva and Devakī and tried to kill all her children. But Kṛṣṇa, the 8th child, was saved. Kṛṣṇa killed Kaṁsa and got his parents honourably released. She stayed with him throughout his life. After Kṛṣṇa's death, she entered fire. (PCK p. 452)

14. A person who, having fallen into this dreadful circuit of worldly existence, becomes utterly helpless and utters his name, is then immediately liberated. Fear itself is afraid of him.

15. Oh Sūta! Sages who have taken resort to His feet and who are the abodes of tranquillity, purify immediately by their presence (when approached); whereas the water of the divine Gaṅgā sanctifies after actual contact, i.e., ablutions (lit. 'by actual service').

16. Or what person desirous of purity of heart, will not listen to the glory of the venerable Lord whose deeds are praised by persons of auspicious fame[23]—the glory that cleanses the sins of the Kali age.

17. Describe to us who are very eager (to hear) his great[24] acts which are eulogised by the learned ones (like Nārada, Vyāsa or Brahmā etc.)— acts of him who sportively assumes[25] different forms.[26]

23. It is alternately explained : '.....Lord who is of sanctifying fame as well as of praiseworthy deeds.' VJ., VD.

24. 1. great e.g. the creation of the universe—ŚR. SD. 2. removing sins—udgata-doṣa—VJ. 3. creating (lit. giving) highest rapture—JG. 4. giving the desired objects to devotees—VC. 5. awarding the four highest goals in human life (*puruṣārtha*) viz. *dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa*—G.D.

25. *dadhataḥ*—This present participle signifies the eternal nature of His pastimes—VC.

26. *Kalāḥ*—1. Forms e.g., Brahman, Rudra etc.—ŚR. 2. All incarnations—VJ., VC. 3. Incarnations in the shape of man etc.—JG. 4. Kṛṣṇa was the only complete incarnation (*pūrṇāvatāra*) is implied by this—VR., GD. 5. VD. waxes eloquent in explaining the concept of incarnation (*avatāra*). The incarnations are of three types—(i) *puruṣāvatāra* viz. Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha of the Pañcarātra system; (ii) *guṇāvatāra* e.g. Brahman (representing *rajo-guṇa*), Rudra (for *tamoguṇa*) &c. (iii) *līlāvatāra*—All incarnations from Sanaka, Sanandana upto Kalki (described in BH.P.I.3).

VD. gives another fourfold classification of these incarnations in ascending powerfulness, according as they are due to : (1) influence or *āveśa* (e.g. Sanaka, Nārada, Pṛthu etc.); (2) miraculous power or *Prabhāva* (e.g. Mohinī, Vyāsa, Datta etc.); (3) magnificence or *Vaibhava* (e.g. Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hayagrīva etc.) and (4) of the highest stage or Parāvasthā, which are in ascending hierarchy Narasiṁha, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

Thus Kṛṣṇa is regarded as the most complete incarnation. *Kṛṣṇa eva svayaṁ bhagavān, na tato'dhikaḥ Ko'pyasti*—VD.

18. Oh intelligent (Sūta) ! Describe to us fully the auspicious narratives of the incarnations of Hari, the Supreme Ruler, who by his mystic power called "Illusion"[27] indulges at will in his pastimes.

19. We, however, do not feel thorough satisfaction in hearing about his glorious[28] prowess which according to listeners who are connoisseurs of tastes is of increasing sweetness[29] every moment.

20. Lord Keśava, (though the Supreme Being is) concealed in human disguise[30], has certainly performed superhuman acts of heroism, along with Balarāma[31].

21. We, apprehending the arrival of the Kali age, have engaged ourselves in a sacrifice of a long duration in this field consecrated by Lord Viṣṇu. Hence, we have sufficient leisure[32] to hear the story of Hari.

27. *ātma-Māyā*—(1) His own power called 'miracle' (*āścarya-śakti*).—VR. (2) 'Knowledge' (*saṅkalpa-rūpa jñāna*) (3) 'Will-power', but with the following different implications: (a) *Svarūpa-bhūta-icchā*—VJ. (b) *nijecchārūpa-śaktiḥ* -JG., VD. quote *mahāsaṁhitā* :

Ātma-māyā tad-icchā syād—Guṇa-māyā jaḍātmikā|

(4) 'Mystic power' (*yoga-māyā*)—VC.

28. *Uttama-śloka*—(i) whose glory dispells the darkness in the form of ignorance of the mind or nescience (*avidyā*—SR., GD. (ii) which is praised by the best (persons)—VC., VD. (iii) whose glory is the best—VC. (iv) one who is praised by the liberated who experience the joy of Brahman, VB.

29. *Svādu-svādu*—more tasteful than tasteful things—ŚR. However, VJ. is followed here.

30. *Kapaṭa-mānuṣaḥ*—(a) 'Disguised as man; Having the appearance of man.'—VR., GD. &c. JG. explains: The Supreme Lord has no material body implied by the word 'man'. He is the Supreme being appearing in human shape. (b) 'Mānuṣeṣvapi kaṁ sukham patati prāpnoti / : VJ.

31. *Balarāma*: An incarnation of *Śeṣa*, son of Vasudeva and originally of Devaki but by womb-transfer, was born of Rohiṇī, another wife of Vasudeva. He was fair in complexion and was usually dressed in blue. He was brought up along with Kṛṣṇa by Nanda in Gokula. He is represented as armed with a ploughshare and a pestle-like club. He was a lifelong associate of Kṛṣṇa, sharing with him all vicissitudes of life. He was noted for his great physical power and short temper and addiction to wine and dice. He married Revatī. At the time of the last internecine fight among the Yādavas, he quietly retired and left his human mortal body by yogic process and resumed his form as Śeṣa (Details—Viṣṇu P. ; Harivaṁśa). DHM. 40-41, PI. 2.463-65.

32. *kṣaṇa*—Joy, desire (*utsava*)—VD.

22. By the creator (or Lord Viṣṇu) you have been clearly pointed out as the helmsman (of a ship) to us (who are) desirous of crossing the ocean (in the form of) the Kali Age which is difficult to be crossed over and which deprives (men) of goodness[33] (or 'Strength' as applied to ocean).

23. Tell us to whom righteousness has now resorted for refuge (when) Kṛṣṇa, the master of *Yogic*-mystic powers, wellversed in the Vedas, the protector of religion, has returned to his abode.[34]

CHAPTER TWO

Vyāsa said :

1. Being highly pleased at these courteous questions of the Brāhmaṇas (Sūta, Ugraśravas) the son of Romaharṣaṇa, complimenting their words (enquiry) began to reply in details.

Sūta said :

2. I bow down to that sage (Śuka) whose ceremony of the investiture of the sacred thread had not taken place (i.e. in that early stage of childhood), who had renounced all actions and set out (of home[35]) and whom the sage Vyāsa (Śuka's

33. *sattva*—'courage, morale'—VD.

34. *svāṁ kāṣṭhām*—
—His own boundary i.e. His own Self—ŚR.
—His own direction, i.e. Vaikuṇṭha-loka—VR.
—His own attribute, full form (*guṇa-pūrṇa-svarūpam*)—VJ.
—His quarter, i.e. His own eternal abode (*nija-nitya-dhāma*)—JG.
—His boundary, the span of life of 125 years while he was in this world —VC.

35. *pravrajantam*—ŚR. : Set out as a recluse (to enter the 4th stage of life, viz. *Saṁnyāsa*). But VJ. refutes this on the grounds of the ineligibility of Śuka to *Saṁnyāsa* as his thread ceremony had not taken place. Here *pravrajyā* does not mean *saṁnyāsa* but "abruptly going out." VB. explains *pravrajanam* as "leaving out all contacts" and not *saṁnyāsa*.

father Dvaipāyana)[36], being grieved at his separation from him, called back as "Oh Son" (to which) the trees, being like Śuka on account of his (Śuka's) existence (entry) into the hearts of all beings[37] responded (to Vyāsa).

3. I seek refuge in the son of Vyāsa (viz. Śuka, the spiritual master of sages who had, out of compassion for people in the worldly existence desiring to cross over the (ocean of) the blinding darkness (of ignorance), narrated the secret one among the Purāṇas [38] (viz. *the Bhāgavata Purāṇa*), which is the only one lamp of spiritual truth, full of its own (uncommon) glory[39], and is the essence of all the Vedas.

4. After paying obeisance to Nārāyaṇa[40] and also to Nara[41] the best of men[42], and also[43] to the goddess of learning, one should narrate *Jaya* (another name of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. See VR. and SD.).

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36. *Dvaipāyana*—The name of Vyāsa, the son of Parāśara, so called because of his birth on an island in the Jumna—PCK. p. 479.

evaṁ Dvaipāyano jajñe Satyavatyām Parāśarāt /
Nyasto dvīpe sa yad bālas tasmād Dvaipāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ //

—MBH. I.63.86

37. *sarva-bhūta-hṛdayaḥ*—ŚR. : Śuka replied through the medium of trees to remove the paternal bond from the heart of Vyāsa.

VB. : One who controls the hearts of all beings; or whose heart is in all beings.

JG. : Upon whom the heart of all beings is placed.

38. *purāṇa-guhyaṃ*—ŚR & JG. interpret as above, but VR. : "The secret Purāṇa", VJ. adds *purāṇasya bhagavataḥ sannidhātuṁ yogyam.*

39. *svānubhāvam*—JG.: This expresses the uncommon glory of the *BH.P.*, but VJ. : He who expounded Brahman (svānubhāvam) and who narrated the *BH.P.* which is'...etc. (VJ. construes this verse differently as indicated above).

40. *Nārāyaṇa* : Viṣṇu so called because he lay on the waters of the Deluge before the beginning of Creation : *Āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai nara-sūnavaḥ / Tā yadasyāyanaṁ pūrvaṁ tena Nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ //*

41. *Nara* : An incarnation of Viṣṇu; born of Dharma and Mūrti daughter of Dakṣa. A friend and associate of Nārāyaṇa while performing penance at Badarikāśrama. As ŚR. and JG. note Nārāyaṇa and Nara represent Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna.

42. *narottama*—The best of beings. Some treat this as the adjective qualifying Nara.

43. VJ. reads "Vyāsa" for *caiva*. He interprets this verse rather differently :

5. Oh sages ! I have been very nicely asked by your honour about the welfare (or bliss) of the people because (your) relevant question is about Kṛṣṇa, whereby the soul becomes completely soothed.

6. That is certainly the sublime religion[44] for men, (religion) from which is created the devotion to Lord Viṣṇu—devotion which is without any (ulterior) motive, unobstructed (or constant) and by which the soul becomes deeply pacified.

7. Loyal devotion (applied) to Lord Vāsudeva[45] immediately[46] generates non-attachment which leads to causeless[47] knowledge.

8. If that religion, howsoever well-practised, does not create love for the stories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, it is certainly sheer labour.

9. Verily, wealth is not the proper objective of the religion leading to Liberation[48]. The desire (for worldly

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"After paying homage to Nārāyaṇa (the subject of the *Bhāgavata Śāstra*), Vyāsa (the author of the BH.P.), the goddess Lakṣmī, Vāyu, the greatest of men, the highest teacher, Sarasvatī (the goddess of learning) and Nara, I expound the BH.P. (due to the favour of the above deities)." JG. states : 'Of this Bhāgavata Śāstra, Nara & Nārāyaṇa are the presiding deities (*adhiṣṭhātṛ-devate*), Śrī-Kṛṣṇa is the *Devatā*, Sarasvatī is the *Śakti*, Vyāsa is the Seer (*Ṛṣi*), OM (*praṇava*) is the *Bīja*, and Gāyatrī is the Metre (*Chandas*). As pointed out by Nīlakaṇṭha in his Comm. on the Devī-Bhāgavata, the 1st verse of the BH.P. is not in the Gāyatrī metre (vide Ft. Note on BH.P.I.1.1.)'

44. ŚR.: This verse answers the 1st question (in Bh.P.I.1.9). *para dharma* : Religion is of two kinds—*apara dharma* (i.e. Dh. the object of which is Liberation) and—*para dharma* (which creates devotion to Kṛṣṇa).

45. Vāsudeva—VR. : All pervader, VJ.' One who dwells (pervades) everywhere or One who makes all to dwell in Him. *vasati sarvatra, svasmin sarvaṁ vāsayati*=vasuḥ. *vasuś cāsau devaś ca |*

46. *āśu*—JG. Quickly. As soon as the Bh.P. is heard, the knowledge described therein is created.

47. *ahaituka*—ŚR : Free from unnecessary arguments & JG. : Derived from the Upaniṣads. VD. : The object or cause of which is "*A*" (i.e.) Vāsudeva. VJ. : With no ulterior motive like money etc. VR. : *Bhakti* as an end in itself. SD. That which does not result in anything but devotion. VB. : Knowledge which is not inferrable but is generated directly by realization (*sākṣātkāra*)

48. *āpavargya*—VR., VJ. : "That which leads to Liberation". JG. : Devotion —Unconditional devotion of the individual spirit to the divine spirit. The devotion which does not expect any gain in return but gives oneself up to God.

things) is never enjoined for the attainment of that (kind of) wealth which has religion as its end (object).[49]

10. It is not proper to satisfy the senses (by enjoyment of desired objects but to limit) that much enjoyment of desired objects as is essential for (the sustenance of) life. The aim of life in this world is enquiry about the Truth (or the essential nature of the Supreme Being= *Tattva*) and not (the desire for enjoyment in Heaven) by performing religious rites.

11. Those who possess the knowledge of the Truth (*tattva*) call the knowledge of non-duality[50] as the Truth. It is also variously designated as Brahman, Paramātman or Bhagavān.

12. The sages who have faith in it (Brahman) visualize their own soul in themselves, through devotion which is combined with knowledge and non-attachment and which is developed by listening to the Vedānta.

13. Hence, Oh greatest of the twin-borns! Gratification (grace) of Hari is the consummation of religion practised well by men according to the division of castes and stages of life.

14. Therefore, the Venerable Lord of the Sātvatas (deserves always to be) heard, eulogised, meditated and worshipped with concentrated attention.

15. Who will not love (listen to) His narratives by whose sword-like meditation, the learned ones, becoming one with the

49. *dharmaikāntasya*—VJ "That of which Dharma is the only definite fruit". VR. endorses the same when he says : *Dharmaika-prayojanasyārthasya vittasya lābhāya prayojanāya kāmo na smṛtaḥ/Arthasya prayojanaṁ na kāmo bhavati /* It may be noted that by *kāma* he means our needs of life *annapānādi*.

50. *advaya*—ŚR. : Non-duality. Here Bh.P. anticipates the theory of momentariness of the Buddhists. VJ : "Having neither equal nor superior". VR. : "incomparable with It", also *anyonya-bheda-rahita*, or *jātyādi-bheda-rahita*. JG. : Knowledge is nothing but consciousness (*cit*) and has no second (*advaya*) and is of the Supreme Being. Although the Bh.P. uses the word *Tattva* in the sense of Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavān, one is the Pure knowledge beyond everything, the other is the internal controller having abundance of Māyā—power, while the last is complete within Himself. Verse 12: *ātmani*—ŚR : "In sentient beings", JG. "In the purified hearts of sentient beings"

Supreme Spirit[51] cut asunder the knot-like acts producing bondage.[52]

16. Oh Brāhmaṇas! Love about the narratives of Vāsudeva will be generated in (persons) desirous of hearing (or devoted to service) and full of faith, by performing holy pilgrimages and through the service of the great (holy) people.

17. The reason is that Kṛṣṇa, hearing and glorifying (whose episodes) is meritorious and who is the well-wisher of the good, exists in the hearts of the listeners to His narratives and shakes off all evil .

18. When Evils are all but destroyed by continuous services of the devotees of the Lord[53], firm devotion to the Lord of excellent fame[54], is generated.

19. Then, mind, not being affected by perturbations (qualities or "aspects"[55]) like Passions (*rajas*) and Ignorance (*tamas*) and by desire, avarice and others, and being stabilised in goodness, is quietened (soothed).

20. Thus the knowledge[56] of the reality of the Lord is produced in the person whose mind is pacified and who has freed himself from attachment through the devotion of the Supreme Lord.

21. As soon as the Supreme Lord is seen within oneself, his knot (of ego) in the heart[57] is cut asunder, all doubts are

51. *yuktaḥ*—ŚR : With power of self-control, JG : With a subdued mind.

52. *granthi*—ŚR. : Knots i.e. acts producing ego, JG.: Acts producing ego in different bodies.

53. or the study of the *Bhāgavata*.

54. *uttama-śloka*—ŚR.: (1) As in Bh.P. 1.1.19 He whose glory dispels darkness of ignorance in mind. (2) The Lord who is praised by persons whose hearts are absolved from ignorance.

55. *bhāva*—According to Sāṅkhyas, the perturbation of Prakṛti results in the non-balance of its *guṇas* i.e. "attributes or constituents" which Dr. Radhakrishnan prefers to call "aspects". But he prefers to use the original Sk. *guṇa* in *Hist. of Ind. Phil. Vol. II* pp. 262-65. I have however, followed the traditional translation of these terms.

56. JG. thinks that the communion with the Supreme Lord is felt from within without the influence of thinking power.

57. VJ. takes *hṛdaya-granthi* as Mind and not ego. Quoting Vedic scriptures he states that on this point ŚR.'s explanation is against the tenets of the BH.P. (*Bhāgavata-jñānād advaita-niṣedhāc ca* /)

solved and his actions (good or bad, of the previous period which are not exhausted by enjoying the fruits) are annihilated.

22. Hence, verily, wise men always practise with great delight (their) devotion in Lord Vāsudeva which purifies their hearts.[58]

23. *Sattva* (goodness), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance)—These are the attributes or constituents of Nature (*Prakṛti*). The Supreme Being possessing these attributes is one. Here He assumes names like Hari, Viriñci (Brahmadeva), and Hara (Śiva) for the preservation (creation and destruction) of the universe. There (from among them) the good (Final Beatitude) comes from Him whose body is *Sattva* (goodness) itself.

24. To the earthly wood, the smoke issuing from it is superior. To such smoke the Fire is superior as being connected with all sacrificial acts prescribed in the Vedas. (Similarly) the quality of *rajas* is better than that of *tamas*, but *sattva-guṇa* (the quality of goodness) is the best as the Supreme Spirit (*Brahman*) is realized in it.[59]

25. Therefore, formerly sages worshipped Venerable Viṣṇu (who is of purest goodness i.e. *sattva-guṇa* incarnate). Those who follow them here become fit for final beatitude.

26. So also, disregarding the lords of goblins of terrible forms, persons desirous of Liberation (being) quiet and free from malice adore images of Nārāyaṇa.

27. Verily, longing for wealth, power and offspring, persons whose nature (is dominated by) the qualities of *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance) and who are of the kindred nature (as lords of manes etc.) adore the Lords of the manes, goblins and created beings and others.

28. Vāsudeva is the highest objective of the Vedas.

58. ŚR. : "Though the Supreme Being assumed three different names for three different functions, the real good of men will result in devotion to Vāsudeva who is full of *Sattva-guṇa*.

59. ŚR. Explains : The quality of *rajas* is more expressive of the Supreme Being than *tamas*. The particle *tu* shows that *rajas* has but little value as compared with *sattva* (Goodness) which fully expresses the nature of the Supreme Being. Thus the superiority of Viṣṇu, the presiding deity of *sattva-guṇa* over the other two presiding deities of *rajas* and *tamas* (viz. Brahmadeva and Śiva is obvious.

(Vedic) sacrifices are intended for Vāsudeva. The Yogic practices (and as a matter of that) all (religious) actions have Vāsudeva as their goal.

29. The object of knowledge is (the comprehension of) Vāsudeva. Religious penance is for the sake of Vāsudeva. Vāsudeva is the goal of Religion. Vāsudeva is the end to be reached in liberation.

30. The Supreme Lord who is without attributes (and) all-pervading by nature, formerly created this (Universe) by His will-power called Illusion (*Māyā*) which consists of (three) qualities (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and is of manifested and unmanifested form or "expressive of cause and effect (law of causation).

31. (The Supreme Lord) having manifested Himself by His Knowledge or Intellectual Power[60] and entering into these attributes created by *Māyā* appears as if He has attributes.

32. Just as the same fire placed in wood from which it is created, appears of different forms, (so also) the *Puruṣa*[61]—the Soul of the Univer e appears different in created beings.[62]

33. This (Supreme Lord), by entering into beings created by Himself by the effects full of attributes, of gross and subtle elements, organs of senses and Soul-mind, enjoys their attributes.[63]

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60. *vijñāna*—ŚR. : Intellectual power, VR. : Soul (*jīva*), SD. : Individual soul (*jīva*) who is a part of the Universal soul and is of the nature of knowledge.

61. *pumān*—ŚR. : The Supreme lord, the Soul of the universe. VR. : The individual soul (jīva). VJ. however, supports the above (our) translation.

62. VC. differs : "Just as the fire consumes the wood in which it is created, the universal soul (*paramātmā*) when realized by devotion etc. removes the limitations (*upādhis*) due to *māyā*." SD. thinks that this verse shows the driving force of the Lord. The *paramātmā* appears differently as a driving force in all movable and immovable objects but He is one.

63. VR. differs. He takes *asau* as individual soul. The gist of his interpretation: "The individual soul enters the bodies of gods etc. created according to their past actions, and enjoys the objects of senses and does acts resulting into merits or sins". Alternatively he suggests that the Supreme Lord enjoys through individual souls and not directly. VJ. thinks that the Supreme Lord enters these bodies in a detached manner. If he enters an unfortunate body, the Supreme Soul has not to suffer miseries like the individual soul.

34. Certainly, this Creator of the Universe[64], being fond of pastimes[65] like incarnations in gods, non-human being sand men, protects the Universe, by his power.

CHAPTER THREE

Sūta said :

1. At the beginning, with the desire to create the Universe, the Lord assumed the form of Man[66] (*puruṣa*) consisting of sixteen parts[67] created from the *tattvas* (primary substances) of which *Mahat*[68] (the Great or "Intellect") is the first.

64. *loka-bhāvanaḥ*—ŚR. "Protector of the Universe". VJ., VR. : "The Creator of the Universe".

65. *anu-rata*—SD. "Ready to protect the religion as needed at a particular period". VJ. thinks that *anu* means The Lord is not bound to but may at His will incarnate as per necessity of the world. He is not bound by the law of Karman to do so.

66. *pauruṣam rūpam*—ŚR. : Though the Supreme Spirit has no such human form, for the convenience of meditation or worship. He is regarded as *Virāṭ* (one residing in or knowing the affairs of sentient beings.)

VJ. explains : The Supreme Being collected and preserved the whole of the universe in its subtle form in his "Belly", at the time of the Deluge and lay covered in the darkness of his *Prakṛti*. At the time of Creation of the Universe, he drank up the Darkness covering him and manifested himself. This is "the assumption of the Puruṣa form". Alternatively "the assumption of forms like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc" may be accepted.

VB. : He assumed of his own accord body consisting of pure *sattva* (the constituent power—guṇa—of goodness) which is composed of *tattvas* (principles). It may not be a human form.

JG. : Puruṣa implies 3 forms of Viṣṇu, as (1) the Creator of the principle Mahat (Intelligence), (2) the Being in the Egg, and (3) the Being in all *bhūtas*. The Supreme Lord described as possessing 6 attributes of glory etc. is now described as *Puruṣa*. *Rūpa* according to VR. indicates here the cause of Brahmāṇḍa (*Brahmāṇḍa-kāraṇam samaṣṭi-tattva-jātam*), while with SD. *rūpa* is the effect of *Samaṣṭi* (aggregate which is considered as made up of parts each of which is consubstantially the same with the whole) and the material cause of *vyaṣṭi* (an aggregate viewed as made up of many separated bodies)—*samaṣṭi-kāryātmakaṁ vyaṣṭyupādāna-bhutam*)

67. *ṣoḍaśakalam*—ŚR., SD., VB. : 10 organs of senses+Mind+5 *mahābhūtas* (Elements)=16 parts.

68. *mahadādibhiḥ*—ŚR. : Consisting of the "principles" (*tattvas*) called

2. Brahmā, the Head of the progenitor of the Universe,[69] was born of the lotus of the deep-lake-like navel[70] of the Lord who was lying on the waters (of the post-Deluge ocean) extending his *yogic* meditation-slumber[71].

3. Verily that form of the Lord on the formation of whose limbs is based the extent of the Universe, is very pure, excellent, and full of *sattva* (goodness).

4. They (i.e. yogins) with their vision of vast knowledge[72] visualise this form wonderful (on account of its having) thousands of feet, thighs, arms, mouths, thousands of heads, ears, eyes and noses, shining on account of thousands of crowns, garments and earings.

5. This[73] (original form of the Supreme Being, the *Ādi-Nārāyaṇa*) is the indestructible seed[74] and the receptacle (place of return) of different incarnations and from whose parts and parts of parts[75], beings such as gods, subhuman beings (like animals, birds), men and others, are created.

by Sāṅkhyas as *Mahat* (the Great or Intellect), *ahaṁkāra* (ego or self-sense) and 5 *tanmātras* (subtle pure elements corresponding to the 5 organs of sense).

69. *viśva-sṛjām patiḥ*—Brahmā, the Creator of the universe at first created 10 Prajāpatis (Lords or generators of created beings) e.g. Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu etc. In the Vāyupurāṇa we have another list : Kardama, Kaśyapa, Śeṣa, Vikrānta. etc. (For details vide PI. II.404)

VB. remarks that the word *pati* shows that to these generators of created beings, the order of Brahmā was inviolable.

70. *nābhi-hradāmbujaḥ*—VB. explains that the word *nābhi* (Navel) is used to signify the existence of the Universe in the belly of the Lord. ŚR. says that this refers to the Supreme Being's assumption of *Puruṣa* form in the *Padma Kalpa*.

71. *Yoga-nidrā*—ŚR. : "The sleep of *samādhi* (meditation). VB. says that *yoga-nidrā* is a certain kind of power of the Lord. It relieves the agonies of beings and brings them to him. He extends it for the creation of the Universe.

72. *adabhra-cakṣuṣā*—ŚR. : "With their eyes of vast knowledge" VJ.: "Of full knowledge" SD. : "Of great knowledge".

73. *etad*—VR. thinks that this is the *Aniruddha* form, VJ. calls this *Padma-nābha* while JG. "the Being in the egg of Brahman".

74. *bīja*—ŚR. : Place of origin; JG. : Embryo. VR.: The root cause.

75. *aṁśāṁśena*—ŚR. : Nārāyana is the seed of incarnations as well as of all animate things as they are created out of his parts. Brahmā is the

6. At first[76], that very God manifested (Himself) as Youths[77] and (becoming) Brāhmaṇa, practised unbroken celibacy which is difficult to practise.

7. Secondly, also, the Lord of Sacrifices (Nārāyaṇa) with the object of creation, assumed the body of a boar for raising up the Earth which had sunk down to the lower region called Rasatala[78].

8. And thirdly, He, having become the Divine Sage (Nārada[79]) in the Ārṣa Creation (pertaining to sages), expounded the religio-mystical treatise pertaining to the *Sātvatas* (the devotees of Viṣṇu) namely *Pañcarātrāgama* by following which actions become void of their binding force.[80]

9. In the fourth incarnation, having been born of the wife of Dharma (namely Mūrti, daughter of Dakṣa Prajāpati) as the twin sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa[81], He performed severe penance with fully pacified mind.

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part (*aṁśa*) of Nārāyaṇa and Brahmā's progeny like the *mānasaputras* (Marīci and others) are parts of part (*aṃśāṁśa*). VR. *cidacit tattvaikya-deśena.*

76. *prathamam*—ŚR. : This word is used for numerical reference only and does not indicate superiority or inferiority.

77. *kaumāram*—ŚR. : This is a name of Creation like Ārṣa, Prājāpatya etc. It includes Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, Sanatkumāra. They were mind-born sons of Brahmā, and were Brāhmaṇas. They refused to create progeny and led a celibate life. SD., VR., JG. agree with ŚR.

78. *Rasātala*—One of the seven sub-terranean regions. They are as follows : Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Rasātala, Mahātala and Pātāla. These are inhabited by Nāgas, demons etc.

79. *Nārada*: The beloved 10th son of Brahmā; one of the 12 who knew the Dharma ordained by Hari; a celibate; was taught the *Bhāgavata* by his father; he recited it to Vyāsa; author of *Sātvata Tantra*; mentioned many times in the Bh.P.

—PI. II.225

80. *naiskarmyam*—ŚR. : That from which the cause of the binding force of an action becomes null and void. VS. : means leading to Liberation. VR. observes Those who perform *nivṛtti* type of *karma* should not follow *pravṛtti dharma* Vl.: By performing *karmas* as prescribed in the *Sātvata Tantra*, one attains liberation.

81. These twin sages performed penance at Badarikāśrama. When Indra sent god of Love and heavenly damsels to disturb his contemplation, Nara created a number of beautiful ladies and asked the god of Love to select one for heaven. They took Urvaśī to heaven and reported the superior powers of the sages. Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa are regarded as the incarnations of Nara and Nārāyaṇa respectively.—PI. II.205., 231.

10. The fifth (incarnation) was by name Kapila[82], the chief of Siddhas (who) explained to Āsuri[83] the Sāṅkhya doctrine[84] which determined all the principles, which was lost (formerly) in the course of time.

11. In the sixth (Incarnation) He, being requested by Anasūyā[85] became the child (lit. accepted the child-ship) of Atri[86], taught Metaphysics (ŚR: knowledge of the Soul) to Alarka[87], Prahlāda[88] and others.

82. *Kapila* : Born of Kardama and Devahūti; taught knowledge of Brahman to his mother; propounder of the Sāṅkhya philosophy which he taught to Āsuri; one of the twelve who knew the Dharma ordained by Hari; burnt down 60,000 sons of Sagara when they attacked him on suspicion of theft of their sacrificial horse. (PI. I.311). Apart from the mythological account, Kapila seems to be a historical figure –an exponent of a system of philosophy in Pre-Buddhist period.

83. *Āsuri* : N. of the disciple of Kapila; a *siddha* but did not comprehend Hari's Māyā; was invited to Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice. PI.I.180.

84. *Sāṅkhya* : The system takes its name from its method of arriving at conclusions by theoretical investigation. The word *Sāṁkhya* is derived by some from *Saṁkhyā* or number and is appropriate to this system which gives an analytical enumeration of the principles of the cosmos. But this tendency to enumeration is common to all Hindu systems of thought...In the early texts, *Sāṁkhya* is used in the sense of philosophical reflection and not numerical reckoning. This particular system, which expounds by careful reflection the nature of *puruṣa* or spirit and the other entities, acquired this significant title. ——S. Radhakrishnan—*Hist. of Ind. Phil. II.* 248-334.

Cf. *Śuddhātma-tattva-vijñānaṁ Sāṁkhyaṁ yadabhidhīyate* /

Śaṅkara—Comm. on *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma.*

85 *Anasūyā* : The wife of the sage Atri and a daughter of Kardama; mother of Datta, Durvāsas and Soma; mother of 5 Ātreyas and a daughter Śruti —PI. I.53.

86. *Atri* : A son of Brahmā; married Anasūyā appointed by Brahmā for the creation of the world. While engaged in meditation on Mount Rkṣa, the Trimūrtis blessed him with 3 sons being their own parts (*aṁśas*). Accordingly Datta (Viṣṇu), Durvāsas (Śiva) and Soma (Brahmā) were born. —PI. I.41.

87. *Alarka* : PCK (p. 76) records different Alarkas, but the one mentioned here seems to be the king of Kāśī; youngest son of Ṛtadhvaja and Madālasā; was expounded the spiritual knowledge by his mother and Dattātreya.

88. *Prahlāda* : Son of Hiraṇyakaśipu and Kayādhū; was initiated in the Bhāgavata Dharma by Nārada. For him Viṣṇu incarnated as Man-lion and killed Hiraṇyakaśipu. Prahlāda became the Lord of Daityas. His

12. Then, in the seventh (incarnation), Yajña[89] was born of Ruci and Ākuti. He along with gods of whom Yama[90] was the first, protected the period assigned to the Manu called Svayambhū.[91]

13. In the eighth (incarnation), Lord Viṣṇu (lit. One with wide steps) was born of King Nābhi and queen Meru Devī, He (as Ṛṣabha)[92] showing to the strong-minded ones the path (of sannyāsa), the most respectable of all the stages of life.

14. Oh Brāhmanas! Having been implored by sages, (He) assumed the ninth body (incarnation) pertaining to (i.e. known as) Pṛthu. From this (earth), he milked (medicinal) plants. Thereby he became the most pleasant.

15. At the time of oceanic deluge in the epoch (Manvantara) called Cākṣuṣa[93] He assumed the form of a fish[94] and protected Vaivasvata Manu[95] by making him board the earth-boat.

spiritual preceptor was Dattātreya. It was due to him that Kṛṣṇa spared the life of Bāṇa. Prahlāda lived in Sutala and attained liberation by Satsaṅga.—PI. II.435-36.

89. *Yajña* : An incarnation of Viṣṇu, son of Ruci and Ākutī; reported to have married his twin-sister Dakṣiṇā; was Indra in the period called *Svāyambhuva Manvantara.*

90. *Yama* : Name of the 1st son out of 12 sons born of Yajña and Dakṣiṇā. He was a god in Svāyambhuva Manvantara.

91. *Svāyambhuva Manvantara* : Period relating to Svayambhū. Svayambhū was the first Manu (out of 14 Manus). Śatarūpā was his wife. They had 2 sons—Priyavrata and Uttānapāda and 3 daughters viz. Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti who were married to Ruci, Kardama and Dakṣa respectively. As Ākūti was married by *putrikā-dharma*, he took over son Yajña. In the period (Manvantara) of Svayambhū, Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Bhṛgu were the seven mind-born sons of Brahmā, Yajña was the Indra and Dakṣiṇā the Indrāṇī and their sons called Tuṣita were the gods.—BPK. 370.

92. Ṛṣabha—Ādinātha, an incarnation of Viṣṇu. For details see Bh.P. V.3-6.

93. *Cākṣuṣa*—The epoch (Manvantara) of the 2nd Manu Cakṣu. He was the son of Vyuṣṭa and Puṣkariṇī; wife Ākūti, son Manu.—PI. I,574

94. *mātsyaṁ rūpam*—The Fish incarnation. Though this is the 10th incarnation here, it is regarded as the 1st incarnation of Viṣṇu, popularly.

95. *Vaivasvata Manu*—In his former life, V.M. was King Satyavrata of Tamil Nad, who by his obligations on Viṣṇu in his initial stage of Fish-

16. In the eleventh (incarnation) in the form of a tortoise, the omni-present Lord supported the Mandara mountain on his back while gods and demons were churning the ocean.[96]

17. The twelfth (incarnation) is of Dhanvantari[97], and the thirteenth, the female form of Mohinī[98] who after deluding others (i.e. demons) enabled (lit. made) the gods to drink nectar.

18. Assuming the fourteenth Man-lion form[99], he tore up the chest of the powerful king of the Daityas with his claws like a weaver of mats (tearing) the rushes (grass).

19. Proposing to beg three paces (of land) but desirous of recovering (lit. taking back) heaven, he assumed the Pigmy

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incarnation was blessed with Manu-ship. He is the 7th Manu whose epoch continues at present. In his regime, Vasu, Rudra, Āditya, Viśve Deva, Marudgana, Aśvini-kumāra and Rbhu are the gods. Purandara, the Indra and Kāśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadvāja are the 7 sages.—BPK.307, also PI. II.601.

96. This refers to the occasion of churning the ocean for nectar. The gods and demons cooperated in churning the ocean with Mount Mandara as the churning staff, serpent Vāsuki as the string. Fourteen valuable things such as the goddess Lakṣmī, Kaustubha gem etc. were obtained. Nectar (*amṛta*) was one of them. The deadly poison Halāhala was drunk up by god Śiva to save the world.

(For details vide PI. I.87)

97 *Dhanvantam*: An incarnation of Viṣṇu. He appeared with the jar of nectar during the ocean-churning for nectar. Another account shows him to be the son of king Dīrgha-tamas of Kāśī; the originator of Āyur-Veda and the father of Ketumān.—PI. II.156-57

98. *Mohinī* : The 13th incarnation of Viṣṇu to delude the Āsuras from having any share in the nectar and distribute it to Devas (gods).

—PI. II.156-57.

99. *Narasiṁha* : (also Nārasiṁha and Nṛsiṁha) : Viṣṇu came down on the earth to punish Hiraṇyakaśipu for his insolence and cruelty. Hiraṇyakaśipu harassed his son Prahlāda for his devotion to Viṣṇu.—the omni-present. When asked whether Viṣṇu existed in the column of his hall, Prahlāda said "Yes" on which Hiraṇyakaśipu kicked it, when Viṣṇu appeared before the demon and killed him.

form[100] and arrived at Bali's[101] sacrifice.

20. In the sixteenth incarnation, being angry at the hostility of kings to Brāhmaṇas, he extirpated the warrior class from the earth for twentyone times.[102]

21. In the seventeenth (descent on the earth) he was born of Satyavatī from Parāśara[103]. Seeing people of low intelligence, he divided the tree in the form of Veda into several branches.

22. After this (i.e. after the 18th incarnation), with a desire to help gods (lit. to do the work of gods viz. to kill Rāvaṇa etc.), he assumed kingship and performed acts of valour such as control of the sea (by building a bridge over it.)

23. In the nineteenth and the twentieth (incarnations),

100. The origin of this incarnation is "The three strides of Viṣṇu" mentioned in the Ṛg-veda. In the Tretā-yuga (2nd Age), the pious Daitya King Bali acquired the dominance of the three worlds by defeating the gods. To remedy this Viṣṇu was born as a diminutive son of Kaśyapa and Aditi. The dwarf appeared before Bali and begged of him to donate him three paces of land. The generous king agreed. Viṣnu manifested his original form and covered the heaven and earth in two strides. But respecting his (Bali's) virtues, He made Bali the King of the subterranean region Sutala and assured him of Indra-ship in the 8th Manvantara (Epoch).

101. *Bali* : A son of Virocana and grand-son of Prahlāda; married Vindhyāvali and Aśanā; had 100 sons of whom Bāṇa was the eldest; defeated gods on the battlefield and performed 100 Horse-sacrifices. In the 100th horse-sacrifice, he was deceived by Viṣṇu in a dwarf form. (for the rest vide the above note).—P.I. 2.469-71.

102. This refers to Paraśurāma incarnation of Viṣṇu, in the Tretā age. He was the son of Jamadagni and Reṇukā (a princess). Haihaya king Kārtavirya Arjuna forcibly took away Jamadagni's Kāmadhenu (Wish-yielding cow). The scuffle led to Paraśurāma's killing of Kārtavīrya. Jamadagni disapproved of this and ordered Paraśurāma to go on pilgrimage for one year in expiation of this. After the departure of Paraśurāma, the sons of Kārtavīrya killed Jamadagni. In the struggle between Bhārgavas and Haihayas that followed this, Paraśurāma defeated them 21 times, which has been poetically described as "extirpation" of the Kṣatriya class. After this he retired to perform penance on Mahendra mountain. He is regarded as "deathless", was discomfited by Dāśarathi Rāma,; taught Astra-vidyā to Bhīṣma and Karṇa; guided Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Gomāntaka.

—PI. II.291.

103. *Parāśara* : Son of Śakti, grandson of Vasiṣṭha; father of Vyāsa.

—PI. II.293-4.

having taken birth in the Vṛṣṇi family as Rāma (Balarāma) and Kṛṣṇa, he lessened the burden of the earth.

24. Then after full advent of the Kali Age, (He) will be born with Buddha as His name, and as a son of Ajana in the Kīkaṭa country.[104]

25. Then in the twilight of the Kali Age, when kings will be as good as robbers, this protector of the world will be born of Viṣnuyaśas under the name Kalki.

26. Oh twice-born ones! Just as thousands of canals flow forth from inexhaustible lake, similarly innumerable are the incarnations of Hari, the ocean of goodness (the *Sattva-guṇa*).

27. Sages, Manus[105], gods as well as very powerful sons of Manu along with Prajāpatis (gods presiding over creation) are all parts of Hari only.

28. But[106] Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Being himself and all these, parts and smaller parts of the Supreme Being who give happiness to the world (when it is) troubled by the enemies of Indra (i.e. demons) in every epoch.

29. The man who, exerting himself with devotion, recites in the morning and in the evening this mysterious (account of the) births (incarnations) of the Lord, is completely released from all kinds of misery.

30. This form of the formless Lord whose true constitution is the Spirit itself, has been indeed created in the Soul

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104. *Kīkaṭa* : Name of the land where Buddha was born; noted for the sacred Gayā, the garden park Rājagṛha and the hermitage of Cyavana. —PI. I.381.

105. *Manu* : Progenitors and sovereigns of the earth for 1/14 part of Brahmā's day (i.e. 4,320,000 human years). The Manus are 14 in number viz. 1. Svāyambhuva, 2. Svārociṣa 3. Auttami, 4. Tāmasa, 5. Raivata, 6. Cākṣuṣa, 7. Vaivasvata, 8. Sāvarṇi, 9. Dakṣa-sāvarṇi, 10. Brahma-sāvarṇi, 11. Dharma sāvarṇi, 12. Rudra sāvarṇi, 13. Deva sāvarṇi, 14. Indra sāvarṇi.

106. JG. explains the difference between Bhagavān and his parts as follows: The Supreme Lord, by His divine will, can manifest His power anywhere without interruption, while the parts (*aṁśas*) or incarnations can manifest these for performing their appointed mission. Though Kṛṣṇa is included in the list of incarnations, He is not merely a part (*aṁśa*) of the Supreme Being but the Supreme Being Himself. The particle *tu* in the above verse is used to distinguish him from other incarnations.

31. *Just as a stream of clouds (is attributed) to the sky* or the dust (particles of the earth) *is ascribed to the wind (by* ignorant persons), *similarly the quality of being seen is attributed to the seer by unintelligent ones. (The spirit is wrongly* misunderstood as being material body.)

32. From this is created a different body which is made up of unmanifested attributes (or parts of the body like hands, feet etc.) and which is subtle due to the invisibility and inaudibility of its essential nature. It is the *Jīva* (spirit) due to which transmigration (takes place).[107]

33. When these two forms *sat* and *asat* (i.e. two bodies gross and subtle) attributed to the soul through ignorance are negatived by Self-knowledge, it is the visualization of Brahman (i.e. identification of Jīva with Brahman)[108].

34. They know that if this divine (pertaining to the Omniscient Spirit) and resplendent (or sportive)[109] Māyā

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107. ŚR. says that the hypothesis of a subtle body which is invisible, inaudible and formless, is necessary to account for the repeated births or transmigrations of the Soul.

108. VR. interprets *Brahma* as "the liberated soul" and *darśana* as "the knowledge of the nature of the 'pure' soul devoid of any contamination or contact with *Prakṛti*". So this verse means : "That knowledge by which one realizes that origination (birth) and destruction (death) really belong to the non-Spirit (*acit*) and that they are ascribed to the Soul through ignorance (*avidyā*) and that they are to be denied of the Soul (*Ātman*) by the knowledge of the *ātman*, is the real knowledge of *Brahman*."

But VJ. states: "That knowledge is the knowledge of *Brahman* leading to liberation from *saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths)—the knowledge which consists in seeing that the forms consisting of the Primordial Nature (*Prakṛti*) and its products are, from the very beginning, different from the Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*) due to His self-knowledge. It is due to Nescience (*Avidyā*) that he mistakes them as belonging to Himself.

109. SR : Sporting in the cycle of creation, preservation and destruction of the universe.

VR : When this cosmic illusion (*Māyā* or *Prakṛti*) becomes capacious with *Mahat* etc. and the consequent pride or belief of thinking the body and the Soul as identical, ceases or disappears, then the individual Soul comes to be worshipped (respected) as having realised his own glory as the liberated with the eight excellent qualities which are manifested on the realization of the Supreme Soul.

(illusion), transforming itself to knowledge ceases itself (automatically), (the Jīva or Spirit) becoming perfect (i.e. identical with Brahman) is glorified in its own greatness).

35. The wise ones describe in this way, the births and deeds of the Birthless and Actionless, the Lord of the hearts *(antaryāmin) whose deeds are mystically described in* the Vedas[110].

36. Or he whose sports are not ineffective, creates, protects and eats up (destroys) this Universe but is not attached to this.[111] And this Master of six qualities[112] lies concealed in the hearts of all beings and remaining (aloof) independent, he enjoys (as if it is fragrance) the objects of six senses.

37. Just as an ignorant person does not understand the performance of an actor, (similarly) no being of dull intelligence can comprehend by mind, words or skill (in argumentation or Logic)[113] the pastimes of the Supporter (of the universe) who extends greatly[114] his names and forms.

38. He who is attached to the fragrance of his lotus-like feet, without crookedness and obeys him continuously, knows the way to the Pre-eminent Lord, the protector of the universe (who is) of infinite power and the holder of the discus (lit. a part of the chariot).

39. Hence, Oh venerable ones ! Blessed are you in this world ! As you have thus shown complete devotion to Vāsudeva, the Lord of all the people, there is no terrible transmigration again.

40. The venerable sage (Vyāsa) compiled this epic (Purāṇa) called *Bhāgavata,* equal in status to the Vedas, describing the deeds of him of pious reputation.

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110. VJ. differs : "The wise describe the secrets contained in the Upaniṣads : The births (incarnations) of Him whose birth is not like that of other individual souls, whose acts are not meant for any selfish purpose, who is present in and controls the minds of all.

111. ŚR: The differentia between the *jīva* and God is the unconcernedness of God with the universe.

112. Viz. Jñāna, Śakti, Bala, Aiśvarya, Vīrya and Tejas.

113. *nipuṇena* : VD. By skill in knowledge and *yoga.*

114. *vitanvataḥ*—VR. : He extends the world of forms by his mental resolve or will

VJ. : *manovacobhir nāma-rūpātmakaṁ prapañcaṁ sṛjataḥ /*

41. For the highest good of the people, he (Vyāsa) made his son (Śuka), pre-eminent among those who have realized the Soul, receive this great (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) which is the means of securing Bliss[115].

42. He (Śuka) made the great king Parīkṣit hear[116] attentively this (*Bhāgavata*), the choicest essence of all the Vedas and History (Mahābhārata).

43-44. Oh Brāhmaṇas ! While he (Parīkṣit) was sitting on the banks of the Ganges fasting himself unto death, and was surrounded by great sages, and Śuka, the Brāhmaṇa sage of great brilliance (splendour) was narrating the *Bhāgavata*, I learnt the *Bhāgavata* while I sat there due to his favour. I shall narrate to you whatever I have learnt to the best of my ability (intelligence).

45. When Kṛṣṇa retired to His abode along with Righteousness, knowledge and other things, this sun in the form of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* has now arisen in the Kali Age for persons who have lost their (intellectual) sight.

115. *svastyayana* : Lit. averting of evil by recitation of *mantras* or performance of expiatory rites.

116. Parīkṣit : A son of Uttarā and Abhimanyu; a great king of Hastināpura; the foremost of Bhāgavatas; married Irāvatī, daughter of Uttarā; had 4 sons of whom Janamejaya was the eldest; visualised the symbolic advent of the Kali Age. Due to his act of throwing a dead snake round the neck of a meditating sage, he was cursed with death by Takṣaka's bite. Parīkṣit, knowing his doom, sat in *prāyopaveśa*, where Śuka visited him and narrated the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. Afterwards Parīkṣit sat in contemplation in detached spirit, was bitten by Takṣaka and his body was reduced to ashes by the poison.

CHAPTER FOUR

(*Arrival of Nārada*)

Vyāsa said :

1. Śaunaka, the oldest[117] of the sages (who were) performing the sacrifice of long duration, (being) the head of the congregation of sages[118], and conversant with the *Ṛgveda*, highly praised the Sūta who was thus speaking[119] and addressed (him as follows).

Śaunaka said :

2. Oh Sūta ! Oh highly fortunate one ![120] The finest of speakers ! Tell us the sanctifying (holy) narrative pertaining to the Supreme Lord (the holy narrative of the *Bhāgavata*), which[121] was recounted by venerable[122] Śuka.

3. In what age or (in which) place and with what objective was this (narrative) commenced ? By whom[123] was the dark sage[124] (Vyāsa) inspired to compile this text ?

4. His son who is a great Yogin (contemplative saint) and who has visualized the Supreme Spirit (*Brahman*)[125], and

117. *vṛddha*—VB. : Advanced in knowledge and not necessarily in age.

118. *kula-pati*—Originally it signified a Brāhmaṇa sage who maintained, fed and taught 10,000 pupils. ŚR. interprets it as above (*gaṇa-mukhya*). VB. explains it as the regulator or controller of the group of sages (*kulasya ṛṣi—kulasya patiḥ niyāmakaḥ*).

119. *bruvāṇa*—VB. : "Śaunaka was so eager that he did not even wait for the completion of the Speech of the Sūta, as is the normal etiquette".

120. *mahābhāga*—VB. : "It was the great luck of the Sūta that he heard the *Bhāgavata* from Śuka".

121. ŚR. and VB. read *yad* while VJ. reads *yam* i.e. the narrative of the Bhāgavata.

122. *bhagavān*—VB. : "possessing all good qualities" (*pūrṇa-guṇaḥ*).

123. *kutaḥ*—VB : What reason impelled him to compile the Bh. P.

124. *Kṛṣṇaḥ*—ŚR. : *Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyanaḥ*.

125. *sama-dṛk*—ŚR. : *sama=Brahma*; VJ. *Viṣṇu* (*mayā=Śriyā saha vartate iti*/ "One in association with the goddess Lakṣmī") VB. One knowing (Brahman).

who is devoid of any sense of discrimination and distinction,[126] whose mind is concentrated on one thing (viz. the Supreme Spirit),[127] and (who is) wakeful from the sleep (in the form of Illusion or Ignorance)[128] appears as a dullard avoiding society.[129]

5*. The heavenly damsels, seeing the sage (Vyāsa) (who was) following his son, blushed and put on their garments, even though he (the sage) was not naked but (they) did not do so in the presence of his son (Śuka who was naked). Observing this strange (behaviour) the sage enquired of them (about the reason); they said, "In your outlook, there is the discrimination between man and woman,[130] but it does not exist in your son whose outlook is pure.[131]

6. How was he (Śuka) recognised[132] (when he) arrived in the country Kuru-Jāṅgala[133] and (was) wandering in the city called Hastināpura[134] like a mad, dumb and dull-witted (person)?

7. Oh Sir! How did the dialogue wherein[135] this (sacred) Veda-like text[136] pertaining to Lord Viṣṇu (i.e. the

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126. *nirvikalpakaḥ*—ŚR.: Devoid of any knowledge of distinction from one thing to another (*nirasta-bheda*)

127. *ekānta-matiḥ*—ŚR.: with mind devoted to one thing. VJ.: whose mind always is engrossed in Hari. VB.: free from worldly attachment.

128. *unnidra*—ŚR.: Wakeful from the sleep of illusion (Māyā) VJ.: From whom sleep in the form of ignorance and other defects, is away.

129. *gūḍha*—VB.: avoiding society. Also "unostentatious", also *aprakaṭa*.

*This verse is not noted by VJ.

130. *strī-bhidā*—ŚR.: The power of seeing the difference between man and woman.

131. *vivikta-dṛṣṭi*—ŚR.: of pure outlook *viviktā-pūtā dṛṣṭir yasya* /

132. *alakṣita*—ŚR.: known (*jñāta*).

133. Kuru-Jāṅgala: The kingdom of Parīkṣit.: Visited by Śuka. Its capital was Hastināpura.

134. *Hastināpura*—The ancient capital of the Kurus. Founded by King Hasti. Though a central scene of action in the MBH (*Mahābhārata*), nothing of the Pāṇḍava era is reported to have been excavated so far.

135. *yatra*—ŚR.: From the conversation.

136. *Sātvatī Śrutiḥ*—*Sātvatī* "Pertaining to lord Hari" according to all comm., but Śruti "compilation" (ŚR.) "equal (in sacredness) to the Vedas" (VR.) "Vaiṣṇava Veda" (VB.).

Bhāgavata Purāṇa) take place between the sage (Śuka) and the royal-sage of the Pāṇḍava family ?

8. That illustrious (sage Śuka) really awaits at the houses of the house-holders only for (so short) a period (as required for) milking cows,[137] thereby transforming it (the house) into a holy place.[138]

9. Oh Sūta ! (Parīkṣit) the son of Abhimanyu is reported to be the best among the devotees of the Lord (Viṣṇu). Describe to us his extremely wonderful birth and deeds.

10. For what reason did the emperor (Parīkṣit), the enhancer of the honour of Pāṇḍavas (lit. Pāṇḍu's[139] progeny), disregarding the glory of emperorship, sit on the bank of the Ganges fasting himself unto death ?

11. Oh (Sūta) ! How wonderful it is ! How did the young hero (warrior-king) to whose footstool (near the throne), enemies, for their own good, bring riches (as tribute) and pay their homage, desire to renounce the royal majesty (lit. wealth) which it is very difficult to give up, along with (his) life ?

12. The persons who are devoted to Lord Viṣṇu (lit. He whose renown or glory dispells the darkness of ignorance) live for the happiness,[140] abundance,[141] and prosperity[142] of

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137. ŚR. states that this verse raises the doubt how the BH. P. could be narrated within a short period as Śuka stayed at the house of a householder for the time required for milking a cow. This period is, according to ŚR., 1/8th of a *muhūrta* i.e. 15 *kalās*.

138. VR. & VJ. : "Sanctifying the house (by his steps)".

139. *Pāṇḍu*—A royal sage born of Vicitravīrya's queen Ambālikā and Vyāsa (Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana) ; superseded his elder blind brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra and was installed as king; married Kuntī alias Pṛthā, sister of Vasudeva, and Mādrī; being prevented from sexual intercourse by a curse, got five sons born to his queens by invoking gods by incantations known to Kuntī; dies as a royal sage in the forest and his second queen Mādrī immolated herself with him; his sons are the Pāṇḍavas. (PI. II. 310.)

140. *śivāya*—For "happiness" (ŚR.), "auspiciousness" (VR.), "quite happiness" (VB.).

141. *bhavāya*—For "abundance" (ŚR.), "ever increasing prosperity" (SD.VR.), "attainment of the goal of life viz. Kāma" (GD.), "For retirement from worldly affairs or *saṁsāra*" (VG.).

142. *bhūtaye*—For "affluence or supremacy (ŚR., SD), "wealth" (VR. VG.), "attainment of mystic powers or *siddhis*" (VB.).

others and not for themselves. Why did this (king) becoming completely indifferent to his body which gave shelter to others, give it (body) up ?

13. Tell us in details everything that has been asked here. I regard you as well-versed in all subjects of speech that are other than the Vedas (i.e. the *Purāṇas* VJ).

Sūta said :

14. In the third cycle of ages, when the Dvāpara Age has already commenced, the sage (lit. one expert in Yoga) Vyāsa, a small part of Hari, was born from Parāśara and Vāsavī.[143]

15. Once upon a time, after the disk of the sun had risen, he sat in a solitary place after (bathing and) sipping the (sacred) water of the Sarasvatī[144] from the palm of his hand (as per his routine of morning duties).

16. The sage who knows the past and the future,[145] perceiving the promiscuous mixing up[146] of the courses of conduct suitable to particular ages, in every Age, in this world due to Time of imperceptible velocity[147]

17-18. And (observing) the deterioration of the power of things created from the elements (such as men, etc,) and

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143. *Vāsavī*—N. of the daughter of King Uparicara Vasu; brought up as Satyavatī in the house of a fisher-man; the mother of the sage Vyāsa. (BPK. 285).

144. *Sarasvatī*—A sacred river famous in the Vedas. The Ghaggar in the Panjab is regarded as its modern name. ŚR. interprets "upaspṛśya" as "having taken bath" etc while VJ. "After the performance of morning duties e.g. sandhyā, etc".

ŚR. suggests that Vyāsa was sitting at this time in Badarikāśrama (which is so far away from the Panjab). VD. explains this by stating that ŚR. does not mean the Badarikāśrama near Mount Gandhamādana but a separate place of the same name in the forest on the bank of the Sarasvatī in Sindh. SD. and JG., note this place as Śamyāprāśa.

145. *parāvarajñaḥ*—VJ. : "Seer of the past, present and the future".

146. *vyatikara*—ŚR. & VJ. : mixing up; VR. "Inverted order" VB. : "Destruction".

147. *a-vyakta-raṁhas* : ŚR. : Whose course cannot be perceived" VJ. : Of unexpressed (unexhibited) velocity.
VB. : Whose velocity lies within Prakṛti. (Prakṛti and others are dependent upon Time (kālādhīna).

(finding that) men have become lacking in religious faith, energy[148], in intellectual capacity and in longevity of life due to that (subtle force of Time) and seeing the unfortunate men, the sage of unerring view,[149] meditated with his divine vision, upon what was beneficial to all classes of people and their stages of life.

19. Observing that the Vedic rites performed by four sacrificial priests[150] purify the people, he (Vyāsa) separated the (single) Veda into four for the continuity of (the institution of) sacrifices.

20. The four Vedas namely the Ṛg., Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan were divided. [51] And History-cum-Mythology (the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas) is called the fifth Veda.

21. Out of these, Paila[152] was the recepient of the *Ṛgveda*, the wise sage Jaimini[153] the master of singing the *Sāman*, Vaiśampāyana[154] alone was expert in the *Yajur Veda*.

22. The terrible sage Sumantu[155] (was well-versed) in

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148. *niḥsattva*—Without courage or constancy (ŚR.) Without energy (VJ.).

149. *amogha-dṛś*—VJ. : Whose knowledge is fruitful (*avandhyajñāna*) VR. Whose wishes are not fruitless (*avitatha-saṅkalpa*)

150. The four sacrificial priests are Hotṛ, Udgātṛ, Adhvaryu and Brahmā and they represent the Ṛg, Sāman, Yajus and Atharvan (Vedas) respectively.

151. *uddhṛtaḥ*—ŚR. : "Separated"; VJ. : "The Vedas are not compiled but simply arranged by Vyāsa. As History-cum-Mythology is meant for the elucidation of the contents of the Vedas, MBH. and Purāṇas are regarded as the 5th Veda. As JG. points out, this classification of ancient literature in 5 Vedas is as old as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

152. *Paila* : Son of the sage Vasu; disciple of Vyāsa to learn the *Ṛgveda*; he taught it to Indrapramati and to Bāṣkala; was invited to work as *Hotṛ* in the Rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira; He classified the *Ṛgveda* in two parts and imparted them to his two disciples mentioned above. (PI. II. 391)

153. *Jaimini* : A pupil of Vyāsa in charge of *Sāma-veda*; was invited to Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya, Janmejaya's Sarpa-satra; Sūtras of *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* and *Aśvam edha Parvan* are traditionally regarded as being compiled by him (PI. I. 653, BPK 120).

154 *Vaiśampāyana* : A pupil of Vyāsa in charge of *Yajur Veda*. He was the maternal uncle of Yājñavalkya. (BPK. 303).

155. *Sumantu* : VJ. states Sumantu as the son of Varuṇa (& reads *Vāruṇaḥ* for *dāruṇaḥ*). He was taught the *Atharva-veda* by Vyāsa.

the *Atharva Veda* relating to the Aṅgirasas, and my father, Romaharṣaṇa, in History-cum-Purāṇas.

23. The sages divided their own respective Veda in different parts. Those Vedas were separated into (a number of) branches by (their) disciples, disciples of disciples and their students.

24. The venerable Vyāsa who was compassionate to the helpless, arranged the Vedas in such a way as can be retained in memory even by persons of low intelligence.

25. The three Vedas are not to be heard by women, Śūdras and lowest among the twice-born ones (i.e. unworthy persons of Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya castes). In order that the welfare of such (persons) ignorant about actions leading to the good (results) may be (achieved) this way here, that the sage (Vyāsa) compiled the narrative called the *Bhārata*.

26. Oh twice-born ones! The mind of (Vyāsa who was) thus always and in all respects trying for the welfare of all beings, was, however, not satisfied thereby—

27. Vyāsa, the knower of the path of duty, whose mind was not much pacified and who was sitting in solitude on the holy bank of the Sarasvatī, conjecturing (about the reasons etc. of his unhappy state of mind), spoke out this:

28. "Being intent (keen) on observing my duties, the Vedas, preceptors and (holy) fires have been sincerely (lit. without any deceit) worshipped and (their) commands have been obeyed by me."

29. "And verily, the (meaning) of the Vedas has been explained by compiling a work of the title *Bhārata* in which (subjects such as) religion and others are known by (under-privileged persons e.g.) women, Śudras and the like."

30. "Alas ! In spite of all these, my individual soul (though) the best in those possessing the lustre of Vedic studies[156] and entire in itself[157] (Or "all-pervading") by

156. *Brahma-varcasyuttamaḥ*—ŚR. : The best of possessors of the lustre of Brahma (Veda).
VR. : The purest one (*uttamaḥ*) in lustre born of the study of the Vedas (*Kṛtasvādhyāya-nimitte tejasi*).
VJ : *Vṛttyadhyayana-sampannānāṁ madhye śreṣṭhaḥ /*

157. *vibhuḥ*—ŚR. : "Complete in itself" (*paripūrṇaḥ*)
VR. : "Master" or "Controller", VJ. pervading (*vyāpta*).

itself appears to be underdeveloped (not having reached the stage of the Supreme Spirit[158] (or not reached its natural condition)."

31. Or (because) religious systems (religion) pertaining to the Supreme Lord which are liked by the ascetics of the highest order, have not been considered (by me) in details. And those are really liked by the Infallible Lord (Acyuta)

32. In this way, (while Vyāsa was) considering himself deficient and was distressed (at the thought of his deficiency), Nārada approached the hermitage of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana as described above.

33. The sage (Vyāsa), having known the arrival of Nārada who was worshipped by gods, at once, rose from his seat to welcome him and worshipped (received) him with due formalities.

CHAPTER FIVE

(*The Dialogue Between Vyāsa and Nārada*)

Sūta said :

1. The divine sage (Nārada) of great fame,[159] holding a lute in his hand, and being comfortably seated, spoke with a slight smile,[160] to the Brāhmaṇa sage who was sitting near him.[161]

158. *asampannaḥ*—ŚR. : Not reached its natural stage. VJ. : One who has not achieved his life's mission. VR. : *a-samṛddha*.

159. *bṛhacchravaḥ*—ŚR. : whose fame is great. GD. : One whose fame for omniscience has spread everywhere.

160. Commentators attribute various reasons for this smile. ŚR. : "Because even a great man is sometimes deluded". VD. : "This great man does not deserve to be thus perplexed". VB., VC. : Nārada smiled as he was unable to conceal his pleasure (about the prospective discussion).

161. *upāsīnaṃ*—VD ; Who received him with due formalities.

Nārada said :

2. Oh highly fortunate son of Parāśara, is your son, associated with (lit. proud of) your body or with your mind,[162] quite satisfied with your body or mind (respectively) ?

3. Have you not thoroughly comprehended[163] whatever you desired to know[164], as you have compiled the great, wonderful[165] *Bhārata* which is full of matters[166] pertaining to the principal goals of human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, *mokṣa*) ?

4. The eternal Brahma[167] (Supreme Spirit) (Or the Veda) which has been so much coveted[168] by you (for its knowledge and attainment) has been known and attained by you.. (Or in the case of the Veda: "has been studied and considered by you by composing the Vedānta Sūtras").[169] Still, Oh learned (sage)[170], you are worrying yourself as if you have not achieved your goal.

162. *śārīra ātmā mānasa eva vā* : *śārīra ātmā* : ŚR., VC : Soul who is proud of the body (*śarīrābhimānī ātmā*). SV. : "Presiding over the body".

mānasa ātmā : ŚR., VC : proud of the mind. SV. : controller of the mind. BP. : Soul which is proud of the gross and subtle bodies.

163. *susampannam*—ŚR. Fully acquainted with. GD. : Properly comprehended with ease.

164. *jijñāsitam*—ŚR. : What was worth knowing e.g. religion etc.

165. *mahadadbhutam*—VR. : Extensive (*vipulam*) and wonderful in its composition and meaning (*śabdataḥ arthataś ca citram*) SV : *śabdārthābhyāṁ vicitram*|

166. *sarvārtha-paribṛṁhitam*—ŚR. : Full of matters concerning the four goals of human life e.g. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. SV. & VB. support this as follows : *sarvaiḥ sāṅgopāṅgaiḥ ca dharmabhir arthaiḥ paribṛṁhitaṁ pūrṇam*|

167. *Brahma*—It means both "the Veda" and "the Supreme Spirit" and the verse is to be construed as applying to both. ŚR. takes it in the latter sense.

168. *jijñāsita*—ŚR. : Considered, but GS. adds "Considered by composing the *Brahma Sūtras*." SV. VR. and VB. take "Brahma" as "the Veda" and interpret, "You have studied the Veda word by word and from the point of its meaning and implication have composed the *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*.

169. *adhīta*—ŚR. : "Attained" (*adhigata*, *prāpta*).

170. *prabho*—VJ. : One of vast learning (*prabhūta-jñānin*).

Vyāsa said:

5. (Although) all that has been described by you, is certainly in me; my soul[171], however, is unsatisfied. I ask the (underlying) latent[172] cause of it to you, as you have unfathomable knowledge[173] and are born from Brahman[174].

6. Verily your honour knows all the secrets[175], as you have adored the Primeval Man (Lord Viṣṇu, who is) the regulator of (everything) high or low[176], and who, without being attached[177] creates, protects and destroys the universe by means of attributes (viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*), as soon as He wills it (by His will-power).

7. You who travel in the three worlds (the Heaven, the earth and the subterranean regions) like the Sun (and thereby know the external things), and who, like the breath (wind) moving within, (are) a witness unto the hearts of others[178], explain to me sufficiently clearly the deficiency in me though I have dived deep into the Supreme Spirit by Yogic practices (e.g. meditation etc.)[179] and have mastered the Vedas by religious observances[180].

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171. *ātmā*—ŚR. : The soul both corporeal (*śārīra*) and mental (*mānasa*).

172. *avyaktam*—ŚR. : Not clear, latent; VB. : not explicit VR.. : Not known to me.

173. *agādha-bodha*—ŚR. : Whose intelligence is unfathomable VR., VJ. : Of unfathomable knowledge. VC., VD. : Omniscient.

174. *Ātma-bhava*—: VB. : Incarnation of the Lord. *ātma-bhūta*—VB. : Self-knower (*ātmavid*).

175. *samasta-guhyam*—VR., BP. : Minds of all beings.

176. *parāvareśaḥ*—ŚR. : Regulator of all cause and effect (*kārya-kāraṇa-niyantā*). VR. : The Lord to whom gods like Brahmā and others are subordinate; Controller of all.

177. *asaṅgaḥ*—VD., VR. Unattached to attributes (*Guṇa-saṅga-rahitaḥ*)

178. *ātma-sākṣī*—ŚR. : Knowing the intelligence and course of conduct (*buddhi-vṛtti-jña*).

179. *dharmataḥ* ŚR. : *pare Brahmaṇi dharmato yogena niṣṇātaḥ*/ VR. takes *dharmataḥ* as *nivṛtti-dharmaiḥ*.

180. *Parāvare Brahmaṇi*—ŚR. : *avara-brahma* is the Vedas which are mastered by means of "Self-study, observance of religious vows etc." VB. explains *para* as that which has been explained by the Upaniṣads (*Vedānta*), *apara Brahma* is the Veda.

Nārada Said :

8. Your honour has not practically described the pure[181] glory of the Lord. I think that knowledge[182] by which the Supreme Being is not pleased is incomplete.

9. Oh great sage ! You have not really described the glory of Vāsudeva (in the same proportion) as you have extolled in details the goals (of human life) like Religion (*dharma*) and others (viz. *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*) and[183] its cognate subjects.

10. The speech composed of words with rhetorical charm[184] but which seldom describes the world-purifying glory of Hari, is[185] regarded like a place of pleasure worthy of enjoyment for worldly persons where ascetics[186] of pure mind[187], who dwell in (are merged in) the Supreme Spirit (Brahma[188]) never like to stay, like swans from the Mānasa lake, who have beautiful dwelling places, do not find pleasure in the pools that are the pleasure-resorts of crows alone.

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181. *amala*—VR. : Cleansing the sins of the speaker and the hearer.

182. *darśana*—ŚR. : "Knowledge", VR. : Visualization of the Lord (*Bhagavaddarśana*). VD., VC. : Science of investigation into the nature of the Supreme Spirit (*Vedānta-darśana*).

183. *ca*—ŚR. : This word shows the inclusion of the different practices of religion.

184. *citra-pada*—In Rhetorics, *citra* is one of the 3 main divisions of *Kāvya* (Poetry). It is of 2 kinds: *śabda-citra* and *artha-citra*, and the poetical charm lies mainly in the use of figures of speech, dependent on the sound or sense of the word. The Bh. P. naturally regards Lord Hari's glory superior to rhetorical beauty. VD. explains this as "Wonderful" (*vismayasya sthānam* : *vismayakāri*)

185. Hari's devotees are likened to swans dwelling in the Mānasa lake. Just as these swans avoid dirty places which are enjoyed by crows, similarly poetry not singing of the glory of the Lord is not liked by the true devotees. ŚR. and VR. interpret *vāyasam tīrtham* as a place of enjoyment of pleasures for persons desirous of worldly things. VD. explains *vāyasa* as "Trade or profession for one's livelihood".

186. *haṁsa*—ŚR. : (1) Swans, (2) Recluse.

187. *mānasaḥ*—(1) Living in the Mānasa lake (2) Of good (*sāttvic* frame of mind). To this VD. adds : (3) Devotees staying in the mind of Hari, (4) Mind-born sons of Brahmā, like Sanaka, etc.

188. *uśikkṣayaḥ* : ŚR., VR. Vj. agree to this but with different etymologies.

11. That outflow of words[189] which though not properly composed[190] in every verse, makes good people (saints) hear, sing and praise the names (which are as if) imprinted[191] with the glory of the Infinite Lord, destroys the sins of the people.

12. Knowledge, (though) actionless[192] and pure[193], (if) devoid of devotion to the Imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu), does not appear sufficiently bright (purificatory).[194] And how can again the action which is always unblissful, even though (performed) without any desire of its fruit appear bright (i.e. will have purificatory effect, if it is not dedicated to God.) ?

13. Oh highly fortunate one ! (Your Honour) of correct insight[195], of pure (spotless) glory[196], lover of the truth, and observer of religious vows, should recollect (and describe) with concentrated mind[197], the various acts of the Lord with wide steps[198] (i.e, Viṣṇu in Vāmana incarnation) for liberation from all bondages (of this Saṁsāra).

14. Since you were looking for (objects) other than (the Lord's deeds) and were desirous of speaking (i.e. describing) something else (than the pastimes of the Lord), your

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189. *vāg-visarga* : ŚR. : "Application of words" (*vācaḥ prayogaḥ*) VJ. : Special composition or arrangement of words, VR. : *vāk-sṛṣṭi-rūpaḥ prabandhaḥ*.

190. *abaddhavatī*—ŚR. : Ill-worded Full of corrupt words.

191. *nāmāni*—VB : Not merely names but bearing the imprint of Lord's glory.

192. *naiṣkarmya*—VR. : Knowledge about the correct path of devotion to the Lord. RR. : Means or path of Liberation (*niṣkarman*).

193. *nirañjana*—VR. : Untouched by the collyrium of love and hate. VD. : Free from illusion (*avidyā*). VJ. : Unsoiled by objects of enjoyment.

194. ŚR. : "Does not result in proper "direct" knowledge.

195. *amoghadṛś*—ŚR. : Of true intellect.

196. *śuci-śravas*—ŚR. : of pure renown.

197. *samādhinā*—VD. : out of the 3 ways of speech. *samādhi-bhāṣā* is characterised by objective description (*Darśana-guhyasamādhi-bhedena tridhā bhinnānām bhāṣāṇām madhye yathāsthita-vastu-kathana-lakṣaṇayā samādhi-bhāṣayā anusmara/*)

198. *urukramasya*—SD., VB. and VR. think this a reference to Viṣṇu in the Vāmana incarnation who after getting permission from Bali to get 3 steps of land assumed his *viśva-rūpa* and covered the earth and the sky in 2 steps and pressed down Bali to the subterranean regions with the 3rd step. VJ. interprets this as "Of great exploits."

mind, which has become unstable on account of the words and forms (created by your above-mentioned desire) will not get a stable position anywhere and on any matter, like a boat driven by a gale (lit. "struck by a wind").

15. A gross negligence[199] (has been committed by you) in advising censuarble acts (for the sake) of religion, to persons who by nature are addicted to secular desires. Ordinary people have followed those actions, thinking them to be (real) religion, on account of (Vyāsa's) words.[200] (Ordinary man) does not think of setting aside that (way of life).

16. By abstaining from worldly acts, a very clever person becomes capable of knowing the blissful nature of the All-pervading, Limitless Lord. Therefore, your honour (should please) describe the diversions of the Supreme Lord to (persons) who are devoid of spiritual intellect[201] and who due to qualities viz. *Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas* are engaged in acts (holding out future promises).

17. (If) a person, discarding his own (form of) religion, resorts to the lotus-like feet of Hari, (and happens) to fall while in an immature stage, will evil befall unto him in whatever place or in whichever (circumstances) he may be? Or what benefit has accrued to a non-devotee following his own religion?[202]

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199. *vyatikrama*—ŚR. : Transgression (improper for Vyāsa) V.J. : Gross injustice.

200. *yad vākyataḥ*—ŚR. and JG. but VR. "For the sake of the good of the beings you (Vyāsa) have acted to the contrary. Due to your description of the 1st three goals of human life (viz. *dharma. artha*, & *kāma*) people do not know that you intended to advise them to set aside these three for the sake of the 4th goal, viz. *mokṣa*. JG. thinks that this verse pinpoints Vyāsa's deficiency. He had done wrong to the world by describing a course of religion devoid of Hari's glorious acts. (In MBH. *Kṛṣṇa* is a secondary figure.)

201. *anātmnaḥ*—ŚR. : Proud of the physical body. JG. : Devoid of spiritual intellect. SD. : Of undetermined intellect.

202. VJ. "No puruṣārtha (goal of human life) is achieved by faultless observation of one's own *pravṛtti-dharma*. I request you to describe the science of *Nivṛtti-dharma*" VG. The daily and occasional religious observances should be abandoned in favour of devotion to Hari.

18. The learned one should specially try for that objective (viz. "the experience of the supreme Spirit" which is not obtained while wandering in higher or lower (types of births). That happiness (i.e. enjoyment of worldly objects) comes to (our) lot unsolicited like misery from other sources (from actions of previous life) everywhere due to (passage of) time which has great velocity.[203]

19. Oh ! A person who is serving Lord Kṛṣṇa will not certainly be entangled into the cycle of transmigration of the soul. There is such an attraction of that sweetest thing[204] that he who remembers the (joy or test of) clasping the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, will never desire to let them go.[205]

20. This universe is verily the Supreme Lord Himself but in a way different[206]. As your honour already knows it, (it is) from him that the preservance, destruction and creation of the Universe (take place). Only a spanful has been indicated to you by me.

21. Oh (sage) of unerring view![207] You know it yourself that (though) you are birthless, you are born as a part of

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203. *gambhīra-rahasā*—VR. Whose velocity is too fast to be observed. VJ. : Whose speed is unmanifested but covers many births (earthly existences)

204. *rasa-grahaḥ*—ŚR. : *rasena rasanīyena gṛhyate vaśī-kriyate* / Or *rase-rasanīye grahaḥ=āgrahaḥ yasya*/.
VB. : *rasena grahaṇaṁ yasya* /

205. According to VR : The devotees of the Lord even though they have not mastered the Bhakti-yoga thoroughly, do not even then return to the cycle of births and deaths (*saṁsāra*) like ignorant persons, or non-devotees (VJ).

206. ŚR. adds one more explanation : This universe is the Supreme Lord. The individual spirit, though apparently separate from the Lord, is also the Supreme Lord. There is nothing animate or inanimate beyond the Supreme Lord who alone is the Truth or Reality. VJ. states the position of the Dualistic School : The Lord is verily like the universe (Not the Universe itself). He is different from it. For it is from the Lord that the creation, preservation and destruction of the Universe proceeds (and He is endowed with all powers of omniscience, omnipotence etc.). The Lord Himself knows this. (Like a pupil exhibiting his little knowledge before the preceptor) I have shown my limited knowledge to you).

207. *amogha-dṛś*—ŚR. : Full of accurate knowledge. VR. : One who sees the whole of reality as it is.

the Supreme Soul (who is) the Greatest Man, for the welfare of the world. Therefore, let the glories[208] of the Lord of great prowess be described in details by you.

22. The act of extolling the qualities of the Lord of excellent renown, has been declared by wise men, as the indestructible fruit[209] of a man's penance, hearing (the scriptures), performance of the best sacrifices, recital of Vedas and of intelligence and charities.

23. Oh sage ! As for myself, formerly (in a former cycle of Ages), in (my) previous birth, I was born of a certain female servant of sages conversant with the Vedas. Even while (I was) a child, I was appointed to wait upon (some) ascetics who wished to stay together (in one place) during (the four months of) the rainy-season.

24. Although the sages[210] had equality of outlook (towards all beings) they began (to show) favour to me whose unsteadiness had completely disappeared, (who was) self-controlled, obedient, and a willing servant of few words.

25. Being allowed by the twice-born (sages) to eat the remanents of the food sticking to their dishes whereby (my) sin had been destroyed, I used to take meal once a day.[211] I was behaving thus and my heart had been well purified. (Thus) a self-interest in their (Bhāgavata) religion also had developed (in me).

26. There, by the favour of the singers, I heard attractive (interesting) narratives of Kṛṣṇa, every day. Oh Vyāsa! (As) I heard every word[212] of those (narratives) with special attention, my devotion in the Lord whose renown is so dear, developed.

27. Oh great sage! Then I developed liking for (the Lord) whose fame is dear (to all). My intellect became un-

208. *abhyudaya*—ŚR. : "Prowess"; VR. : viz. Birth, actions, qualities. (*Janma-karma-guṇādi*).

209. *avicyutārthaḥ*—VD., VR : *artha*=purpose ; SD. : *artha*=Fruit (*phalam*).

210. VB. says that these were the 4 sages : Sanaka, Sanandana etc. in their previous birth.

211. VJ. the recluses eat once a day, so did Nārada.

212. v.l. *anusavam*—VR. and VJ. Interpret this as "Three times a day, viz. morning, noon and evening (*tri-sandhyam*)."

deviating[213] from the right course whereby I could see that due to my illusion, this grossness and subtlety[214] had been imagined in me who am (really) higher Brahma (Supreme Spirit).[215]

28. In this way, during the rainy season and the Autumn, I, who heard attentively the spotless glory of Hari extolled thrice a day[216] by the sages of noble souls, had got created in me devotion which removes the *rajas* and *tamas* of the Soul.

29-30. At the time of their departure those sages, who were kind to the poor, taught the most esoterical knowledge[217] which has been conveyed by the Supreme Lord Himself, to me who, as a child was attached to them, and (was) humble, full of reverence, self-controlled and had been serving them (with devotion).

31. On account of which (knowledge) only, I came to comprehend the efficacy of the power called Illusion[218] of Lord Vāsudeva, the Creator of the Universe. (It is) by that knowledge (that) the people attain to His feet (i.e. Liberation).

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213. *a-skhalita*—ŚR. : "Unobstructed"; SD. : "Steady, firm".

214. *saḍ-asat*—ŚR. Gross and subtle. While JG. takes it as *vyaṣṭi* (An aggregate viewed as made up of many separate bodies) and *samaṣṭi* (An aggregate considered to be made of parts each of which is consubstantially the same with the whole). To quote JG. *aham etat sadasad vyaṣṭi-samaṣṭyātmakaṁ yaj jagat tad vyaṣṭyaṁśaṁ mayi jīvarūpe sva-viṣayaka-bhagavan-māyayā kalpitam paśye.*

215. According to VJ., "I see that all this universe of cause and effect is the creation by the will of Hari who is in me and that it is maintained and destroyed by him". He strongly objects to the *adhyāsa* theory as false knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna.*)

216. See F.N. 212 above.

217. *guhyatcma*—ŚR. and BP. : Knowledge about the practice of religion is *guhya* (secret); pure knowledge derived from the practice of religion is *guhyatara* (secret of a higher degree); Knowledge derived from the above about the Supreme Lord (*Īśvara-jñāna*) is the most secret (*guhyatama*).

218. *māyānubhāvam*—*Māyā* has been variously interpreted by commentators as intellectual capacity (*cicchakti*) of the Lord (JG., VD.), the *prakṛti* consisting of 3 attributes viz, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (VR.). "anubhāva" is the power or the effect of Māyā.

32. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! (It has been) well-known[219] that action which is dedicated to the Lord, the Supreme Spirit, the Controller of the universe, removes the three types of miseries (viz. those pertaining to the body, caused by Fate and caused by animals etc.—called in Sk. *ādhyātmika, ādhidaivika* and *ādhibhautika*).

33. Oh good observer of religious vows! Verily the stuff which causes disease to beings, does not cure it (the disease by itself). But (if) administered after medical Purification[220], it cures[221] (that disease).

34. In the same way, the performances of all[222] actions[223] (which are) the causes of worldly existence[224] (i.e. the transmigration of the soul) are capable of destroying themselves[225] if those (very actions) are dedicated to the Supreme Spirit.

35. In this world, knowledge which is coupled with

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210. *saṁsūcita*—VD. : "Suggested, not directly spoken". JG. : (Suggested) by persons well-versed in Scriptures. VR. : by Śrutis and Smṛtis; VJ. : Properly suggested to the people, (*Samīcinaṁ sūcitaṁ lokasya*).

220. *cikitsitam*—ŚR. : is purified by other objects. BP. : If mixed with medicinal quick-silver vermillion, etc.

221. *punāti*—VD. : purifies, removes the dirt (disease) GD: acts as prophylactic. VR. interprets this verse differently : "Oh careful observer of religious vows ! Just as unwholesome food which causes disease does not cure the disease if taken in for remedial purpose." *cikitsitā 'pi vyādhir apathyādinā punaḥ vardhate ityarthaḥ.*

222. *sarve*—VD. VR. : This includes meritorious actions also. GS. : Both usual (*nitya*) and occasional (*naimittika*) actions performed with attachment (*kāmya-karma*).

223. *kriyā-yogaḥ*—BP. VJ. : *kriyā lakṣaṇā yogā upāyāḥ|*

224. *saṃsṛti-hetavaḥ*—VD. : Causes of bondage.

225. *ātma-vināśāya kalpate*—ŚR. : are capable of destroying the effects of actions. He gives the following progressive stages or steps: 1. Service of the great—2. Their favour—3. Faith in religion—4. Hearing the stories of God—5. Love of God—6. Knowledge about (*viveka-jñāna*) the self—7. Firm devotion to God—8. Awareness of the real nature of God.—9. Manifestation of attributes or qualities of Godhead e.g. Omniscience and others in the devotee.

VD. interprets differently : "In this world, knowledge which is accompanied with devotion (e.g. *śravaṇa, kīrtana* and others) is definitely pleasing to the Supreme Lord. This knowledge is born of actions which are performed without attachment and dedicated to the Supreme Lord."

devotional contemplation[226], is certainly dependent on actions which are performed for the gratification of the Supreme Spirit.[227]

36*. Where persons always perform actions according to the teaching of the Lord, they extol the qualities and names of Kṛṣṇa and meditate on him.

37. Salutations to you Venerable Vāsudeva. Obeisance to Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa[228]. We meditate (on you all).

38. He who thus by taking the names of these (above-mentioned four) forms, worships the Sacrificial Man who is formless yet has his body made up of holy incantations, becomes full of correct perception.[229]

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226. *bhakti-yoga*—JG. : It includes chanting of Hari's name and musing over his deeds.

227. JG. thinks that this verse describes the superiority of actions which are pleasing to the Lord Hari, while VJ. thinks that performance of actions removes the bondage of Karma by generating knowledge.

VR. explains: "Just as actions always done according to the instructions of the Lord, create devotion, similarly they make (the devotee) to meditate upon his attributes and names".

The so-called instructions of Hari mentioned in VR. above are quoted from the Bhagavad Gītā e.g. *yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi* etc. (BG. IX. 27), *mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi* etc. (BG. III. 30).

According to VJ. this verse explains how knowledge is generated by performance of actions (*karmas*). When they perform sacrifices as ordained by the Lord, at various steps, they remember the glorious qualities of the Lord and sing Lord Kṛṣṇa's name. In this way knowledge develops through performance of actions.

228. Although these are names of Kṛṣṇa, his son, his grandson and his (Kṛṣṇa's) brother, these are technically called the Vyūhas in the Pañcarātra system of philosophy. Its application to the Bhāgavata sect is as follows : The Ist category evolved from Prakrti is *mahat* which contains the germs of the entire universe; it is pure translucent *sattva* (also called *Citta* or *Vāsudeva*). From the category of *Mahat* the threefold *ahaṁkāra* viz. *vaikārika*, *taijasa* and *tāmasa* was produced. This *ahaṁkāra* is called *Saṅkarṣaṇa*. The category of *Manas* is produced from *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra* and it is called *Aniruddha* in the terminology of the *Bhāgavata* cult. *Pradyumna* stands for the desire; desires are but functions of the category of *manas* and not a separate category.

229. *samyag-darśana*—ŚR. : The Being of perfect knowledge.

39. Oh Brāhmaṇa! Keśava (Lord Viṣṇu), knowing that I practised his sacred precept, bestowed on me knowledge pertaining to the Controller of the Universe and devotion unto him.

40. Oh sage with wide knowledge! You also describe the great glory of the All-pervading Lord, which satisfies the desire for enjoyment on the part of the learned ones. Persons who are constantiy afflicted by miseries take resort to (his) glory (as it is not) otherwise pacified (at all).

CHAPTER SIX

(Dialogue between Vyāsa and Nārada)

Sūta said : *

1. Oh Brāhmaṇa! Having thus heard about the birth and deeds of the divine sage (Nārada), the venerable Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, asked him again.

Vyāsa said :

2. When the religious mendicants (*sannyāsins*) who initiated you in the special spiritual knowledge departed (to a distant country), what did your honour do in that primary stage of life ?

3. Oh son of the self-existent god Brahmā ! In what way did you lead your later life ? How did you give up your body when the time (of your death) arrived ?

4. Oh the best of gods ![230] How is it that (even though) Time is all-destructive[231] it has not shadowed[232] your memory (of matters) pertaining to the previous epoch ?

*VR. : Vyāsa was eager to know the sequel of the narration after BH. P.1.5.30 (*anvavocan gamiṣyantaḥ kṛpayā dīna-vatsalāḥ* etc).

230. *surasattama*—VJ: Greatest of the knowers.

231. *nirākṛtiḥ*—ŚR.: "Concealing" (*apalāpa*). VD., VR. : "Destruction". VR. "All destructive".

232. vyavadhāt: ŚR: Broken, erased (*khaṇḍitavān*) VR.: Concealed (*tirohitavān*).

Nārada said :

5. When the recluses who taught me the special spiritual knowledge set out (on their distant journey) I, who was in my primary stage of life, did as follows.

6. My mother, to whom I was the only son, being an ignorant woman—a maid servant—bound me by (her) affection as I was a son who had no other shelter.

7. Although she desired (to provide) for my well-being, she, being not independent, was unable to do so. People are subject to (the Will of) the Almighty like a doll of wood.

8. And I, as a child of five years of age, being ignorant of directions, regions or time, stayed in the Brāhmaṇa's house expecting that (termination of the bond of maternal affection).

9. Once, when my innocent mother went out at night (to milk the cow), a serpent (as if) ordered by the god of death, was touched[233] by her foot on the way, bit her while she was milking (the cow).

10. Then, looking upon it (my mother's death) as the grace of the Lord who is solicitous about the well-being of his devotees, I proceeded to the northern direction.

11. (While going alone) in that direction, I saw prosperous countries and capital towns, villages, habitations of cowherds and mines, villages of cultivators, habitations adjacent to hills and streams, parks, jungles and gardens[234].

12. (I saw) mountains of variegated colours due to the ores of different metals[235], (covered with) trees the branches of which are broken by elephants, lakes of clear water and lotus-pools enjoyed by gods (and) beautified by the droning of the black-bees which are roused by wonderful warblings of the birds (lit. wing-vehicled beings).

13-14. I who traversed alone such a long distance saw a vast, unbearably terrible looking forest* which had cavities form-

233. ŚR: "was slightly trod upon".

234. I have followed ŚR. in this interpretation.

235. ŚR. : "Mountains of variegated colours due to metals like gold and silver".

*The 2nd line of verse 13 is constructed with verse 14 and thus inserted herein.

ed by Nala grass, (solid) bamboos, clumps of white reeds and Kuśa grass and clusters of hollow bamboos (whistling with wind) which was (as it were) a play-ground of serpents (wicked elephants) owls and jackals.

15. I, who was physically and mentally exhausted, and was both thirsty and hungry, got relieved from the fatigue by bathing in the deep lake in the river-bed and by drinking (the river-water and by performing the religious sipping of (water (from the cavity of the hand).

16. In that tenantless forest, I, who was seated at the foot of a Pippala tree[236], meditated internally (by my mind or intellect) upon the Supreme Spirit that was (present) within me, as per instructions heard (from the recluses.).

17. While I was meditating upon the lotus-like feet (of Hari) with my mind overwhelmed or subdued with devotion, and my eyes overflowing with tears for longing (to see Hari), Hari manifested himself slowly in my heart.

18. Oh sage ! I, whose hair were standing on their ends owing to the rapturous love (for the Supreme Spirit), and who was deeply satisfied and was immersed in the flood of delight, could not see both.[237]

19. When I could not see the beautiful form of the Lord so pleasing to the mind and dispeller of sorrow, I felt dejected and suddenly stood up through bewilderment.[238]

20. Being desirous of seeing it (the form of the Lord) when I again tried to see him by concentrating my mind within itself, I was not able to see him and became anxious like a diseased person.

21. (He) who is unapproachable to speech, addressed in a voice deep yet sweet and grief-assuaging, to me who was thus struggling alone (to see him) in solitude.

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236. v.l. *āśrita*—VB: Leaning against (the Pippala tree).

237. *ubhayam*—ŚR: "Myself and others"; VR: "Body and Soul" the Individual Spirit and the Supreme Spirit. SD. construes it differently: "Being excessively unsatisfied due to my inability to see him, I became over-eager and with a desire to see him again, I concentrated my mind within me and tried to see him but in vain."

238. From *Apaśyan sahaso* etc. BH.P.I.6.15b to the end of 22 are deleted in some Mss.

22. "Alas ! In this life you are not eligible to see me here. I am difficult to be seen by immature Yogins whose taints (sins) have not been wiped out.

23. On Sinless one ! It was just out of love for you that the Vision (Form) was shown to you once. A saintly person who loves me shakes off all the desires in his heart gradually.

24. Due to the service of the saints for a short while, your mind has become firmly fixed in me. After leaving this inferior world (censurable body as Nārada was lowborn), you will attain the position of my personal attendant (*pārṣada*).

25. This intellect of yours which is stabilised in me, will never be incapaciated. And despite creation or destruction of the world, your memory shall persist due to my grace".

26. That Great Spirit of sky-like form, invisible (yet) controller of all, stopped after speaking this (much). I, who deserved compassion, paid my obeisance with my head to him who was the greatest of the great ;

27. With the sense of bashfulness shed off, reciting the names of the Infinite (Lord), musing over the mystic and auspicious deeds (of the Lord), with a satisfied mind free from desire, pride and jealousy, I wandered over the earth waiting for the time (of my death).

28. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! In this way, with my mind (intellect) fixed in Kṛṣṇa and unattached, and of pure soul, death appeared (suddenly to me) at the proper time like a garland-like lightning.[239]

29. That great spirit of ethereal form (having no material body), invisible (yet) controller of all, stopped after speaking this (much). I who was an object of his grace, paid obeisance with my head to him who was greater than the great.

30. Biding for the time (of my death), I wandered over the earth, reciting the names of the Infinite without any sense

239. *vidyut saudāminī yathā* —ŚR.· "Lightning flashed in the vicinity of a mountain of crystal called Sudāman." This alternate explanation has been echoed by VR. who adds, "This example is given to suggest the transitory nature of death." VC. thinks that just as one lightning emerges out of another, the body of Viṣṇu's attendant (pārṣada) was ready after the falling away of Nārada's human body.

of shyness and musing over the mystic and auspicious deeds (of the Lord), with a heart satisfied, free from desire, pride and jealousy.

31. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! In this way, just as lightning flashes in the vicinity of the crystaline mountain *Sudāman*[240] at the proper time, death came, in due course, to me whose mind was pure and fixed on Kṛṣṇa and was unattached (to worldly things).

32. While I was being transferred to that pure body pertaining to the (attendant of the) Lord, (my) gross body composed of the five elements fell off[241], indicating the exhaustion of actions (due to which one gets one's body).

33. I entered along with his breath in god Brahmā who desired to sleep within Lord Nārāyaṇa when at the end of the world he (Nārāyaṇa) sleeps on the waters of the ocean withdrawing this (world) within him.

34. At the end of one thousand ages,[242] he woke up and desired to create the world (when) I, along with sages of whom Marīci was prominent, was born from the breath (or organs of senses) of god Brahmā.

35. I wandered in and out of the three worlds, without the violation of any vows[243] (as) my movements were unhampered by the grace of the great Viṣṇu.

36. Playing on this lute (*Vīṇā*) gifted to me by the Lord and adorned with Brahman in the form of the seven notes of the musical gamut I go about singing the episodes of Hari.

37. When I sing of the exploits of the Lord whose feet are holy and glory lovable, he manifests himself in my heart immediately like an invitee.

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240. *Saudāminī*—SR. and VR. explain it as above. VR. adds: this example is given to suggest the momentary nature of death.

241. VB. explains that Nārada had not to undergo pains of death. SD. states that Nārada returned to his original divine body after the complete fruition of the Brāhmaṇa's curse whereby he was born as the son of a maid servant.

242. *Yuga*—The group of four ages (viz. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali)—VD.

243. *askandita-vrataḥ*—(i) Whose vow of celibacy remained unviolated—ŚR., VR. (ii) One whose vow of devotion to the Lord remained unbroken—VD., JG.

38. For, this singing of the deeds of Hari is (regarded) as a boat to cross the ocean of worldly existence for those whose hearts are often afflicted by yearning for enjoying (the pleasures of the world).

39. The mind (lit.Soul) which is frequently afflicted by passions and avarice is not pacified (to that extent) by the paths of *Yoga*[244] consisting of *Yama*, *niyama* etc., as is directly done by the service of Kṛṣṇa.

40. Oh sinless one ! Whatever has been asked by you about the mysteries of my birth and deeds, has been narrated by me to your mind's satisfaction.

Sūta said :

41. After having spoken thus to the son of Vāsavī (Vyāsa), the Venerable Nārada bade good-bye and departed while playing upon his lute; for the sage has no purpose of his own.

42. Oh ! How blessed is this divine sage (Nārada) who while singing of the glory of Viṣṇu (lit. god with a bow of horns) is transported with joy and delights this afflicted world by playing upon the lute (Vīṇā).

CHAPTER SEVEN

(*Punishment of Aśvatthāman*)

Śaunaka said :

1. Oh Sūta ! After having listened to the suggestion of Nārada, what did the venerable and glorious Bādarāyaṇa do on Nārada's departure ?

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244. *Yamādibhir yogapathaiḥ*--Patañjali in YS ii. 29 gives the following 'aids' (*aṅgas*) of Yoga: Abstentions (*Yama*), observances (*niyama*), postures (*āsana*), regulations-of-the breath (*prāṇāyāma*), withdrawal-of-the-senses, (*pratyāhāra*). fixed attention, (*dhāraṇā*), contemplation, (*dhyāna*) and concentration (*samādhi*). YS ii. 30 enumerates *yamas* as follows : "Abstinence from injury, falsehood, theft. incontinence and acceptance of gifts." (For details vide J.H. Woods—*The Yoga System of Patañjali*, pp. 177 ff). The path of Yoga was greatly respected and followed by Jainas and Buddhists. The five great vows (*Pañca Mahāvratas* of Jainas correspond

Sūta said :

2. On the western bank of the Sarasvatī, the presiding deity of which is god Brahmā (*Or* which is resorted to by Brāhmaṇas) there is a hermitage called Śamyāprāsa which encourages (lit.extends) the sacrificial sessions of the sages.

3. Sitting in his own hermitage beautified by a cluster of jujube trees, Vyāsa, after 'touching water' (i.e. sipping it from the palm of his hand as is usually performed before any religious act or taking meals), concentrated his mind (as instructed by Nārada).

4. In his mind purified by devotion and thoroughly concentrated, he saw at first the Primeval Being and (his power called) Māyā (Illusion) depending on him.[245]

5. Though the individual soul is beyond the three attributes, he, being deluded by her (Māyā), regards himself as consisting of the three attributes and suffers calamities (e.g. birth, death, three types of misery etc.) caused by the notion.

6. Realizing that the path of devotion to Viṣṇu directly subsides the calamities (of *saṁsāra* mentioned above), the learned Vyāsa composed the *sāttvata saṁhitā* (the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) for ignorant people.

7. Verily, by listening to this (the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) devotion unto Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Man, is developed. It (devotion) dispells all grief, infatuation and fears (of man).

8. Having composed and arranged the *Bhāgavata Saṁhitā*, the sage taught it to his son Śuka who was firmly fixed in renunciation.

Śaunaka said :

9. The sage (Śuka) is (known) to be devoid of attachment to the world and is unconcerned everywhere (to every thing). For what purpose did he who was delighted in his Higher Self, learn this big tome ?

to *yama*. The Bh. P. has elaborated the five *yamas* and the five *niyamas* of Patañjali into twelve each (vide the Bh. P. 3.28. 2-4, 11.19.33-35.).

245. *Māyāṁ tadapāśrayām*—The binding power called Māyā which involves individual Souls (*jīvas*) in worldly existence and transmigration (*saṁsāra*) but which is subservient to Hari-VJ.

Sūta said :

10. Hari is of such (excellent) attributes that sages who are delighted in the Soul and even those whose knots of worldly bonds are severed, perform motiveless devotion to Viṣṇu(lit. the god with wide strides).

11. The venerable son of Bādarāyaṇa (Śuka) whose mind was fascinated with the (excellent) qualities of Hari and who liked the devotees of Viṣṇu (Or who was loved by the devotees of Viṣṇu) studied this great legendary narrative (the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*).

12. I shall, henceforth, narrate to you the birth, deeds and death (or liberation) of king Parīkṣit and the great journey (to heaven) of the Pāṇḍavas in such a way as will bear upon the stories of Kṛṣṇa.

13*. When, in the battle of Kauravas and Sṛñjayas, the warriors had gone the way of heroes (i.e. died on the battlefield) and the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Duryodhana) had his thighbone broken by the stroke of the mace hit by Bhīma.

14. The son of Droṇa (Aśvatthāman) thinking that it would be liked by the master(Duryodhana) cut off and presented (to him) the heads of the sons of Draupadī (while they were asleep)—an act disagreeable to Duryodhana[246] and for which people censured him.

15. Then (Draupadī), the mother of the children, having heard of the death of her sons became terribly tormented and wept bitterly with her eyes flowing with tears. Arjuna consoling her said.

16. "Oh blessed lady! I shall have redressed your grief when I shall present to you the head of the wretched Brāhmaṇa

*This introduces the story how Kṛṣṇa protected Parīkṣit (who was in his mother's womb) from the Brahma-missile of Aśvatthāman.

246. VR. thinks that the murder of the children of Draupadī was not liked by Dhṛtarāṣṭra. VC.'s statement that this killing was disagreeable to Duryodhana, has no basis in the *MBh.* According to the MBh. *Sauptika Parvan* 9.54, Duryodhana praises Aśvatthāman as follows : 'What you, Kṛpa and Bhoja achieved for me today, was not done by Bhīṣma, Karṇa or your father. That wretched Dhṛṣṭadyumna was killed along with Śikhaṇḍin. I, therefore, regard myself as equal to Indra today. . . Farewell. May you be blessed. We shall meet again in heaven .

murdered,[247] cut off by arrows discharged from my Gāṇḍiva bow, and when you, whose sons are killed, would set your foot on it (Aśvatthāman's head) and take your bath."

17. Having thus consoled his beloved (wife Draupadī) with various sweet soothing words, Arjuna whose friend and charioteer was Kṛṣṇa, put on his armour, wielded a terrible bow and with monkey banner flying on his chariot rode in it, pursuing the son of his preceptor.

18. Seeing from a distance Arjuna pursuing him (Aśvatthāman), the murderer of (Draupadī's) children, with a trembling heart, fled in his chariot to the best of his capacity on the earth to save his life, as the god Brahmā[248] (v.l. Arka the Sun-god) did through the fear of god Śiva.

19. When the son of Brāhmaṇa (Aśvatthāman) found that his horses were fatigued and he had become helpless, he thought that the use of the missile Brahma-Śiras[249] was his only protection.

20. Then, being in a peril of life, he sipped water from the palm of his hand concentrated his mind and let the missile go, even though he did not know how to withdraw it.

247. *ātatāyin*—A person who commits a heinous crime, e.g. a thief, a ravisher, a murderer, incendiary, a felon etc. Śukra Nīti enumerates them as follows :.

Agnido garadaś caiva śastronmatto dhanāpahā |
Kṣetra-dāra-haraś caitān ṣaḍ vidyād ātatāyinaḥ ||

248. ŚR. refers to the episode of god Brahmā's flight when Rudra wanted to punish him for his lust after his daughter. ŚR. notes another v.l. Arka—the Sun-god—and states that this refers to the story in *Vāmana Purāṇa*. Vidyunmāli, a demon, got from Śiva, a heavenly car of gold in which he followed the Sun, dispelling the darkness in the part of the world when the Sun had set. The Sun, finding the disappearance of night from the world. melted down the heavenly car of Vidyunmāli. At this, Śiva got enraged with the Sun and opened his third eye. The Sun. terrified at the terrible fire so released, ran for his life but was scorched by it and fell down at Vārāṇasī where he is known as 'Lolārka'. VJ. reads *ārki*, the son of Arka, i.e. the Saturn and refers to the story in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* in which the Saturn had to flee for his life before the fire emanating from the third eye of Rudra.

249. ŚR. regards Brahma-Śiras and Brahmāstra as the same. But as VD. points out, they are different missiles. He. quotes *Skanda Purāṇa* as his authority.

21. Then, seeing the terrific glare of light (of the fierce flame of the missile)manifested in all directions and endangering his life, Arjuna spoke to Kṛṣṇa.

Arjuna said:

22. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh highly fortunate one! The saviour of your devotees from fear! You are the reliever of persons who are being burnt in the fire of worldly life. You are the First, Primeval Man, the direct controller of the universe, higher than the Primordial Nature (Prakṛti). Having dispelled the Cosmic Illusion (Māyā) by your intellectual power (Cicchakti) you stay established in your own pure nature.*

24. You are the same as He (God, described above). By your power, you confer blessings such as Dharma and others (Wealth, Liberation etc.) on all beings whose minds are deluded by Illusion (Māyā).

25. Moreover, this incarnation of yours is both for lessening the burden of the earth as well as for the convenience of

*Some more interpretations :

(i) ŚR: 'You are the direct controller (of the universe) as you are the Man beyond the Primordial Nature (*Prakṛti*). You are the First cause who having dispelled Illusion (*Māyā*) by your intellectual Power (*Cicchakti*) are established in the absolutely pure state of your Self.'

(ii) VR. distinguishes between the individual Soul (*Jīva*) and God; the individual soul, due to his limited knowledge, wrongly attaches the attributes of the body to the Soul while God dispels them by His Power of Knowledge (*Cicchakti*), God being within all individual Souls, dispenses the fruit according to the actions of respective individual Souls and acts as their support.

VR. interprets the text of this verse as follows: 'You alone . are the veritable Ruler (of the universe). You are the First (cause of the universe), Man (existing in all individuals and controlling them) untouched by the attributes of *Prakṛti* (Primordial nature). By your Power of knowledge you are untouched by *Māyā*. You lie established in your own absolute greatness.'

(iii) VJ: "You are the destroyer of sins (*Puruṣaḥ*), the First (= existing before everyone and everything); the controller incarnate, superior to Intelligent Primordial Nature (*Prakṛti*). By your Power of Knowledge, you, having removed the power of bondage (*Māyā*) stay established with Your Self which is absolute (=beyond the bonds of *Prakṛti*).

constant meditation by your devotees who have set their hearts only on you.

26. Oh God of gods! I do not know the nature and the source of this very terrible fire which is encompassing us from all directions.

The Lord said:

27. Know that this is the *Brahma* missile (*astra*) detonated by the son of Droṇa (Aśvatthāman) under peril of life. He does not know the method of withdrawing it.

28. There is no other missile except this very *astra* (missile) which can curb its power. You are conversant with missiles. By the force of the same (*Brahma*) missile, therefore, destroy the fierce fire of that *astra*.

Sūta said:

29. Hearing the words of the Lord, Arjuna, the vanquisher of valiant foes, touched water (i.e. sippedit as *ācamana*), circumambulated him (Kṛṣṇa) and discharged his Brahmāstra against (Aśvatthāman's) Brahmāstra.

30. The flames emanating from Brahmāstra-charged arrows of both (Arjuna and Aśvatthāman) mingled with each other and surrounded by fiery arrows they covered the earth, heaven and the space-between and increased the conflagration like the fire and the Sun (at the end of the world.)

31. All beings who were scorched (by the Brahmāstras) and saw the terrific fire of (their missiles) burning the three worlds, felt that it was the fire of *Pralaya*(which burns down the world).

32. Seeing the distress of the people and the destruction of the world and noticing the view of Vāsudeva, Arjuna withdrew both the missiles.

33. Then Arjuna, with his eyes reddened with rage, swiftly overtook the terrible Aśvatthāman (lit. the son of Gautamī) and roped him forcibly like a (sacrificial) beast.

34. The Lotus-eyed Lord (Kṛṣṇa) spoke angrily to Arjuna who fastened the enemy with a rope and desired to take him per force to the camp.

35. Oh Pārtha, you should not spare this (fellow). Kill this wretched Brāhmaṇa who has murdered innocent children while they were asleep at night.

36. A person, knowing the restrictions of religion (Law) does not kill an enemy who is intoxicated, inattentive (or unguarded), haunted by a ghost (or insane), asleep, or a child or a woman; (nor does he kill) a dullard (lunatic), a suppliant for protection, (an enemy) with a broken chariot or (feeling) in a frightened condition.

37. He who supports his life by killing others is merciless and wicked. To mete out capital punishment to him is in his interest as he really goes to hell on account of that crime (if not expiated by judicial punishment).

38. It was in my presence (lit. while I was hearing) that you promised to Draupadī: 'I shall bring to you the head of the man who killed your sons.'

39. Oh valiant one! Let, therefore, this sinful desperado, the murderer of your sons, be slain as he is a disgrace to his family and has acted against the interests of his master.

40. Though thus urged by Kṛṣṇa who tested his (Arjuna's) sense of Dharma, the great son of Pṛthā (Arjuna) did not wish to kill his teacher's son (even though he was) the slayer of his children.

41. Having returned to his camp, Arjuna, whose dear charioteer was Kṛṣṇa, presented him (Aśvatthāman) to his beloved who was weeping.

42. Seeing the evildoer, the preceptor's son, produced before her, bound with a rope like a (sacrificial) beast with his head bent low due to his censurable act, the good-natured Draupadī bowed to him out of pity.

43. And the virtuous lady (Draupadī), not tolerating the act of bringing him thus bound (with cords) said, "Let him be released immediately, especially as this Brāhmaṇa is veritably the preceptor.

44. Through his favour Your honour has studied the *Dhanurveda* (the Military Science) along with its secret formulae (incantations or *Mantras*) and a number of missiles along with the technique of discharging and withdrawing them.

45. This (Aśvatthāman) is venerable Droṇa existing in

the form of a son. Kṛpī who is Droṇa's (better) half, is alive; she did not immloate herself after him as she was the mother of a warrior.

46. Therefore, Oh highly fortunate one who know religion, the family of the preceptor which deserves constant respect and worship, should not be subjected to misery by Your honour.

47. Let not his mother Gautamī who regards her husband as a god, weep just as I constantly do, with my face full of tears, due to grief at the death of my children.

48. The Brāhmaṇa race which is provoked by Kṣatriyas of uncontrolled tempers and is subjected to grief, burns down within a short time, that Kṣatriya family with its kith and kin."

Sūta said:

49. Oh Brāhmaṇas, King Yudhiṣṭhira (son of Dharma) approved of the queen's speech of great significance which was consistent with religion and justice and was remarkable for its compassion, sincerity and equitability.

50. Nakula, Sahadeva, Sātyaki, Arjuna, the venerable son of Devakī and other ladies present also expressed their approval (of her speech).

51. There (then) the enraged Bhīma spoke:

'It is desirable (even from the point of Aśvatthāman) that he should be killed as he killed the sleeping children in vain neither in the interest of his master nor his own.'

52. Hearing the words of Bhīma and Draupadī, the four-armed[250] Kṛṣṇa looked at the face of his friend (Arjuna) and spoke smilingly as follows:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

53. "The (two) injunctions that a Brāhmaṇa even though fallen, should not be killed and that a wreckless ruffian deserves capital punishment, have been laid down by me. Carry out the twofold command.

250. ŚR. states that Kṛṣṇa manifested his four arms as he used two arms to prevent Bhīma from killing Aśvatthāman and two to ward off Draupadī who suddenly came in the way of Bhīma for warding him off from that act.

54. Carry out what you have promised to your beloved (Draupadī) at the time of consoling her. Do what is agreeable to Bhīma, Pāñcālī and me as well."

Sūta said:

55. Understanding at once the intention of Hari, Arjuna, with his sword, took away the jewel that was in the head of the Brāhmaṇa along with the locks of hair.

56. Releasing him (Aśvatthāman) from the rope (with which he was bound), Arjuna drove him (Aśvatthāman) out of the camp, as he had lost all his lustre due to the murder of children (committed by him) and the loss of the brilliant gem.

57. (For, disgraceful) shaving of the head, confiscation of property as well as expulsion from the place (of residence) is a (veritable) capital punishment to unworthy Brāhmaṇas; there is no other physical punishment prescribed for that caste.

58. All the Pāṇḍavas along with Draupadī, who were afflicted with grief for their sons, performed rites connected with the funeral of their relatives.

CHAPTER EIGHT

(*Kuntī's Eulogy of Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira's Repentance*)

Sūta said *

1. Then, they (Pāṇḍavas) along with Kṛṣṇa and with women (going) in front, proceeded to the Ganges for offering libations of water to their dead kinsmen who desired (such) water.

*VJ.'s text gives the following additional verses, the gist of which is as follows :

All the Pāṇḍavas along with Draupadī were deeply grieved at the death of their sons. They performed the prescribed funeral rites of their kinsmen.

Then the Lord showed to Draupadī the various warriors slain, as promised by him formerly when she fell at his feet weeping.

2. Having offered the libations and bewailing bitterly again, all of them bathed in the waters of the river sanctified by the dust of the lotus-like feet of Hari.

3-4. Explaining the irresistability of the (effects of) Time (or Death) on living beings, Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa) along with sages consoled the Lord of Kurus (Yudhiṣṭhira and his younger brothers, Dhṛtarāṣṭra[251], Gāndhārī[252] aggrieved at the loss of her sons, Pṛthā (Kuntī)[253] and Draupadī, who sat there bereaved of their relatives (and hence) given to sorrow ;

5-6. Having made Yudhiṣṭhira[254] regain his kingdom cheated away from him by rogues, and having got killed the wicked whose life was cut short due to touching the hair of the queen (Draupadī) and having enabled (Yudhiṣṭhira) to per-

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'Oh queen! See the wives of your enemies who with hair dishevelled, are lamenting, embracing their husbands whose thighs or chests are broken with the mace of Bhīma'.

251. Dhṛtarāṣṭra—Eldest son of Vicitravīrya or rather Vyāsa and Ambikā. He married Gāndhārī and had one hundred sons the eldest of whom was Duryodhana. He was blind and hence his younger brother Pāṇḍu superseded him to the throne. The Mahābhārata war was fought between the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu. After the war, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. bereaved of his sons, stayed for some time with the Pāṇḍavas and then resorted to forest along with Gāndhārī and Kuntī where they were burnt in a forest conflagration—DHM 91.

252. Gāndhārī—Daughter of Subala, king of Gāndhāra, wife of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

253. Kuntī (Pṛthā)—Daughter of the Yādava Prince Śūra, sister of Vasudeva; given as a child to Śūra's childless cousin Kuntibhoja. Pleased with her services in her maidenhood, Durvāsas gave her a charm whereby she could invoke any god. She used the incantation to invoke the Sun-God and she gave birth to Karṇa without loss of her virginity. Later, she married Pāṇḍu and bore him three sons —Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma and Arjuna who were respectively from the gods Yama-dharma, Vāyu and Indra.

During the forest-dwelling of Pāṇḍavas, she stayed at Hastināpura. After the Bhārata war, she retired into the forest along with Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī and all of them perished in a forest-fire. HDM 171.

254. *ajātaśatruḥ*—Normally it means 'One having no enemy;' but VJ and VD interpret *ajāta* as Duryodhana as he was born from a pitcher and not in the normal way. In support of this they quote from Mbh. 1.114 wherein the birth of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra is described. These annotators interpret this as 'one whose enemy is Su (Dur) yodhana'

form thrice the horse-sacrifice with the best method[255], he (Kṛṣṇa) caused his Yudhiṣṭhira's) fame spread in all directions like that of god Indra (the Performer of hundred Sacrifices).

7-8. Oh Brāhmaṇa! And having taken leave of Pāṇḍavas and having exchanged mutual worship with Brāhmaṇas like Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa), Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Sātyaki and Uddhava got into chariot with the intention of going to Dvārakā when he saw Uttarā[256] running towards him stricken with panick.

Uttarā said:

9. "Protect me, Oh great Yogin, save me, Oh God of gods, Protector of the world. As people are victims of death[257] I do not see safe shelter with any one else but with you.

10. Oh all-pervading Lord! An arrow with a red-hot iron tip rushes towards me. Oh Lord! Le it burn me at will but let not the embryo (in my womb) be fallen."

Sūta said:

11. Having heard her speech, the Lord who loves his devotees, knew that it was the missile of Aśvatthāman discharged to extirpate the race of Pāṇḍavas.

12. Oh great sage, then at that very time, Pāṇḍavas, having noticed five blazing arrows rushing towards them, resorted to their missiles.

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255. *uttama-kalpakaiḥ*—(i) With faultless detailed formalities of recitation of Mantras, gifts to Brāhmaṇas at the appropriate stages of the sacrifice—VR.

(ii) With the best method of performing religious rites—VJ.

(iii) With the best materials—VB., VD.

(iv) With the best performers of sacrifices like Vyāsa and others— VD.

256. The daughter of Matsya King Virāṭa and queen of Abhimanyu. Mother of Parīkṣit. When Aśvatthāman discharged the Brahmāstra against the child in her womb, she invoked Kṛṣṇa's help who protected her by his Sudarśana discus and saved Parīkṣit—PI. 1.219.

257. *Yatra . . . parasparam*—Where men are the death of one-another ŚR.

13. Having seen the disaster of Pāṇḍavas who were absolutely devoted to him, the mighty Lord ordained their safety by his missile called Sudarśana.

14. Hari, the Lord of yoga, who is the Soul residing within all beings, covered the embryo (in the womb) of the princess of Virāṭa (Uttarā) by (his power called) Māyā (Illusion) for the continuation of the Kuru race.

15. Oh descendant of the Bhṛgu clan (Śaunaka)! Even though the missile called *Brahmaśiras* is irresistible and uncounteractable, it became quiescent when it came into contact with the lustre of Viṣṇu.

16. Do not regard this as a miracle, for Acyuta who though unborn, creates, protects and destroys the world by his refulgent (power) Māyā, is miraculous in every way.

17. The virtuous Pṛthā (Kuntī) in the company of Draupadī, and her sons who were saved from the flames of the missile *Brahma-Śiras* addressed thus to Kṛṣṇa who was about to start.

Kuntī said:

18. I bow to you the First (=the cause of world) Man, the Lord (of the universe), beyond Prakṛti, imperceptible yet pervading all beings from within and without.

19. (I am) ignorant (and hence can simply bow down to) you who are concealed behind the screen of Māyā (Illusion), beyond the ken of sense-perception and immutable. You cannot be realised by the false perception of ignorant person just as an actor in his role in the drama is not recognized by an ignorant spectator.

20.* You cannot be perceived by pure-hearted sages of the highest order. How can we, women, know you in order to follow the path of devotion unto you?

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*Some more interpretations :

ŚR : How can we, women, know you that are incarnated (on this earth) to teach the *Paramahaṁsas* (recluses of the highest order) the *Bhakti Yoga* (path of devotion) and to attract the minds of the (meditative) sages of devotion and to teach them (how to follow) the path of devotion.

VR : How can we women (ineligible for performing *yoga* and of impure mind) know you ? You reveal yourself to the intense devotion of recluses of the highest order, pure in mind and given to meditation of yourself.

21. Again and again I bow to Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, the joy (son) of Devakī, the young child of the Cowherd Nanda, Govinda.[258]

22. Bow to him from whose naval sprouts up the Lotus; salute to the wearer of lotus-garland; respects to the lotus-eyed god; bow to him whose feet are like lotus.

23. Oh Hṛśīkeśa![259] Just as (your) sorrow-stricken (mother) Devakī who was incarcerated for a very long time by Kaṁsa,[260] was released by you, so also I along with my sons, was often saved in a number of difficulties by you alone as my protector.

24. Oh Hari, we have been completely protected by you from poison,[261] from the great fire,[262] from the sight of cannibalistic demons[263], in the assembly of the wicked[264], from the danger of forest-dwelling[265], from the missiles of great warriors in every battle[266] and the missile of the son of Droṇa (Aśvatthāman).

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258. VJ. gives rather unusual derivations of some of the epithets used here, e.g. *Vāsudeva*—One who shines after pervading the world. *Govinda*—One who is attained to by Vedas. *Nandagopa-Kumāra*—One who cured the leprosy of a king called Nanda.

259. The controller of the sense-organs, i.e. Kṛṣṇa.

260. *Kaṁsa*—A tyrannical king of Mathurā, son of Ugrasena and cousin of Devakī. He married two daughters of Jarāsandha, king of Magadha. He deposed his father. Due to a prediction that the eighth child of Devakī will kill him, he imprisoned both Devakī and Vasudeva. He tried to kill all the children of Devakī but Kṛṣṇa, the eighth child was smuggled away and was kept under the protection of Nanda, the cowherd chief. Kaṁsa became a great persecutor of Kṛṣṇa and tried to kill him but was eventually killed by Kṛṣṇa—DHM 149.

261. *viṣāt*—Refers to administration of poison-food to Bhīma by Duryodhana and throwing him in the Gaṅgā after fastening down with creepers (Mbh. I.127.45-54).

262. *mahāgneḥ*—This refers to Duryodhana's attempt to burn down Kuntī and Pāṇḍavas in the house of *lac* at Vāraṇāvata (Mbh. I.147).

263. This refers to the encounter of Pāṇḍavas with demons like Hidimba (Mbh. I. 153), Baka (Mbh. I. 162 etc).

264. This refers to the assembly of dice-players in which Draupadī was humiliated (Mbh. II. 67-68).

265. Refers to the different hazards which Pāṇḍavas faced during their stay in the forest for twelve years.

266. Refers to the Bhārata war in which Pāṇḍavas had to face a number of enemy missiles.

25*Oh Master of the Universe! May there always be calamity at every step (if in every such calamity we are blest with) your sight which relieves people from the cycle of rebirths.

26. Verily a man puffed up with pride of noble birth, power, learning and wealth never deserves to speak of (i.e. remember) you who are worthy of being known by desireless persons or Paramahaṁsas.

27. Salutations to you, who regard your sincere devotees as your wealth[267] and from whom tendencies towards attributes (*guṇas*) viz. the objectives of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma* have disappeared; I bow to you who delight in His your Self and devoid of attachment and who is the Lord of (one who can grant the Final Beatitude.

28* I look upon you as Time (or Death), the Controller of the Universe, beginningless and endless. Although quarrels (wars) among beings arise from you (as the efficient cause), you move with equality (and dispense pleasure and pain according to their past actions).

29. Oh Lord! Nobody knows what you intend to do. You appear to behave like men. Nobody is either favourite with you nor any one antagonistic in the least. It is the mind of men which is prejudiced.

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*VJ. differs :

'Oh Lord of the Universe ! May there be continuous difficulties in our various worldly dealings. In these, however, we should have a sight of you which shows the way to Liberation (*Mokṣa*).

267. *akiñcana-vittāya—akiñcana* is one who wishes to get nothing else but Śrī Kṛṣṇa; hence 'a sincere devotee'. This compound means :

(i) Who are the wealth to his sincere devotees;

(ii) One who loves his sincere devotees.

* Another interpretation :

I regard you as Time-bodied one who control god Brahmā and others and hence who are free from birth and death. Quarrels among beings arise due to Time though you move with equality (the charges of inequality and mercilessness cannot be levelled against you).—VR.

SD: It is due to ignorance that persons bear a prejudiced attitude to you even though you are really devoid of favouritism or antagonism. VB. endorses the same interpretation with his usual details.

30.* Oh soul of the Universe! That you who have no birth and no actions, have incarnations and actions to perform among non-human beings (e.g. the boar-incarnation), human beings (e.g. Rāma, Kṛṣṇa), sages (e.g. Vāmana) and acquatic animals (e.g. the Fish incarnation) is a great imitation (a matter of your will to imitate these).

31. When for a fault committed by you, the cowherdess (Yaśodā) took a rope, the then spectacle of your standing with head bent down, showing expression of fear on your face with eyes full of tears mixed with black collyrium, really enchants me, as even fear is afraid of you.

32. Some (persons) say that you, though unborn, appeared to take birth in the Yadu race for (spreading) the reputation of your dear friend Yudhiṣṭhira of pious fame and that of beloved Yadu, just as the sandal tree (grown on the Malaya) for the (reputation of the) mountain Malaya.

33. Others say that you are the unborn one who, in response to (their) prayer, was born of Vasudeva and Devakī for the good of the world and the destruction of the enemies of gods.

34. Others say that as per prayer of god Brahmā (lit. the self-born god), you were born to lessen the burden of the earth which, like (an overloaded) boat in the sea, suffered from overpressure (of demons and wicked persons).

35. Some others (regard that you are born) for performing deeds worth hearing and remembering by (persons) suffering in this worldly existence on account of nescience,[268] desires and actions (*karmas* done previously).

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* Another interpretation:

You are the birthless (due to absence of actions leading to birth) and the actionless (due to disinclination to do any action on account of non-existence of actions motivating new actions) soul of the universe. That you should have births in (and indulge in actions suitable to) non-human beings, human beings, sages and acquatic animals is extremely deceptive.

268. *avidyā*—(i) Ignorance about the nature of the highest joy—ŚR.

(ii) Ignorance caused by the confusion between the Soul and the body—VR.

(iii) Absence of the knowledge of the Soul and the non-Soul—SD.

36. Only those persons who constantly hear, sing, glorify, remember and take delight in your likeable deeds, will see before long your lotus-like feet which terminates (dries up) the current of worldly existence.

37. And, Oh Lord (Kṛṣṇa) who fulfill the wishes of your devotees! Do you today abandon us, your friends and dependants, who have brought so much grief to the princely class and have no other refuge than the lotus-like feet of your honour?

38* If Your honour is out of sight, what are we Pāṇḍavas and Yadus but (merely) name and form, just as the senseorgans are worthless (dead) in the absence of the Soul (lit. controller of the sense-organs).

39. Or holder of the mace (Kṛṣṇa)! The land (in our kingdom) will not appear beautiful (after your departure) just as now it appears decorated by your feet imprinting on the ground your special (divine) marks.

40. It is by your (favourable) looks that these lands with well-ripened plants and creepers, with their forests, mountains, rivers and seas, prosper (richly).

41. Therefore, Oh Lord of the Universe! the Universal Soul! All-pervading Lord! Cut asunder my bond of love to my kinsmen—this strong attachment towards Pāṇḍavas and Vṛṣṇis.

42. Oh Lord of Madhus (=Yādavas)! May my mind be constant and firm in devotion to you and be not attached to any other object just as the stream of the Ganges flows into the sea (alone without minding any obstacles).

43. Oh Śrī Kṛṣṇa, friend of Arjuna, the best of the Vṛṣṇis, Fire (destroyer) of the prowess of the kings who harassed the earth, of undiminished power and might, Possessor of the wealth of wish-yielding cows (Govinda), one who incarnates for removing the afflictions of cows, twice-born ones (Brāhmaṇas) and gods, Oh Lord of Yogas, the Preceptor of all, Oh Venerable Lord, I bow to you.

* Another interpretation :

(i) When we have visualised you as when the sense-organs find their controller (the Soul), we have become through your grace, Yādavas and Pāṇḍavas—VR.

(ii) The sense-organs function when the controlling agency—the Soul—is with them. The existence of our name and form is due to your presence with us. Otherwise we shall be reduced to nameless and formless category.

Sūta said:

44. Vaikuṇṭha (Kṛṣṇa) whose entire glory was thus eulogized in sweet words by Pṛthā (Kuntī), smiled gently as if enchanting the world by his Māyā.[269]

45. Having blessed her (Kuntī) that her desires would be fulfilled [270] and entering Hastināpura, he took leave of the ladies and was about to leave for his capital when he was detained by the king, out of love.

46. Even though he (Yudhiṣṭhira) was advised with illustrations from historical incidents by Vyāsa and others who did not comprehend the intention of the Lord (that it was Bhīṣma who was to enlighten Yudhiṣṭhira and not they) and by Kṛṣṇa (himself) of miraculous deeds, he (Yudhiṣṭhira) did not understand it (as) he was overcome with grief.

47. Oh Brāhmaṇas, the king Yudhiṣṭhira (son of Yamadharma) brooding over the death of his friends (and well-wishers) and with his mind becoming defunct in judgment like that of common people, spoke as follows.

48. Alas ! Look at the ignorance grown in the heart of a wicked man like me. For the sake of my body which is for others (for being devoured by carnivorous animals like dogs, jackals etc.) many divisions[271] (of the army) are killed.

49. Even for crores of years there is no hope of my release from hell as I have done wrong to children (like Abhimanyu, Lakṣmaṇa), Brāhmaṇas (like Droṇa), relatives, friends, elders, brothers and preceptors.

50. The precept that killing enemies in a righteous war is not a sin in the case of a king protecting his subjects, cannot convince (enlighten) me (as I was not a ruler of the people).

51. Here the sin accrued to me by the wrong done to women whose relatives were slain for my sake, cannot be expiated by me by (religious) acts prescribed for householders.

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269. Māyā: (i) ŚR. quotes ·Māyā is the smile (of the world) which maddens the world.

(ii) Divine Love—VC.

270. After accepting Kuntī's prayer (regarding her constancy in devotion etc.)—ŚR.

271. *Akṣauhiṇī*—A division of the army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants. 65610 horses and 109350 foot-soldiers : Total—218700.

52. Just as one cannot purify muddy water by mud or the sin of drinking wine by means of (profuse) wine, similarly one cannot expiate a single act of killing a living being by (performing) a number of sacrifices (involving the deliberate slaughter of animals).

CHAPTER NINE

(Yudhiṣṭhira's Acquisition of Kingdom)

Sūta said :

1. Thus, being afraid of disaffection of the subjects Yudhiṣṭhira, with a desire to know religious duties of all (kinds), proceeded to the battlefield[272] (Kurukṣetra) where Devavrata[273] (Bhīṣma) was lying.

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272. Vinaśana—Although ŚR. and VJ. identify this with Kurukṣetra, SD. identifies it with the spot where Bhīṣma fell from his chariot in the battle ("yatra Devavrato Bhīṣmo rathad apatad Vinaśanam ... Kurukṣetrāntargatam sthānam/" Bh. P. 1.9.1.

273. Devavrata—Lit. an observer of religious vows; an epithet of Bhīṣma, the 8th son of Śantanu and Gaṅgā; and heir to the throne of Hastināpura after his father; to enable his father to marry Satyavatī, he renounced his claim to the throne and vowed not to marry or beget children; he came to be known as Bhīṣma due to this dreadful vow; after his father's death, he installed Satyavatī's son Vicitravīrya on the throne and got him married to two princesses of Kāśirāja; afterwards when Vicitravīrya died childless, he advised Satyavatī to persuade her daughter-in-laws to have issues by *niyoga* and Bhīṣma became the guardian of his nephews and grandsons; in the great Bhārata war, he was the first commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army. On the tenth day of the battle, Arjuna being shielded by Śikhaṇḍin, pierced Bhīṣma with innumerable arrows and Bhīṣma fell down from his chariot only to be upheld from the ground by "the bed of darts". Due to the boon given to him by Śantanu, Bhīṣma could choose the time of his death. He survived 58 days after this. When Yudhiṣṭhira approached him after the war, he delivered to him several didactic discourses on all aspects of religion. At last when the Sun crossed the vernal equinox, he cast off his mortal coil with his mind fixed on God. Bhīṣma was an ideal hero noted for his continence, wisdom, firmness of resolve and devotion to God.

(ASD. 407, DHM. 53-55 and PI. II. 566-67).

2. Then all the brothers riding in chariots decorated with gold and drawn by excellent horses followed him along with Brāhmaṇas like Vyāsa, Dhaumya[274] and others.

3. Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ! The Lord (Kṛṣṇa) accompanied by Arjuna (followed him) in a chariot. With them (in their company) the king appeared (glorious) like Kubera[275] (the God of wealth) surrounded by Guhyakas[276] (his attendants).

4. Seeing Bhīṣma lying on the ground like a god fallen from the Heaven, Pāṇḍavas along with their followers and Kṛṣṇa (lit. the holder of the discus) bowed (to him).

5.* Of greatest saint ! All Brāhmaṇa sages, divine sages and royal sages assembled there to see (Bhīṣma) the prominent one among the Bhārata clan.

6. Parvata[277] Nārada[278], Dhaumya[279], the venerable Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa)[280], Bṛhadaśva[281], Bharadvāja[282], and the

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274. Dhaumya—The family priest of Pāṇḍavas; was invited for Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice; accompanied Pāṇḍavas in their exile in the forest; followed Yudhiṣṭhira on a visit to the dying Bhīṣma. (PI. II. 185)

275. Kubera—The god of riches; the ruler of the city of Alakā in the north; the head of demi-gods like the Yakṣas, Guhyakas and Kinnaras; traditionally he is regarded as a custodian of gold, silver, precious stones and such treasures.

276. Guhyakas—A class of demigods who, like the Yakṣas, wait on Kubera and guard his treasure. (ASDP. 190).

* VD. distinguishes between the classes of sages as follows : Brāhmaṇa sages emphasize both Work and Knowledge; sages among gods emphasize knowledge and give second priority to Work or actions; sages among kings lay stress on penance and protect their subjects.

277. Parvata—A nephew of Nārada; visited Bhīṣma while he lay on his "dart-bed". Generally mentioned as a heavenly sage along with Nārada. —(BPK. 179, PI. II, 301,PCK 569-70)

278. Nārada—See note 79.

279. Dhaumya—See note 274.

280. Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa)—See note 19.

281. Bṛhadaśva—According to PI. 2. 492, he was the son of Sahadeva and father of Bhānumat; called on the dying Bhīṣma. In the MBH, he is said to have narrated the story of Nala to Yudhiṣṭhira, taught him the technique of gambling by dice. (BPK 213).

282. Bharadvāja—Son of Bṛhaspati; was invited for the Rājasūya of Yudhiṣṭhira; called on the dying Bhīṣma; later he came to see King Parīkṣita when he was practising his Prāyopaveśa. (PI.II.541-42).

son of Reṇuka[283] (Paraśurāma) along with his disciples.

7. Vasiṣṭha[284], Indra-pramada[285], Trita[286], Gṛtsamada[287], Asita[288], Kakṣīvān[289], Gautama[290], Atri[291], Kauśika[292] and then

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283. Son of Reṇukā—Paraśurāma.

284. Vasiṣṭha—Lit. "the wealthiest". A celebrated Vedic sage to whom many hymns are ascribed. In the Bh. P., he is a mind-born son of god Brahmā in the Svāyaṁbhuva epoch (manvantara). In the present epoch (manvantara), he was again born from god Brahmā; married Arundhatī; had 100 sons who were killed by Viśvāmitra. He tried to commit suicide but the rivers Vipāś and Śatadru did not drown him. He was the family priest of Ikṣvākus. The detail of the struggle between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra is given in the MBH., the Rāmāyaṇa and the purāṇas. The feud started with Viśvāmitra's futile attempt to carry away Vasiṣṭha's wish-yielding cow Nandinī and ended with his attainment of the status of a Brāhmana sage (Brahmarṣitva) and Vasiṣṭha's recognition of Viśvāmitra as such and Viśvāmitra's paying due honour to his former rival.

(DHM. 339-42, BPK 280)

285. Indra-pramada—A sage who called on Bhīṣma lying on his bed of arrows (BPK. 32).

286. Trita—According to Nirukta a Vedic seer connected with Gṛtsamada family. In the MBH. he is said to have been pushed in a well by his brothers to appropriate his cows, but was saved by gods. He was invited to Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice; he called on Bhīṣma in his death-bed.

(PCK. 399-400, PI. 2.43, DHM. 321-22).

287. Gṛtsamada—A sage who called on dying Bhīṣma. His identity with the famous Ṛgvedic seer and other sages of the same name is unconfirmed. For details about other Gṛtsamadas vide PCK. 322-23, DHM. 114, BPK. 94).

288. Asita—A famous sage who called on dying Bhiṣma; was invited for Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya: came to Syamanta-pañcaka to see Kṛṣṇa; accompanied Kṛṣṇa to Mithilā; acted as a sacrificial priest at Kṛṣṇa's sacrifice in Kurukṣetra.

(PI. 1.136, BPK.26, PCK, 88-89).

289. Kakṣīvan—Originally a Vedic sage connected with the worship of Aśvins; an Aṅgiras and seer of mantras; called on Bhiṣma while he was lying on his bed of darts.

(PCK. 181, PI. 1.296, DHM. 139-40).

290. Gautama—PI. mentions 16 sages of this name. This Gautama who came to see dying Bhīṣma, is said to have called on Parīkṣit engaged in Prāyopaveśa (fast unto death).

—PI. 1.536-37.

291. Atri—PI. mentions 7 sages of this name (PI. 1. 41-42). He is regarded as the son of Brahmā and father of Dattātreya; taught ānvīkṣiki to Alarka, Prahlāda and others; visited Bhīṣma in his death-bed; came to see Parīkṣit practising prāyopaveśa.

292. Kauśika—PI. 1. 473-74 enumerates 11 sages of this name while PCK. 286-87 mentions 20 persons of this name. About the sage mentioned in this verse both regard him as a sage who called on dying Bhīṣma.

Sudarśana'[293].

8. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! And other sages like Brahmarata (Śuka)[294] and others like Kaśyapa[295], Aṅgirasas[296] (and others) arrived there along with their disciples.

9. Seeing that those great personages have assembled to visit him, the greatest of Vasus (Bhīṣma) who knew religious duties and understood the proper behaviour suitable to particular time and place* respectfully received them (*by his mind and words due to his physical inability to get up*-Śr.)

10. And (Bhīṣma) who knew the superhuman power of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Universe who has assumed human form by His power called Māyā[297] (Illusion) and who (though)

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293. Sudarśana—A sage who visited Bhīṣma in his death-bed. Other 10 persons of the same name mentioned in BPK. 349-50 are different.

294. Brahmarata alias Śuka—Son of Vyāsa; a yogin from his birth. He was initiated in spiritual lore by Bahulāśva Janaka of Mithilā; was taught the Bhāgavata Purāṇa by Vyāsa which he narrated to king Parīkṣit while he observed prāyopaveśa (fast unto death).

295. Kaśyapa—Out of the 7 Kaśyapas mentioned in PI. 1. 341-42, the sage mentioned here was a contemporary of Kṛṣṇa; was invited for Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice; came to Syamantapañcaka to see Kṛṣṇa; one of the sages who left for Piṇḍāraka; met by Takṣaka on his way to king Parīkṣit.

(PI. 1.342 also BPK 55).

296. Aṅgirasas—A contemporary of Kṛṣṇa; with his pupils visited Bhiṣma lying on his bed of arrows; came to see Kṛṣṇa at Syamantapañcaka; went to Dvārakā to request Kṛṣṇa to return to Vaikuṇṭha; came to see Parīkṣit practising prāyopaveśa.

The remaining 10 persons of the same name given in PI. 1.22-24 are different.

—PI.1.22-23.

297. Māyā—This word is highly ambiguous. Brahma Sūtra iii. 2.3 compares it with dreams but commentators argue that world is not māyā as dreams are. Bhāskara takes it as "artha-pratyaya-Śūnyatva", with Śaṅkara it is "dṛṣṭa-naṣṭa-svarūpatva", with Rāmānuja "as caryātmakatva" and "sarva-bhavana-samartya" with Vallabha. In stead of entering into the disputations of different schools of Vedānta, I have translated as "the power of Brahma called Māyā", though son etimes it is simply translated as "Illusion".

Verse 9: The portions marked with asterisks are the interpretations given by commentators mentioned in the brackets e.g. VJ.. ŚR.

occupying the hearts (of all) was sitting (by his side) worshipped him (Kṛṣṇa).

11. With his eyes blinded with tears of affection, he spoke to the sons of Pāṇḍu who sat near him with humility and love.

12. "Oh sons of Dharma ! Alas how painful! How much unjust ! You who have resorted to Brāhmaṇas, religious duties and Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa) do not deserve to lead such a miserable life !

13. When the unrivalled chariot-fighter Pāṇḍu passed away, with young offspring, my daughter-in-law Pṛthā (Kuntī) whose children were very young, was frequently subjected to great sufferings for your sake[298].

14. And I think whatever unpleasent (has happened to you) is brought about by Time (Fate) under whose influence lies all the world along with its guardians[299] of the quarters (of the world) just as a row of clouds under the control of the wind.

15. (Can there be calamity) where the king is the son of Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira), Bhīma (wolf-bellied one) with a mace in hand, the dark-coloured hero (Arjuna) the bearer of the Gāṇḍīva bow and the knower of missiles and (having) Kṛṣṇa as a well-wisher ?

16. Oh King! No body really could divine the intentions (lit. desire to do certain things) of this (Kṛṣṇa). As a matter of fact, even learned people who try with a desire to fathom it become perplexed.

17. Therefore, concluding (deciding) that all this is in the power of the Providence, Oh King ! Lord (of the people) the most excellent Bharata ! protect these protectionless subjects in compliance of His orders.

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298. JG. on verses 12-14 differs: 'It is very distressing to think that although you are the son of Dharma, you consider yourself unworthy of living. Moreover, being the refuge of Brāhmaṇas, it is also distressing to think and improper on your parts to consider that you are not fit to live.

299. Sa-pālaḥ—Along with the guardian deities of the eight cardinal points. They are as follows: Indra of the East, Agni (Fire) of the South-east, Yama of the South, Nirṛti of the South-east, Varuṇa of the West, Vāyu (wind) or Marut of the North-west, Kubera of the North, Īśāna or Śiva of the North-east.

18. This venerable Lord is veritable Nārāyaṇa the Primeval Man who deluding the world with his power called Māyā (illusion) moves incognito among the Vṛṣṇis.

19. Oh King ! Lord Śiva, the divine sage Nārada, the venerable lord Kapila know his (Kṛṣṇa's) secretmost prowess.

20. He whom you regard as maternal-cousin, a dear friend and the best well-wisher and to whom out of good feelings you employed as a counsellor, an emissary and a charioteer, is Nārāyaṇa Himself.

21. There never has been any change in his mind (regarding the dignity or otherwise) for acts performed by him (who is) the Soul of all, who is impartial, without a second, free from ego, and free from all sins.

22. (In spite of Kṛṣṇa's being equal to all), Oh protector of the earth ! Look at his compassion on (his) staunch devotees that Kṛṣṇa himself has appeared before me, when I am giving up life.

23. While concentrating the mind upon whom with devotion, and repeating whose name by words, a *Yogi*, who quits his body, becomes liberated from desires and actions.

24. Let the venerable four-armed God of gods whose lotus-like face is beaming with gracious (pleasing) smile and reddish eyes and who is the object of meditation, wait till I cast off this mortal frame (body)."

Sūta said :

25. On hearing that (speech of Bhīṣma), Yudhiṣṭhira asked (questions on) various (types of religious) duties (to Bhīṣma) who was lying in the bed of arrows (lit. cage of arrows) while the sages were listening.

26. Oh sage ! (Bhīṣma) the philosopher, described to him the religious duties prescribed according to the nature of men and those according to castes and stages of life; duties of two-fold characteristics (viz. those characterised by *Pravṛtti* or active participation in worldly life and those characterised by *Nivṛtti* or abstention from worldly activities) due to attaehment (rāga) and non-attachment (vairāgya) as (they, i.e. duties, have been) handed down in the sacred books (Vedas) (āmnāta).

27. [He explained] briefly and in details rules (duties) regarding charities, kingship, (laws pertaining to) the path of liberation, (duties) of women and those pertaining to the Bhāgavata religion.

28. (He described) the four goals of human life, viz. righteousness, attainment of worldly prosperity, Love and Liberation, along with the means to attain them as exemplified in different histories and legends.

29. While he was explaining religious duties, the time of the Summer solstice (as) longed for by Yogis who have the power to die as per their pleasure, also drew near.

30. Then (Bhīṣma), the leader of the thousands (of charioteers) concluded his speech. With his eyes unclosed, he fully concentrated his mind completely free from attachment, on the Primeval Man, the four-armed Kṛṣṇa with shining yellow garments, standing before him.

31. Bhīṣma whose sin was destroyed[300] by his purest concentration of mind[301] and whose pangs of wounds caused by weapons had immediately been removed (subsided) by his (Kṛṣṇa's favourable) glance[302] and the movements of whose sensory organs had stopped and the delusion (regarding the identity of the mind and the body) disappeared and who was (about) to quit this body praised Janārdana, i.e. Kṛṣṇa (as follows):

32. "Thus (at the time of my death) my mind free from thirst (i.e. desire for enjoyment of the fruition of actions) is fixed in the venerable Lord (Kṛṣṇa) the best in the Sātvata (Yādava) clan, who is overfull of abundance (lit. has surpassed

300. hatāśubhaḥ—'The Fate that was delaying his union with God'—VR., SD.

301. dhāraṇā—'Fixed attention'—

Patañjali defines it as 'Binding the mind-stuff to a place' (deśa-bandhas' cittasya dhāraṇā—Yoga Sūtra 3.1).

Vyāsa explains, "Binding of the mind-stuff, only insofar as it is fluctuation to some place" like the heart-lotus or the tip of the nose or to an external object is Dhāraṇā. Viṣnu Purāṇa and Nāradīya Purāṇa recommend Viṣṇu for such objects of concentration.

Woods—YSP p. 203-04.

302. īkṣayā—'By the mere sight of Kṛṣṇa'—VR.

abundance), and is full of ecstatic happiness that is inherent in Him, and who sometimes with a desire to play, associated himself with Prakṛti[303] or Māyā (illusion), from which starts the stream of worldly existence.

33. Immaculate be my devotion to the friend of Vijaya (Arjuna), i.e. Kṛṣṇa, who has assumed a body most fascinating in three worlds, with *Tamāla* (tree) like complexion, wearing spotless garment yellow like the rays of the morning Sun, and lotus-like face covered with pendent locks of hair.

34. May my mind be (concentrated) in Kṛṣṇa whose face was bedecked with drops of perspiration scattered by his hair flowing in all directions, (appearing) grey with dust (kicked up by the hoofs) of horses in the battle, and with his armour glittering with the dint of my keen-edged arrows piercing his body (lit. skin).

35. May my love be (fixed) on Pārtha's (Arjuna's) friend who, immediately after listening to the words (of request) of his friend, posted his chariot between the two armies, his and his enemy's, (and who as it were) carried away the lives (the life-spans) of the hordes of the enemy by a glance of his eyes.

36. Let my love be upon the feet of the Lord who by his spiritual knowledge (power) removed the wrong knowledge (understanding) [of Arjuna] who at the sight of the head (i.e. the leaders) of the (enemy) army at a distance, became averse to kill his kith and kin, thinking that to be a wrong act.

37. In order to (enable me to) carry out my vow, in supersession of his own (regarding non-participation in the battle with arms), he who was seated in a chariot jumped out, and carrying the wheel of a chariot and shaking the earth and with his upper garment fallen away, attacked me like a lion killing an elephant.

38. May the Lord Mukunda who being pierced by sharpened arrows, was bathed in blood, as his armour shattered;

303. Prakṛti—The Sāṁkhyas regarded this as the evolver of the universe and called it Pradhāna. It is translated as Nature or Matter as opposed to Spirit (Puruṣa). Later on, it came to be regarded as the personified will of the Supreme Being and the proto-type of the female sex, identified with Māyā or illusion and the Śakti or the energy of the deity.

ŚR. interprets this as 'Yoga Māyā'. Dowson—HMP. 240.

who in order to kill me, violently attacked me (rushed at me) who was endeavouring to kill him, be my shelter.

39. Let my devotion be in the Lord who treats the chariot of Arjuna as a member of his family, who has taken a whip (in his hand) and held the reins of the horses (in another), whose splendour is worth looking at, while I am lying at the door of death, as those who were killed after having a look at him, attain his resemblance in form.

40. [Let my love be on Kṛṣṇa] by imitating whose actions became verily merged with him, the cowherdesses who have performed the great worship by (their) graceful movements, amorous gestures, sweet smiles, solicitous looks, though (they were thus) blind with fatuation (for him).

41. This (Universal) Soul who, being attractive to look at, was endowed with the place of honour (agra-pūjā) in the assembly crowded with sages and prominent kings at the time of the Rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira, has manifested himself to me (lit. my sight).

42. I who have shed off differences (dualism—*bheda*) and delusion (*moha*), have attained to him, the unborn (aja), enthroned in (each and every) heart of beings (corporate beings)[304] created by him just as the Sun (though one) appears different to every (individual) onlooker."

Sūta said :

43. In this way, having merged himself with Lord Kṛṣṇa with the functions of his mind, speech, sight, he (Bhīṣma) ceased to breathe within.

44. Knowing that Bhīṣma is being merged with the attributeless Brahman, all kept quiet like birds after sunset.

45. There was a beating of drums by men and gods. The good ones among the kings praised him. Flowers were showered down from heaven (the sky).

46. Oh Bhārgava (Śaunaka of the Bhṛgu clan), Yudhiṣṭhira having got performed the funeral rites etc. of the deceased (Bhīṣma) became mournful awhile.

304. JG. observes that this verse should not be explained as having any reference to Brahma, as in V. 30 the reference is clearly to Kṛṣṇa.

47. Then (after the death of Bhīṣma), sages pleased Kṛṣṇa by (reciting) his sacred (guhya) names and with their hearts pleased and devoted to Kṛṣṇa they went back to their hermitages.

48. Then Yudhiṣṭhira along with Kṛṣṇa went to Hastināpura and consoled his uncle (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) and miserable Gāndhārī.

49. Then as per order of the uncle (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) and the consent of Vāsudeva, the powerful Yudhiṣṭhira ruled his ancestral kingdom as per religious precepts.

CHAPTER TEN

(Kṛṣṇa's Departure to Dvārakā)

Śaunaka said :

1. How did Yudhiṣṭhira,[305] the greatest among the upholders of religion, who regained his kingdom[306] after killing the heinous criminals, the grabbers of his wealth (kingdom),[307] proceed to rule his kingdom ? What did he do then ?

Sūta said :

2. Hari, the donor of prosperity to His devotees,[308] made the Kuru family which (due to internecine war and the missile Brahmāstra fired at their last scion Parīkṣit, then in womb) was burnt down like the jungle of bamboo-canes in a forest conflagration, sprout forth again (by reviving Parīkṣit). Verily, He

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305. v.l. *gaviṣṭhira*—One who is firm in his promise.

306. *pratyavaruddha-bhojanaḥ*—
(i) One whose enjoyment is lessened due to grief caused by the killing of his relatives—ŚR.
(ii) One who got enjoyment by the acquisition of kingdom—ŚR.
(iii) One who has regained his kingdom —VR.

307. *sva-riktha-spṛdhaḥ*—Those who fought for acquiring wealth—ŚR.

308. *bhava-bhāvanaḥ*—Makes Lord Śiva to meditate upon his Pastimes—VD.

(Hari) felt profound happiness after installing Yudhiṣṭhira on his own kingdom.

3. He (Yudhiṣṭhira) whose delusion had been dispelled by the dawning of accurate knowledge after listening to the speeches of Bhīṣma and Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa), and whose supporter was the invincible (Kṛṣṇa) and who was surrounded by his younger brothers, ruled over the earth circumscribed by the seas, as Indra, whose supporter was Acyuta (the Lord Viṣṇu) governed the Heaven.

4. It rained at the proper times; the earth (as if) milched out all the desired products; cows with big udders overflowing with milk, gladly drenched even the ground of the cowpens.

5. In every season, rivers, seas, mountains, medicinal plants, trees and creepers—all yielded (lit. fruitioned in) his (Yudhiṣṭhira's) desires.

6. While Yudhiṣṭhira (lit. one having no adversary) was the king, there was no mental anguish, physical pain and miseries caused by superhuman agencies, elements or body, to any being.

7-8. Having stayed in Hastināpura for alleviating the grief of his friend and for the pleasure of his sister, and having requested for and obtained permission to leave, Hari mounted the chariot embracing and saluting Yudhiṣṭhira, himself being embraced and bowed (by his hosts according to their status).

9-10. Subhadrā, Draupadī, Kuntī, the daughter of Virāṭa (Uttarā), Gāndhārī, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Yuyutsu, the twins (Nakula and Sahadeva), Kṛpa (of the Gautama clan), Bhīma, Dhaumya and ladies like Satyavatī (lit. the fisherman's daughter) and others swooned away (or were bewildered) as they could not bear separation from Kṛṣṇa (lit. the wielder of the Śārṅga bow).

11. A wise man, freed from association with bad persons due to good company, is not enthusiastic about giving it up; (similarly), having once listened to his enlightening glory, a wise man would not bear separation from him.

12. How can the sons of Pṛthā (Pāṇḍavas) who have entrusted (i.e. fixed) their minds on him in their acts of seeing,

feeling, talking (or conversing), sleeping, sitting and eating (with him), endure the (grief of) separation (from him)?

13. Looking at him with unwinking eyes and following him with their minds, all of them verily moved here and there and brought articles of worship etc. as they were deeply attached to him through affection.

14. When the son of Devakī (Kṛṣṇa) moved out of the house, the women-relatives controlled their (oozing) tears of (affectionate) anxiety, lest any evil should befall.

15. (At the time of the departure of Kṛṣṇa) were sounded the tabors, conchs, kettle-drums, lutes, cymbals, horns, *dhundhurī* (a musical instrument), large military drums, bells and large kettle-drums.

16. Ascending the tops of the palaces with a desire to see Kṛṣṇa, ladies of the Kuru clan, with eyes expressive of love, bashfulness and smiles showered flowers on Kṛṣṇa.

17. Arjuna (the Lord of Sleep), the dear one (friend of Kṛṣṇa) held over his dearest friend, a white umbrella decked with pearl-strings and jewelled handle.

18. Uddhava and Sātyaki held very wonderful fans (on both his sides) on the way. The lord of Madhu (Kṛṣṇa) who was being showered with flowers, appeared resplendent.

19. The true blessings uttered by the twice-born (Brāhmaṇas) which were inapplicable to the attributeless but to the soul possessing qualities, were heard (by Kṛṣṇa) at different places (wherever he went).

20. The mutual conversation of the ladies of the capital of the King of Kurus, whose minds were concentrated on Kṛṣṇa (lit. one whose glory dispels the darkness of ignorance) was attractive to the ears (minds) of all.[309]

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309. *sarva-śruti-manoharaḥ*—In SK. Śruti means 'the Veda' and 'the ear' and hence the commentators have differently interpreted this phrase as follows :

1. Even Upaniṣads incarnate would have complimented that conversation (sañjalpa)—ŚR., VC., SD.
2. Captivating to the ears, i.e. minds of all—VR., VD.
3. The presiding deities of the Vedas wondered how these ladies knew better the Lord—VD.
4. Containing the essence of all Upaniṣads—GD.

21.* This is verily the Primeval Man(spirit) who, without a second, existed in his own nature undifferentiated,[310] without any manifested universe before the disturbance of the equilibrium of the qualities (*guṇaś*) [which results in the creation of the universe] and in the night of the dissolution of universe when the individual souls lie absorbed[311] in the Supreme Spirit, with their powers lying dormant.

22. It is he, the revealer of the Vedas (scriptures) who, again, with a desire to attribute name and form to the nameless and formless spirit, presided over (lit. followed) his nature (*prakṛti*) which being directed by his power (viz. Time) has a desire to procreate, and deludes the individual souls—his own parts.

23. Verily this is he (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) whose feet (or real form), the sages who have subdued their sense-organs and have control over their life-force (by prāṇāyāma etc.) visualize, in this (very) world, with their hearts purified, due to their devotionful longing (to see him)[312]. Certainly[313] this very Kṛṣṇa is capable of completely purifying our intellect[314].

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*VR. explains—This Kṛṣṇa is the same person who is one and is both the material and efficient cause of the Universe (its creation etc). He alone was during the period called the night of Deluge (when all the three attributes were inactive) when all forces lay dormant, when He Himself, the Soul of the Universe of animates and inanimates, the Controller within, had withdrawn in himself the thought of creation and lay without creating gross products (the earth and other Bhūtas).

310. *aviśeṣa ātmani*—ŚR. explains 'niṣ-prapañce nijasvarūpe'.

311. *nimīlitātman* etc.—ŚR. raises the point about the possibility of merging of the souls (jīvas) as they are themselves Brahman and replies, "When all the powers of the individual souls are dormant, it is as good as destruction—*suptāsu śaktiṣu satīṣu jīvopādhi-bhūta-sattvādi-śakti-layaḥ eva jīva-layaḥ*|

312. GD. emphasizes that it is due to his grace (and not simply by the efforts of the sages) that he can be seen.

313. VJ. prefers the reading *na tu* and explains: He purified the heart thoroughly by devotion and not by action (*karma*).

VC. follows the reading *nanu* and explains : It is certain that this (Kṛṣṇa) alone can purify the intellect thoroughly and not Yogic exercises etc. The sagehood (*sūritva*), mastery over sense organs and control of life-force etc. are due to devotion (to him) alone and not to yogic practices.

314. ŚR. gives an alternative explanation :

24. Oh friend! This is verily he (Kṛṣṇa) whose meritorious episodes are eulogised in the Vedas, mystical scriptures (like Upaniṣads and Āgamas) by persons well-versed in the mysteries (of this literature), and who is the only one Lord, who out of his sportiveness creates, protects and destroys the universe, and is not attached to it.

25. In every age, when evil-minded kings rule (lit. live) irreligiously, this (Lord Kṛṣṇa) certainly assumes forms (incarnations) by his *sāttvic* power[315] and sustains the sovereignty (divine faculties of omnipotence, omnipresence etc.), truth, religious order,[316] grace and glory for the prosperity[317] (of persons who have resorted to his feet).

26. Oh! How wonderful it is that this Superman (lit. Supreme Being), the Lord of the Goddess Lakṣmī, has[318] made the race of Yadu[319], the most praiseworthy of the praiseworthiest by his birth (despite the curse of Yayāti and has rendered the forest of (the demon) Madhu[320] the sacredmost of the most sacred regions by his birth as well as by his wanderings.

When he goes out of sight, he may not please destroy his knowledge from our mind i.e. He would not be unseen although he might journey to a distant place. We should accompany him.

315. v.l. sātvataḥ—'To his devotees like gods etc.' (VJ.).

316. *ṛtaṃ*—(1) Speech which is both sweet yet true—VC., SD.
(2) Religious practice (anuṣṭhīyamāno dharmaḥ) —VB. I preferred this older connotation to
(3) *yathārthopadeśakatva* of ŚR., BP., GD.
(4) pious act (*puṇyaṁ karma*)—VR.

317. bhavāya—stability, preservation—ŚR., SD.; but I followed VJ., VC., VR., GD. and translated it as 'prosperity'.

318. The use of the present tense for this past event is vigorously defended by VC. on the ground that the pastimes of the Lord never end, due to their continuance in the infinite number of the worlds. VD. endorses VC. 's view.

319. *Yadu*—Son of king Yayāti of the Lunar race and founder of the Yādava clan in which Kṛṣṇa was born. He refused to bear the curse of old age passed upon his father by the sage Śukra and in consequence he incurred his father's curse. —DHM. 371.

320. *Madhu-vana*—This forest was the dwelling place of demon Madhu. Śatrughna founded a city—Mathurā—after Madhu's death here. This region includes the city of Mathurā and its surrounding region including Vṛndāvana—VB., GD.

27. Oh! Dvārakā (Kṛṣṇa's capital) surpasses the glory of the Heaven![321] It gives sanctity and glory to the earth as its resident-subjects always see their lord's smiling looks favoured on them in his grace.[322]

28. Oh friend! The ladies whose hands have been clasped by Him (in marriage) must have certainly worshipped the Lord (God) by observances of religious vows, ablutions and oblations to the sacred fire as they frequently drink the nectar of his lower lip for which the women of Vraja (Gokula) whose hearts were yearning for that nectar, entranced with fascination.[323]

29-30. Those ladies like the mothers of Pradumna (i.e. Rukmiṇī), Sāmba (viz. Jāmbavatī), Ambā (i.e. Nagnajitī) who were taken away (by Kṛṣṇa) after paying (their price) of valour, by subduing the powerful kings like Caidya (Śiśupāla)[324] and others at the assembly of suitors convened for the selection of the bridegroom by the bride, and thousands of others abducted ladies after killing the son of the Earth[325] (viz. the

321. VB. gives the details of the excellence of Dvārakā over the Heaven as follows :

There are gods in Svarga, in Dvārakā dwells the God of gods. There are heavenly damsels in Svarga while in Dvārakā lives the goddess of Wealth (Lakṣmī). The denizens of Svarga fall down (when their balance of good deeds is exhausted) while the citizens of Dvārakā go up (and are liberated from the worldly existence).

322. v.l. *anugrahoṣitam*—Who made it his place of residence out of his grace—ŚR. Vide VR.

anugraheṇa uṣitam adhivasantam |

VC.—Where his grace is desired—*anugraha eva iṣitaḥ iṣṭaḥ yatra tam |*

323. VC. and VD. explain:—The ladies of Vraja whose hearts were set on testing the nectar of (Kṛṣṇa's) lower lip, frequently fell in ecstatic swoon by remembering the previous night's kisses in the morning (one cannot imagine their condition at the time of actual kissing.)

324. *Caidya* (Śiśupāla)—son of Damaghoṣa and Śruta-śravā (sister of Vasudeva). He was the arch-enemy of Kṛṣṇa, as he (Kṛṣṇa) carried off Rukmiṇī, his proposed wife. At the time of the Rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira, he was slain by Kṛṣṇa in punishment of opprobrious abuse. —BPK 3118-9, DHM 294.

325. *Bhauma*—The son of the Earth i.e. the Asura Naraka; ruled at Prāgjyotiṣa; carried away 16000 women to his palace, robbed Aditi of her ear-rings and demanded Airāvata from Indra; at Indra's request

Asura Naraka—these, indeed, ennoble womanhood from which tenderness (or freedom) has been taken away and which is bereft of sanctity, since their lotus-eyed husband does not depart from their apartments and touches their hearts by his presents of desired objects (or by his sweet words of address).

31. Greeting with a smiling glance the words of women of the city talking among themselves in this way, Hari went his own way.

32. Yudhiṣṭhira apprehending danger from the enemies due to affection, appointed an army with four divisions (viz. Infantry, Cavalry, chariots and elephants) out of fond solicitude for the protection of the slayer of the Asura Madhu.

33. Having prevailed upon the affectionate Kauravas (i.e. King Yudhiṣṭhira and others who belonged to the Kuru clan) who, being distressed at the separation, accompanied him to a long distance, to return, he (Kṛṣṇa) proceeded to his capital with his dear ones.

34-35. Oh Bhārgava! Passing through the region of the Kurus, the Jāṅgalas, the Pāñcālas, the Śūrasenas, along with the Yāmunas, through Brahmāvarta, Kurukṣetra, the kingdom of Matsyas, the Sārasvatas, through deserts and arid regions, the lord with his horses somewhat tired reached the territory of Ānarta which lies beyond Sauvīra and Ābhīra.

36. He was greeted with respectful presents by the people of those (respective) regions through which he travelled. He bent his course westward in the evening when the Sun was sinking into the sea (-water).[326]

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killed by Kṛṣṇa at Prāgjyotiṣapura; the articles carried away by him were returned to their owners while all the women joined Kṛṣṇa's harem; Bhagadatta who sided with Duryodhana in the Mahābhārata war, was Naraka's son. —PI. 2.206-7, BDP. 163 PCK 1.513-14.

326. SR. alternatively explains :
(1) dismounting on the ground, and repairing to the banks of a river, he performed his evening duties.
(2) he went to the pastures in the guise of a cowherd.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

(Kṛṣṇa's Entrance into Dvārakā)

Sūta said:

1. Arriving in the country called Ānarta, his own kingdom, overflowing with prosperity, he blew his excellent conch, allaying thereby their depressed spirits.

2. Just as a white-bellied swan singing loudly in a cluster of red lotuses appears beautiful, so shone brightly the white-wombed conch, reddened by the red lower lip of Kṛṣṇa (lit. one whose steps are wide) and held in the hollow of (his red-) lotus-like palms while it was being blown by him.

3. Hearing that sound (blast) of the conch creating consternation in the heart of the terrors of the world, all subjects desirous of seeing their Lord, advanced to welcome him.

4. There, just as a lamp is offered to the Sun, those reverential subjects presented offerings to Him who is ever delighted and contented in himself, due to self-realization.

5. Like children speaking to their parents, they, with faces blooming with affection, and voice stiffled with joy, addressed their protector, the friend of all:

6. "Oh Lord! We are always submissive to your lotus-like feet adored by Brahmā, his off-spring (Sanaka etc.) and Indra (the lord of gods), the highest resort for the seekers of the supreme beatitude here, a shelter where Time [or death] which dominates everything else, is powerless.

7. Oh creator of the Universe ! Be thou for our prosperity.[327] You alone are our mother, friend, husband, father, spiritual preceptor, the supreme deity, by serving whom we consider ourselves as having become blessed.

8. Oh ! It is due to you that we have been blessed with a protector. We can behold what the gods can scarcely see, your form beautiful in all respects, your face beaming with affectionate smile and loving looks.

9. Oh lotus-eyed (Lord), when, with a desire to see (your) friends, Your Honour[328] departed to the land of Kurus

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327. *bhavāya*—our good, consisting of knowledge, devotion etc.—VJ.

328. v.l. *no bhavān*—Your Honour, leaving us in slight —ŚR.

or of the Madhus (Mathurā and region around it, including Vṛndāvana), Oh Acyuta ! to us, who are yours, (even) a moment (of separation from you) appears like a long period of ten million years—even as it happens to the eyes (blind-folded) in the absence of the light of the Sun."

10. Hearing such words spoken by his subjects and spreading out grace by his affectionate glances, Kṛṣṇa who was kind to his devotees, entered the city.

11. (The city which was) guarded by the Madhus[329], Bhojas[330], Daśārhas[331], Arhas[332], Kukuras[333], Andhakas[334] and Vṛṣṇis[335] who were as powerful as himself (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), like Bhogavatī[336] guarded by serpents.

12. Beautified with lotus-pools surrounded by orchards, flower-gardens consisting of sacred trees and creeper-pavilions, (full of) richness of flowers etc. (produced in) every season.

13. With triumphal arches erected in front of the city gates, house-doors and the public roads : the solar rays have been obstructed in the interior by the tops of banners and flags painted (with various designs).

14. With royal roads, streets, market places and quadrangular places swept clean and be-sprinkled with fragrant

329. *Madhus*—A family of the Yādava clan—BPK 233.

330. *Bhojas*—Descendants of king Mahābhoja of the Yādava clan —BPK 228.

331. Daśārha—Son of king Nirvṛti or Vidūratha of the Yādava clan, a founder of the dynasty of the same name. (BPK 137). Here it refers to that clan. They were related to Pāṇḍavas and defended Dvāravatī—PI. 2.79.

332. *Arhas*—a group of people defending Dvārakā and related to Pāṇḍavas—PI. 1.113.

333. *Kukuras*—a son of Andhaka and father of Dhṛṣṭa. Here his descendants, the defenders of Dvārakā. are implied—PI. 1.383.

334. Andhakas—A community of the Yādava tribe defending Dvārakā; at Dvāravatī their overlord was Ugrasena. Relieved by Kaṁsa's death, ended themselves by fighting with their kinsmen. Pl. 1. 67.

335. Vṛṣṇis—The descendants of Vṛṣṇi, the son of Madhu, whose ancestor was the eldest son of Yadu. Kṛṣṇa belonged to this branch of the Lunar race. —DHM 369.

336. Bhogavatī—The subterranean capital of the Nāgas in the Nāgaloka portion of the Pātāla. —DHM 54.

waters and strewn with fruits, flowers, grains of sun-dried rice and tender sprouts.

15. The doors of each house (of which city) were beautified by jars full (of water), curds, dried grains of rice, fruit and sugar canes, religious offerings, incense and lamps.

16-17. On hearing about the approach of the dearest one (Kṛṣṇa), the great-minded Vasudeva[337], Akrūra[338], Ugrasena[339], and Balarāma[340] of marvellous bravery, (17) Pradyumna[341], Cārudeṣṇa[342], Sāmba[343] the son of Jāmbavatī—all having refrain-

337. *Vasudeva*—son of Śūra of the Yādava clan; married seven daughters of Devaka, the youngest of them Devakī was the mother of Kṛṣṇa. After the death of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, he gave up his life in spiritual meditation and his four queens immolated themselves along with his body. (DHM 342-43, MNK Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī—300-1).

338. *Akrūra*—A Yādava, uncle of Kṛṣṇa; the son of Śvaphalka and Gāndinī; married a daughter of Ugrasena; as per order of Kaṁsa, brought Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma from Vraja to Mathurā for Dhanuryāga; on the way Kṛṣṇa showed to him his real Divine form. He is chiefly noted as being the possessor of the Syamantaka gem; was killed in the internecine fight amongst the Yādavas at Prabhāsa. (PI. 1.3-4, DHM.10).

339. *Ugrasena*—King of Mathurā, father of Kaṁsa and Devaka. He was deposed by Kaṁsa but Kṛṣṇa after killing Kaṁsa, restored Ugrasena to the throne. Later he stayed at Dvārakā. After Kṛṣṇa's death he entered fire.—(PI. 1.210).

340. *Balarāma*—Kṛṣṇa's elder step-brother.

341. *Pradyumna*—the eldest son of Kṛṣṇa by Rukmiṇī; when a child only six days old, he was stolen by the Asura Śambara who tried to kill him. Through sheer providence, he survived all attempts and grew up to manhood under the loving care of Māyāvatī, actually Rati, his (Pradyumna's) wife of his previous birth as Kāma. He killed Śambara, married Māyāvatī and both alighted by air inside Kṛṣṇa's palace. Kṛṣṇa presented the couple to Rukmiṇī. Pradyumna married Kakudmatī, the daughter of Rukmin and had by her a son named Aniruddha. Finally, Pradyumna got killed in the drunken brawl of the Yādavas at Prabhāsa. His wives burnt themselves as Satī.—(DHM 237-38; PI. 2. 416-17).

342. *Cārudeṣṇa*—a son of Jāmbavatī and Kṛṣṇa; a good archer. (PI. 1.598.)

343. Sāmba—A son of Kṛṣṇa by Jāmbavatī; was a noted warrior but led a dissolute life and scoffed at sacred things. When his friends disguised him as a pregnant woman and asked great sages like Viśvāmitra, Durvāsas, Nārada etc. whether she would beget a male child,

ed from sleeping, sitting and eating due to the extreme joyous excitement.

18. And being full of respect, joy and in a hurry out of love (for Kṛṣṇa), they, leading the principal elephant (of state) before them, advanced in chariots (to meet him) in company of Brāhmaṇas (with auspicious articles in their hands) reciting the Vedas, accompanied by the blowing of conches and musical instruments.

19. And hundreds of the best courtisans whose beautiful faces and cheeks were glowing with glittering ear-rings, being eager to see him, advanced to greet him in their conveyances.

20. Actors, dancers, singers, scholars versed in ancient legends, family bards and heralds[344] sang the wonderful deeds of him whose glory dispels ignorance.

21. Approaching near them, the Lord paid suitable respects to all the kinsmen, citizens and retainers, there.

22. Bowing down his head, saluting (orally), embracing, touching by hands, looking with smile, (giving) desired boons and consoling, the supreme Lord paid honours to all (classes of people) up to the outcaste dog-cookers (caṇḍālas).

23. Even he himself, being endowed benedictions by the superiors (or preceptors), Brāhmaṇas with their wives[345], old men, by bards and others, entered the city.

24. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! When Kṛṣṇa proceeded on the royal (main) road, women of the good families in Dvārakā, being

the sages told that Sāmba will give birth to an iron pestle (or club) which would destroy the Yādava clan. Though Ugrasena got the iron pestle pounded and cast into the sea, the particles grew into rushes, reeds which turned into weapons at the drunken brawl amongst the Yādavas and killed them all. Sāmba was killed in this fight.—(DHM 276, BPK 341, MNK 379).

344. Though all these are panegyrists, the last is applied to those who are learned among them.

ŚR. quotes the duties of these as follows :

Sūtāḥ paurāṇikāḥ proktā Māgadhā vaṁśa-śaṁsakāḥ/
Bandinas tvamala-prajñāḥ prastāva-sadṛśoktayaḥ //

but VD. states that Bandis are the eulogists of the present kings :

Vartamāna-nṛpāṇāñca stotāro bandinaḥ smṛtāḥ //

345. VB. thinks that this adjective should qualify all the persons in this verse.

greatly delighted at His sight, ascended on the tops of their houses.

25. For, the eyes of the residents of Dvārakā were not thoroughly satisfied, although they were always used to see the Imperishable (Kṛṣṇa), whose person is the home of beauty (and)

26. Whose bosom is the home of the goddess of wealth, whose face is (like) a drinking vessel (of the nectar) to the eyes, whose arms (are the shelter) of the guardians (of the quarters) of the world, and (whose) lotus-like feet are (the refuge) of the Cakravāka birds[346] (in the form of the devotees who sing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the essence of the universe).

27. Richly adorned with a white umbrella (lit. sunprotector) and Chouries, bestrewn with flowers showered (on him) on the way, the wearer of the yellow raiment (Kṛṣṇa) shone with the garland of forest flowers[347] just as a cloud would shine with (the shining beauty of) the Sun, the Moon (along with stars), the rainbow and the lightning[348].

28. (When) he entered (his) parents' house, he was embraced by his mothers. With joy, he bowed down with his head to his seven[349] (mothers) ofwhom Devakī was the chief.

29. Placing the son on the lap, the mothers who with their breasts wet with the milk of motherly affection were beside themselves with joy, sprinkled him with tears (of joy).

346. *sāraṅga*—A pun implying—
(1) the Cakravāka birds and
(2) singers of the essence (of the universe, viz. Lord Kṛṣṇa)—
sāraṁ Śrī Kṛṣṇaṁ gāyantī ti sāraṅgā bhaktāḥ /—ŚR.

347. *Vanamālā*—A garland prepared out of the flowers of Kunda, Pārijāta, lotus, Mandāra and Tulasī leaves :

Tulasī-Kunda-Mandāra-Pārijātāmbujais tu yā /
Pañcabhir grathitā mālā vanamāleti kīrtyate //

348. In plain words : Kṛṣṇa had a white umbrella on his head and *Chowries* on both sides. Flowers were showered on him on the way. He wore a yellow garment and a garland of forest flowers. On account of these, he appeared like a dark cloud.

349. Vasudeva had eighteen wives. Kṛṣṇa saluted them all, but special respect was shown to Devakī and her sisters. Vide ŚR:

mātṛ-sodaryād ādara-viśeṣa-jñāpanārtham uktam /

30. Then (Kṛṣṇa) entered his own mansion full of all coveted objects and unsurpassed by all other palaces wherein were the edifices of his sixteen thousand and also (one hundred and eight other) wives.

31. Having observed from afar their husband, returned home from a distant journey, the wives of Kṛṣṇa in whose minds rapturous joy was generated, and with eyes and faces full of bashfulness, immediately sprang from their seats (a bodily action) along with their vows[350] (which is a mental action).

32. Oh best of Bhṛgus ! They being of deep dispositions, embraced their husband with (their) hearts, eyes and (as if through) children. Owing to the distressed condition of their mind, the tears in their eyes though restrained, oozed out of the eyes of those bashful ladies.

33. Although he stood by their side in privacy, his pair of feet assumed newness (every moment). Who can desist from his feet which the goddess of prosperity (Lakṣmī) though (notoriously) fickle, never forsakes ?

34. Just as the wind subsides (after burning down a forest of bamboos) by means of fire begotten (of their mutual friction), similarly (Kṛṣṇa) (although) himself unarmed, got repose after creating hostility among the kings whose birth was a load to the earth, and causing them to kill one another, (with their power exhibited by their armies surrounding them).

35. Coming down in this world of mortals by his divine power (Māyā) and revelling among a bevy of beauties, gems of that sex, the very Supreme Lord enjoys himself like ordinary man.

36. Smitten by the pure and charming smile exhibiting their unrestrained nature and bashful looks of women, the adversary of the God of Love (i.e. Śiva) being fascinated abandoned his bow (*Pināka*). (But) women of transcendent beauty

350. *vrataiḥ sākam*—ŚR. explains : 'While observing the vows of women whose husbands have gone abroad'. It can also be taken as *sākaṁ vrataiḥ* which means that the rules for such women as prescribed by Yājñavalkya:

Kriḍāṁ śarīra-saṁskāraṁ samājotsava-darśanam /
Hāsyam para-gṛhe yānaṁ tyajet proṣita-bhartṛkā //
also : rose up along with the other ladies.

not by their cunning (deceits) ruffle the serenity of Kṛṣṇa's mind.

37. Verily people regarding (Lord Kṛṣṇa) just like (themselves), consider Him attached and following like pursuits, although he is really free from worldly feelings and passions. Hence the unwisdom (of the people).

38. This is the superiority of the Almighty that though he is associated with the Primordial Matter, He (Kṛṣṇa) is never affected by its qualities, just as Intellect though resorting to (i.e. in spite of its being in association with) the soul, does not acquire the properties of the soul.[351]

39. They, the ignorant wives (of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) not understanding correctly the greatness of their husband, thought the Lord as their slave abjectly ministering to their humour in private just as people (lit. minds) [think wrongly about God].

351. This verse is interpreted differently. For example :

"That is the control of the Controller (the Supreme spirit) that he (Kṛṣṇa) is not affected by the qualities of the Nature (Primordial Matter) despite His ever presence in the (working of the) Nature, just as the Intellect, though in intimate association with the eternally existing Soul is affected by the qualities inherent in the Supreme Spirit."

ŚR. explains *ātmasthaiḥ* etc : "as the intellect and happiness in the Soul do not unite with each other, similarly Kṛṣṇa is not affected by the attributes of Nature." He further adds, "It may be said that the intellect joins with the attributes of the Supreme Spirit and the material body with its qualities unites with the intellect and the individual spirit with condition; but the Supreme Spirit does not imbibe the qualities of nature, although He is present in it."

VJ. a follower of the Dualistic School of Vedānta explains : The ruling nature of the Supreme Spirit consists in that, though (he is) abiding in Primordial Nature (Prakṛti), he is not limited by Sattva and other attributes, as also by Śabda etc. which are under his control; just as the (Intellect) of the wise. though abiding in the Primordial Nature (Prakṛti), is not affected by the qualities of the Prakrti, as the Intellect fixed on Kṛṣṇa, is not affected.

JG. follows mainly ŚR. but in explaining the 2nd line of the verse he states, " . . . as the mind of the devotees under the benign care of the Supreme Lord, is in no way affected by, though it may come in contact with Nature".

CHAPTER TWELVE

(Birth of Parīkṣit)

Śaunaka said :[352]

1. The foetus in the womb of Uttarā which was killed by the missile Brahmaśiras of immense heat, fired (lit. flung, hurled) by Aśvatthāman, was restored to life by the Lord.

2-3. If you be so pleased[353] to speak, I desire to hear the birth, actions (life), the way he met death and the state after death of that highly intelligent and great-souled Parīkṣit. Narrate to us reverentials (about him whom) Śuka imparted knowledge.

Sūta said :

4. Dharmarāja who, due to his service to the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, became unattached to all objects of enjoyment, protected the subjects keeping them contented, with paternal care.

5. Riches, sacrifices, subjects,[354] the queen-consort, brothers, the earth and sovereignty over the isle of Jambū,[355] and glory reaching as far as the heaven.

6. Oh Brāhmaṇas! Did those objects of enjoyments covetable even to gods, yield joy to the king whose mind was concentrated on Kṛṣṇa as (objects) other (than food do) to the hungry ? [No].

7-8. Oh son of Bhṛgu ! while being scorched by the flames of the missile (Brahmāstra) in the womb of the mother, the hero (Parīkṣit) saw a certain Being, of the size of a thumb,

352. In Bh. P. 1.7.12 Sūta has promised to describe the life and career of Parīkṣit. After describing how Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā after restoring the Pāṇḍavas to their ancestral kingdom, this topic is now taken up.

353. ŚR. states that this expresses prayer or a request and not a command.

354. *Lokāḥ*—attainment of heavens as a result of the sacrifices —ŚR.

355. *Jambūdvīpa*—One of the seven island-continents surrounding Meru. It is so named on account of the abundance of Jambū (Engenia Jambolana) trees. India forms the major part of this island.

pure, wearing a crown of shining gold, of beautiful appearance, dark complexion, with garments (shining) like the lightning and Imperishable—

9. Of beautiful long four arms, (with) ear-rings of bright (heated) gold, (with) eyes red like blood, with a mace in hand, going around him in all directions, waving (around) constantly the meteor-liked bright mace—

10. (Parīkṣit) examined carefully who was this (Being) near him extinguishing the flames of the missile by his mace like the Sun dispersing the mist.

11. Having warded off (the Brahmāstra), the omnipresent Lord, Hari, of infinite nature and the protector of religion,[356] disappeared then and there, while the foetus of ten months was looking on.

12. Then, (at the auspicious time) when the favourable planets were in the ascendance, (indicating progressive) increase of all qualities the scion to the dynasty of Pāṇḍu was born, with the prowess like Pāṇḍu reborn.

13. Having got the ceremonial repetition regarding the auspiciousness of the day[357], the king, with a happy heart, got the ceremony of birth[358] (or astrological calculation of the nativity of a child) performed by Brāhmaṇas like Dhaumya, Kṛpa and others.

14. The king, the knower of the sacred places (and of the proper time, person etc. for donating gifts) gave gold, cows, lands, excellent villages, elephants, horses and sweet food (dishes) to Brāhmaṇas at the auspicious time of the birth of his progeny[359].

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356. *Dharma-gup* : (1) The protector of religion or righteousness (ŚR.) (2) The protector of kings—the protector of religion (VD.) (3) The Performer of his duty of protecting his devotees (VR.) (4) The observer of religion (VJ.)

357. *Puṇyāha-vācana*—Repetition of the words 'This is an auspicious day' three times at the commencement of most of religious ceremonies. —ASDP (V.S. Apte : the Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1965).

358. This is technically known as Jātakarman.

359. ŚR. quotes here a smṛti text which states, "gifts given at the time of a male child and at the time called 'Vyatipāt' fruition in eternal good". It further states that gods and Manes (Pitṛs) remain present at the time of the birth of a male child to twice-born, declaring that as an

15-16. Brāhmaṇas, pleased (as they were) with the modest king, spoke, "Oh chief among the descendants of Puru ! When this pure scion of the Puru race was nearly brought to death by the unavoidable Fate, he was given to you by the mighty Viṣṇu out of his grace."

17. He, therefore, will be widely known in the world as 'Viṣṇurāta'. (There is) no doubt that he will be the most famous and the greatest devotee".

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

18. Oh, the best amongst the venerable ones ! Will he emulate his great-souled forefathers of holy reputation, the royal sages, in fame and good will (lit. expression of approbation)?

Brāhmaṇas said :

19. Oh son of Pṛthā (Yudhiṣṭhira), this (Viṣṇurāta alias Parīkṣit) will be the protector of subjects like Ikṣvāku, the son of Manu incarnate, friendly to Brāhmaṇas and true of word like Rāma, the son of Daśaratha.

20. This (Parīkṣit) will be munificent and protector (of the seekers of shelter) like Śibi[360], the king of Uśīnara, and a contributer to the glory of his relatives, the performers of sacrifices like Bharata[361], the son of Duṣyanta.

21. This (Viṣṇurāta will be) the foremost among the archers like both the Arjunas (viz. Arjuna, the Pāṇḍava and Arjuna son of Kṛtavīrya of Haihaya dynasty), unassailable like fire, unsurpassable (of unfathomable mind) like the sea.

22. He will be brave like the lion (lit. king of beasts),

auspicious day (*puṇyāha*). ŚR. quotes another text which explains that there is no impurity on account of the birth of a child until the umbilical cord is cut. VD. endorses the above views by quoting from the *Viṣṇu-dharma* and *Varāha*. VB., GD. and others follow ŚR.

360. Śibi—He is said to have saved Agni (the god of fire) in the form of a dove from Indra in the form of a hawk, by offering his own flesh equal to the weight of the dove to be so released. When the dove went on increasing weight in the balance, Śibi offered his own body completely.

361. *Bharata*—a son of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā; brought up in his childhood by Kaṇva; became a *cakravarti* after his father; performed 55 horse sacrifices on the banks of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā; he subjugated Kirātas, Hūṇas, Yavanas, Andhras and all other Mlecchas. He was such a reputed emperor that India was named after him.

worthy of taking shelter just as the Himālayas (are worth inhabiting), forbearing like the earth[362] and tolerant like parents.

23. (He would be) like the God Brahmā (or his grandfather Yudhiṣṭhira) in impartiality (or absence of hatred), like lord Śiva (the Lord of the Mountains) in graciousness, like the god Viṣṇu (the shelter of the goddess of wealth) in being the refuge of all beings.

24. This (Prince would be) equal to lord Kṛṣṇa in the eminence of virtues, generous like Rantideva[363] and righteous like Yayāti.[364]

25. (He will be) like Bali[365] in courage; of (sincere) devotion like Prahlāda, performer of (many) horse-sacrifices, a worshipper of scholars[366].

26. This (prince will be) the father of royal sages, the dispenser of punishment to persons going astray (taking to the

362. VC. adds that Parīkṣit was more forbearing than the earth, as the earth has not to suffer sharp, scathing words of the enemies, as he would have to do.

363. *Rantideva*—A pious and benevolent king of the Lunar race, sixth in descent from Bharata. He was enormously rich, very religious, charitable and performer of grand sacrifices. So many animals were sacrificed at his sacrifices and in his kitchen that a river of blood had issued from hides and was afterwards appropriately called Carmaṇvatī (Chambal in Malwa region). (DHM 263, ASDP. 795.)

364. *Yayāti*—Son of Nahuṣa of the Lunar race; had two wives, Devayānī, the daughter of Śukra the preceptor of the Asuras, and Śarmiṣṭhā, the Asura Princess daughter of Vṛṣaparva. From Devayānī was born Yadu and he founded the Yādava dynasty. Puru was his son from Śarmiṣṭhā. He bore the curse of Śukra and exchanged his youth to his father's decrepitude. Yayātī afterwards felt ashamed, returned the youth to Puru; made him a king and retired to forest. Puru was the founder of the Paurava dynasty. (DHM 376-77.)

365. *Bali*—A good and virtuous Daitya king, son of Virocana and grandson of Prahlāda. Through his devotion and penance, he defeated gods and extended his authority over three worlds. Viṣṇu had to incarnate as a dwarf and beg from Balī a piece of land measuring three steps. When the boon was granted, Viṣṇu manifested his real form and stepped over heaven and earth in two strides. Bali was made to live in Pātāla, the lowest region of the world. (DHM 43.)

366. vṛddhānāṁ jñāna-vṛddhānām paryupāsakaḥ sevakaḥ. The usual meaning is 'servant of the old people'.

wrong path), the controller of Kali for the (preservation of) religion on the earth.

27. Having heard of his (prospective) death from Takṣaka commissioned by (the curse of) the sage's son, (Śṛṅgin, the son of Śamīka), he, freeing himself from worldly attachments, will resort to the feet of Hari (in the holy assembly on the bank of the Ganges).[367]

28. This (prince) who after having enquired (and subsequently realized) the true nature of the Soul[368] from the sage (Śuka), the son of Vyāsa, will certainly attain to the place, free from fear from any quarter (i.e. liberation).

29. After predicting to the king (the details of Parīkṣit's future life), all the Brāhmaṇas, expert in astrological calculations of nativity, getting (their due) worship (and offerings), returned to their respective homes.

367. *Hareḥ padam*—Gaṅgā- tīra - sat - sabhām, tatra hi bhagavatpadam abhivyaktam/VB.

GD. endorses the same in different words.

368. jijñāsita-ātma-yāthātmya—

To understand the different interpretations of the commentators it is important to note that different schools of Vedānta hold different views regarding the relations between individual Soul (jīva) and God. Thus Madhva regards *jīvas* as parts of God but they are distinct from him, and the identity of the Brahman and the *jīvas* is only in a remote sense. According to Nimbārka, individual Souls (*jīvas*) are different from God and yet are similar to him : He regards *jīvas* as God's parts, but emphasizes the distinctness of the *jīvas* as well as their similarity to him. Rāmānuja thinks that God holds the *jīvas* within himself and by his will dominates all their functions, by expanding or contracting the nature of *jīva's* knowledge. Vallabha holds that the *jīvas*, being parts of God, are one with Him. They appear as *jīvas* through his function as *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva*, by which certain powers and qualities that exist in God are obscured or manifested in the *jīva*.

Like ŚR. given above, VC states :

jijñāsitaṁ vicāritam ātmano yāthārthyam vāstavaṁ tattvam yena /

(ii) who has enquired of and got the decisive (accurate) knowledge about the real nature of the individual Soul and the Supreme Soul—VR.

(iii) One who has enquired of and got a clear decision by 'Thisthus-ness' (*idamitthatayā*) of the real nature of the identity of the individual Spirit (jiva) and God—VB.

30. As the king, meditating him (supreme lord) whom he saw in the embryo, (will) examine (look for him) (for discovering him) in the men here, he will come to be known as Parīkṣit in this world.

31. The (well-known) prince who was dáily being fed by his grand-fathers (on 64 objects of enjoyment) quickly thrived like the moon which grows in size by its digits, during the bright half of the month.

32. The king, wishing to expiate the sin for injury to (and killing of his) relatives, by performing a horse-sacrifice, and being short of funds for the same, pondered over the ways (to procure money) by means other than levying (new tax and inflicting fines).

33. Guessing his (Yudhiṣṭhira's) desire, and being directed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the four brothers brought immense riches left (buried) in the northern quarters[369].

34. Having procured the requirements of sacrifice, Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, afraid of sin, worshipped Hari by performing three horse-sacrifices.

35. The Lord who was invited by the king (Yudhiṣṭhira) made him (the king) to perform the sacrifice by the Brāhmaṇas and stayed for some months with a desire to render services to his friends.

36. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka), then, after taking leave of king (Yudhiṣṭhira), his brothers and Draupadī (Kṛṣṇa), surrounded by Yādavas and accompanied by Arjuna went to Dvāravatī (Dvārakā).

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369. This refers to the treasures of king Marutta left over by him after performing his sacrifices. This Marutta was the son of Āvikṣit and father of Dama. His sacrifices were of high order. He was a great friend of Indra. (PI. I. 649)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(Discourse of Nārada)

1. Having learnt the knowledge of the Soul[370] from Maitreya[371] during the course of his (Vidura's) pilgrimage, Vidura[372] returned to Hastināpura as his desire for knowledge was satisfied.

2. While Vidura (Kṣattā) asked a number of questions to Maitreya (Kauṣārava), he certainly[373] desisted from them when complete, whole-minded devotion for Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) was generated in him.

3. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! finding his relative arrive, Yudhiṣṭhira along with his younger brothers, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Yuyutsu[374], Sañjaya, Kṛpa, Kuntī,

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370. *ātmanogatim*—(i) The Lord Hari, (who is the highest goal of achievement)—ŚR.
(ii) Knowledge about the real nature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa—VD.
(iii) Devotion to Hari—JG., VD.
(iv) Knowledge about the Supreme Spirit—VR., VJ.
(v) Knowledge about heaven, hell etc. to which the individual soul goes (after death)—VJ.
(vi) The diversions or the workings of the Lord (Kṛṣṇa), the (Supreme) Soul—VB.

371. *Maitreya*—Also Kauṣārava, a *siddha* who under instructions from Kṛṣṇa explained the science of the Supreme Soul (*ātmavidyā*) to Vidura. The conversation between Vidura and Maitreya is given in BH. P. Skandha III and IV. (P.I. 2. 739-40.)

372. *Vidura*—A son of Vyāsa by a maid-servant. She was sent by Ambikā, the widowed queen of Vicitravīrya, to Vyāsa when she (the queen) was pressed by her mother-in-law Satyavatī to submit to Vyāsa. Vidura is called a *kṣattṛ* (vide the next verse) which is normally applied to a child born of a Śūdra man and Kṣatriya woman (ASDP. 384). He was however treated as a step-brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He was well disposed to Pāṇḍavas and warned them of the evil designs of Duryodhana. According to MBH., Vidura left Hastināpura finally along with Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī for penance. He then went away to perform austere penance alone in the forest. When Yudhiṣṭhira contacted him in a lonely place, Vidura, by his Yogic power, gave up his body and entered the person of Yudhiṣṭhira (MBH. Āśrama 26.20.33). —MNK. 309-12.

373. *ha*—This particle shows 'complete satisfaction'—VJ.

374. *Yuyutsu*—Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son from of a Vaiśya woman. He was a partisan of Pāṇḍavas.

4. Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadrā, Uttarā, Kṛpī[375], women of Pāṇḍu's clan and other women, along with their children,

5. advanced to receive him with great joy, like the body animated by the re-entry of life in it. Having formally received him by duly embracing and saluting Vidura,

6. they who were distressed with anxious sorrow caused by separation from him, shed tears of affection. The king paid respects to Vidura when he occupied his seat.

7. When Vidura enjoyed his food, was relieved of fatigue and was seated comfortably in his seat, the king bowed him respectfully and asked him in the presence of his relatives who were listening.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

8. "Do you remember us who grew up under the shadow of your wings (i.e. protection due to your partiality to us), who were saved along with our mother from a number of calamities like (the administration of) poison, (setting on) fire (the house of *lac*) and others.

9. In what way was your maintenance[376] (livelihood) carried on while you were travelling over the globe ? What places of pilgrimage and important sacred places on this earth[377] were visited (lit. served) by you ?

10. Oh self-controlled one (Vidura) ! Devotees of the Lord (Viṣṇu) like you are themselves *tīrthas* (sacred places) incarnate. With the Holder of the Mace (God Viṣṇu) residing in the hearts, they sanctify the places of pilgrimage (and restore their original holiness by removing the sins of other persons accumulated in them).

375. *Kṛpī*—Droṇa's wife, sister of Kṛpa, Aśvatthāman's mother.

376. VB. explains that here the genitive case (*vaḥ*) is used. as Vidura was unattached and actively disinterested in his life. Hence the instrumental case is not used. VJ. states that Yudhiṣṭhira wanted to know whether Vidura observed vows like eating once a day etc. during his pilgrimage.

377. The distinction between *Tīrtha* and *Kṣetra* is as follows: *Tīrthas* are generally connected with water like sanctified rivers as the Ganges, lakes, like Puṣkara, Mānasa etc. *Kṣetra* is originally a limited sacred tract of land e.g. Kurukṣetra, Jagannātha Purī. Later on, they came to mean 'holy places' in general.

11. Oh father (uncle), have you visited our well-wishers and relatives whose god is Kṛṣṇa? Or have you heard that the Yādavas are living happily in their own city (Dvārakā) ?"

12. Vidura, who was thus addressed by Dharmarāja (Yudhiṣṭhira), described fully everything that was experienced by him, in a serial order except the destruction of the Yadu-clan.

13. The compassionate (Vidura being) unable to see distressed persons, did not, of course, report the disagreeable (destruction of the Yādava clan) which (though) took place of itself, was very unbearable to men.

14. Then being received like a god, (Vidura) teaching philosophy (lit. giving instructions on truth) to his elder brother, and securing the love of all, stayed happily for some time, in the city of Hastināpura.

15. While Yama bore the curse[378] of (living) the life of a Śūdra for a hundred years, Aryaman (the 2nd Sun out of the twelve Suns) dispensed punishment to the sinners according to their (respective) sins.

16. With kingdom restored to him and with great royal splendour, Yudhiṣṭhira, having seen his grandson, the maintainer of his family, was happy with his brothers (who were) like the guardians of the quarters (of the world).

17. In this way, unendurable Time of the negligent (blundering people[379]) attached to households (domestic

378. The sage Māṇḍavya was wrongly sentenced to be impaled as he was mistakenly arrested along with the thieves. When the king came to know of the truth, he went to the sage Māṇḍavya, got him down from the stake of impalement and sincerely apologised. Māṇḍavya went to Yama and demanded of him the reason of impalement despite his innocence. Yama explained to him that it was due to his transfixment of an insect during his childhood. He cursed Yama to be born as a Śūdra for giving him such a disproportionately heavy retributory punishment for a comparatively light offence committed during infancy, due to ignorance.

379. JG., VC., VD. exempt Pāṇḍavas from this category, as according to BH. P. 1.12.6 Yudhiṣṭhira (and others) were unattached to enjoyment due to their devotion to Kṛṣṇa. JG. specifically states that Vidura gave the advice only to Yudhiṣṭhira and not to Pāṇḍavas. VR. states that the time or period ordained for worldly enjoyment of Pāṇḍavas had passed.

affairs) passed away inperceptibly, due to their desire (of enjoyment) of such pleasures.

18. Noticing the indications of the Time, Vidura spoke to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "Oh king! look at the fear (-ful period); let your departure be quick.

19. Oh king, the mighty Time against which no defence can ever be made from any quarter in this world, has now arrived for us all.

20. And overpowered by whom, these people are instantly deprived of their dearest life—what of other things like wealth etc.

21. Your father (i.e. uncle Bhīṣma), brothers, friends and sons are killed. Youth has departed. Your body is overpowered by old age. Still you take shelter in the house of the enemy.

22. Oh! How wonderfully strong is the desire of a living being, for life, on account of which Your Honour accepts like a domestic dog, a lump of food scornfully given to you by Bhīma.

23. What value is to that life spared by them (Pāṇḍavas) who were put to fire, were administered poison and whose wife was insulted by you and whose lands, wealth and kingdom were also taken away (deprived by) you.

24. This body of a miserly man like you who wishes to live, becomes old by old age even though you do not wish it, like (the withering away of) your under and upper garments.[380]

25.* Certainly that person is called wise who being free from attachment to worldly objects and released from the bondage (of pride or ego) and departing in a mysterious way, leaves this body, free from (the desire of) glory etc.

380. VJ., VC. and VD. explain that the upper and inner garments signify gross and subtle bodies. Wrinkles, baldness mark the oldness of the gross body and blindness, deafness etc. of the subtle body.

*VR. interprets as follows :

A person who being desireless (about his body etc.), free from the worldly bondages (of merits and sins). whose passing away is not known (to his relatives), quits this body from which objectives of worldly life (*puruṣārthas*) are expected, is called a *Yogin*.

VJ. gives a different interpretation, which may be summarised as follows :

26. He is the best of men in whom indifference to the world (worldly objects) is generated either from within or due to the advice of others and who has subdued his mind and who, with Hari in his heart[381], goes out of home as a recluse.

27. Let Your Honour proceed to the northern direction without the knowledge of your relatives. Mostly the coming period is destructive to the qualities of men.

28. In this way, the king of the Ajamīḍha[382] family, whose intellect was his sight (i.e. who was physically blind) and who was thus enlightened by his younger brother Vidura, firmly cut as under his bond of affection to his relatives and proceeded as per way directed by his brother.

29. The virtuous daughter of Subala[383] ever devoted to her husband, followed him to the Himālayas, (which is) a great delight of the recluses just as fighting (lit. hard blows in fight) is (enjoyable) to warriors[384].

30. When Yudhiṣṭhira (lit. the adversaryless king, enemy of none) after performing *Sandhyā* (prayer to the Sun) and offering oblations to fire, and having bowed to Brāhmaṇas by giving sesame seeds, cows, land and gold, entered the house (palace of Dhṛtarāṣṭra) for paying respects to the elders, he did not find his uncles and Gāndhārī (the daughter of Subala).

A person, free from the (pride of his) body, the object of which is the achievement of happiness here and hereafter and thereby liberated from the bonds (of love for one's wife and others) and whose movements (i.e. departure to forest etc.) are not known, is called wise and should by penance make his body fulfil its objective (viz. liberation).

381. VB. is strongly against even spiritual suicide. One should know the Lord, concentrate on him in his heart, give up the idea of quitting his body. He should continue to recite mentally the most valuable name of God and leave his house as it would come in his way of spiritual progress.

382. *Ajamīḍha*—A son of Hastin. Had three queens of Kuru line. One branch of his descendants, e.g. Priyamedha and others became Brāhmaṇas while another branch, e.g. Bṛhadiṣu and others, was Kṣattriya —BPK 6, PI. 1.30.

383. *Subala*—King of Gāndhāra; father of Gāndhārī, Dhṛtarāṣṭra's queen.

384. v.l. *sat-saṃprahāram* : Just as a severe battle in which hard blows are given, is liked by the brave, the Himālayas though cold and full of hardships (due to its mountaneous nature) are liked by ascetics.

31. Agitated in mind, he asked Sañjaya who was sitting there, "Oh son of Gavalgaṇa[385], (Saṇjaya) where is our father (uncle)who is stricken with age and blind in eyes ?

32. Oh friend ! Where has Mother (Gāndhārī) distressed due to the killing of her sons, gone (along with) friendly uncle (Vidura)? Has he (Dhṛtarāṣtra), being aggrieved at the killing of his relatives and afraid of me (as) the guilty ignorant (person),[386] thrown himself in the Gaṅgā along with his wife ?

33. Where have uncles who have protected all of us from dangers (difficulties) after the demise of our father Pāṇḍu, gone from this place?

Sūta said:

34. Not finding his master (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), the Sūta (Sañjaya) who, out of compassion and bewilderment due to his affection (for Dhṛtarāṣṭra). grew extremely distressed and emaciated, did not reply (for some time).

35. Wiping out tears by (his) hands and mustering courage (within himself), and remembering the feet of his master, he replied to Yudhiṣṭhira.

Sañjaya said:

36. 'Oh, son of a high family! I do not know the decisions (regarding the course of actions) of your uncles or that of Gāndhārī. Oh long-armed one, I am bereaved of the great-souled ones.'

385. *Gavalgaṇa*—A sage like learned Sūta, father of the famous Sūta Sañjaya of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

386. *āśaṁsamānaḥ śamalam*—Various conjectures are given by the commentators in explaining these words. For example :

(1) Yudhiṣṭhira has not spared a single son. What is the propriety of living now ? — VC.

(2) Yudhiṣṭhira has killed his brothers, usurped their kingdom and expelled me. Has he not become so evil-minded ?—VJ.

(3) 'Let the sin of my death also be visited on his head'. With this desire Dhṛtarāṣṭra threw himself in the Ganges.—JG.

It can also be translated : "apprehensive of an offense from me, a dull-witted person."

37. At that time (there) arrived the great sage Nārada along with Tumburu[387]. He (Yudhiṣṭhira) along with his younger brothers, rose up, saluted them, received them in a way, and asked.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

38. "Oh revered (sage), I do not know the movements of my uncles. Where have they gone from here ? Or where has the poor mother afflicted with the killing of her sons, gone?

39. Oh illustrious one, you are like a helmsman who shows the coast beyond, in this boundless ocean (of worldly existence)."

Thereupon the great Nārada, the best of the sages, replied.

40. "Oh king, do not grieve for anybody as the whole world is under the control of the Almighty, the Controller (of the universe) whom all worlds along with their guardian deities worship, and who unites or separates the beings.

41. Just as bullocks with noses bored through with strings are bound in a row to a rope (carry the load of the master[388], persons bound by different designations[389] to the big cord in the from of the Veda, carry out the orders of (or perform the worship of) the controller of the universe.

42. Just as assembling and removal of articles of game are done according to the sweet will of the player, so is the union and separation of human beings (brought about) by the will of the Almighty.

43. Even if you consider the world as eteṛnal or non-eternal or both, or neither (eternal and non-eternal) it does not behove you at all to lament for them (relatives) unless it be out of affection, a manifestation of delusion.

387. *Tumburu*—A Gandharva disciple of Nārada, expert in divine music; accompanied Nārada at the time of this visit to Yudhiṣṭhira and returned with him to heaven. Sang the praise of Kṛṣṇa when he held the Govardhana. His two daughters Manovatī and Sukeśā reside in the Sun's chariot in the months of Caitra and Madhu. —PI. 2.29

388. Though no words in the text of this verse support this these words are added in this translation on the authority of eminent commentators like ŚR., VJ., SD., GD.

389. Designations such as Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya or of stages in life, e.g. Brahmacārin, Gṛhastha.

44. Therefore, dear sir, give up this grief caused by ignorance of your mind, (thinking) 'How will they who are without protection and in a miserable condition, live without my protection ?'

45. This body is composed of five elements and is subject to the (influence of) Time and (effects of) actions and attributes. How can (a person) save another, like one being swallowed by a serpent (is unable to save) others ?

46. The handless (animals) are the means of sustenance (of life) to the beings possessed of hands (viz. human beings); the footless (i.e. grass) (is so) to the quadrupeds; the inferior are (the food) of the superior; (thus all less powerful) beings are the means of sustaining life to (all other more powerful) beings.

47. Oh king, this (universe) is, therefore, the self manifesting glorious Lord (himself). He is one, the soul of Souls. He shines (manifests) internally and externally (both as enjoyer and the objects of enjoyment). Look, He is manifold (in form) due to Māyā.[390]

48. Oh great king, the Supreme Lord, the creator of beings, has today come down on this earth as the Destroyer for exterminating the enemies of Gods.

49. The work to be done for Gods is (practically) completed, (only some) balance is expected to be completed. You wait for some time, till the God (Lord Kṛṣṇa) is here (on this earth).

50. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, accompanied by his consort Gāndhārī and (his) brother (Vidura) has gone to the hermitage of sages, by the southern side of the Himālayas.

51. (The hermitage) is called *Saptasrota* (the shrine of seven streams) as verily the divine Ganges with her seven currents branches itself off into seven separate streams for the satisfaction of the seven sages.[391]

52. Taking bath three times a day (as per twilights),

390. I have mainly followed ŚR. in this literal interpretation, though as usual commentators of non-Śaṅkara Schools stress their viewpoints as 'tātparyārtha'.

391. The usual list of seven sages is Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha.

and offering libations to the fire according to the prescribed religious rules, he who lives on water only, stays with a quiet Soul, free from earthly desires.

53. With mastery over (*Yogic*) posture and control over breath and restraint of six organs [five sense organs+mind, the internal organ], he (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) has washed off (lit. shattered) the dirt of the three attributes (viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) by his concentration on Hari (Lord Kṛṣṇa).

54. Having withdrawn mind (ātman associated with Ego-ahaṁkāra —) from the gross body and merged it with intelligence (*buddhi* or *Vijñānātmā*) and that with Soul (*kṣetrajña*) and the Soul with Brahman, the basis of all, just as the Vacuum (space) within a jar merges in the bigger Space.

55. One who has destroyed the resultant of the attributes of the Illusion (*māyā*) and restrained mind (the essence i.e. controller of the mind) and one who has abstained from eating altogether, he (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) sits motionless like a pillar. You should not become an obstacle to him who has given up all actions.

56. He will verily give up his own mortal frame on the fifth day from today and it will be reduced to ashes.

57. When the body of the husband (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) will be burnt by fires along with the hut (hermitage), the virtuous wife (Gāndhārī) standing outside will enter that very fire.

58. Oh son of the Kuru family, having seen that miracle, Vidura with a mixed feeling of joy (at Dhṛtarāṣṭra's liberation) and sorrow (for his brother's demise) will go on a pilgrimage to sacred places."

59. Having told this, Nārada, along with Tumburu, ascended to heaven. Yudhiṣṭhira, bearing his words in mind, gave up sorrow.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(*Conjectures of Yudhiṣṭhira*)

Sūta said :

1-2. When Arjuna (lit. the victorious) left for Dvārakā to see the relatives and to know the actions (and intentions) of Kṛṣṇa of holy reputation, several months elapsed, but Arjuna did not return. Then Yudhiṣṭhira (the foremost of the Kurus) saw omens of terrific nature.

3-5. (He observed):

The terrible state of Time in which the nature of the seasons was reversed, more sinful behaviour of people full of wrath, avarice, falsehood, crooked ways of the world, friendship mixed with dishonesty (fraud), quarrels among father, mother, friends, brothers and between husband and wife, advent of evil time, extremely dreadful unlucky portents, nature of the people characterised by avarice, (so) the king spoke to his younger brother (Bhīma).

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

6. Arjuna (the Victorious) has been sent to Dvārakā with a desire to see our kinsmen and to know the deeds of Kṛṣṇa of auspicious glory.

7. Oh Bhīmasena, seven months are now over, but your younger brother (Arjuna) has not returned, nor do I really understand its reason.

8. Has the period predicted by the divine sage (Nārada) arrived now when the Lord desires to quit his body, which is his instrument to play his part as man[392].

9. From whom (i.e. through the grace of Kṛṣṇa we got) wealth, kingdom, wife, life, family and subjects. Due to whose (Kṛṣṇa's) favour we (achieved) victory over the enemies and the world.

392. *ātmano... ut-sisṛkṣati*—

(i) When he desires to leave the earth (which is his body), the arena of his sports—VJ.

(ii) When he wishes to return his portion of Divinity to Vaikuṇṭha i.e. give up his mortal frame—VC.

10. Oh tiger-like man (Bhīma), look at the terribly ominous portents pertaining to the heaven, the earth and my body forboding calamity befalling (deluding) our intellect in near future.

11. Oh Bhīma, my (left) thigh, eye and arm are now and then throbbing. And tremblings in the heart portend evil happenings in near future. [These evil omens will bring evil unto me in near future.]

12. This female jackal vomitting fire, howls (wailingly) at the rising sun. Oh Bhīma, this dog wails at me without any fear.

13. Auspicious beasts go by my left, while others (like donkeys etc.) pass me by the right side. Oh tiger among men (Bhīma), I perceive that my horses are weeping.

14. This pigeon is the messenger of death. The owl which causes my mind to tremble and the crow, both sleepless (throughout the night) desire (as it were) to annihilate (the universe) by their ominous cries.

15. The quarters (of the world are) foggy; misty halos appear round the moon and the Sun[393], the earth along with the mountains is quaking; there fell a bolt from the blue along with the thundering of the clouds.

16. The rough wind blows darkening (the world) with the dust; the clouds are showering nauseating blood all around.

17. Look, the Sun is dim (lit. bereft of its splendour); there is a mutual clash of the planets in the sky. The heaven and the earth are as if ablaze with crowds of evil spirits[394].

18. Rivers, big and small, lakes and minds as well are agitated. The fire does not burn with ghee. (I cannot comprehend) what (calamity) this period would bring.

19. The babies (or calves) are not sucking (their mothers') breasts (or udders of cows—in the case of calves). The mothers are not yielding milk. In the cow sheds the cows weep with tearful faces and the bulls are not joyous.

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393. I followed ASDP on *paridhayaḥ* but ŚR. differs. He explains, "As the halo of light encircles the fire, the misty quarters have covered the world."

394. 'The followers of Rudra mixed with other beings'—ŚR.

20. Idols of Gods are as if weeping, perspiring and moving. What calamity to these charmless, cheerless countries, towns, villages, gardens, mines and hermitages indicates to us ?

21. On account of these portentous phenomena boding great calamities, I guess that the earth, being deprived of the Lord's feat the beauty of which is unique (lit. not found in any other person), has become luckless (now)."

22. In this way, Oh Brāhmaṇa, while the king was thinking with his mind which anticipated the befalling calamities, Arjuna (lit. the warrior with the monkey at the banner of his chariot) returned from Dvārakā (the capital city of the Yadus).

23-24. Seeing Arjuna, pale, feeble, shedding tears from his lotus-like eyes, with his head hung down, lying prostrate at his feet in an unusual manner, the king remembering the words of Nārada in the presence of his friends, spoke with a distressed heart.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

25. Are our kinsmen Madhu, Bhoja, Daśārha, Arha, Sātvata, Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi living happily in Dvārakā (Ānartapurī) ?

26. Or is our venerable maternal grandfather—Śūrasena hale and hearty ? Is the maternal uncle Ānaka-dundubhi[395] (Vasudeva) along with his younger brothers, well ?

27. Are his wives, our aunts, the seven sisters of whom Devakī is the chief, happy themselves, along with their sons and daughters-in-law ?

28-29. Is the son-less (or whose son Kaṁsa was wicked) king Āhuka (Ugrasena) and his younger brother (Devaka) alive ? Are Hṛdīka along with his son (Kṛtavarman), Akrura, Jayanta, Gada and Sāraṇa (brothers of Kṛṣṇa) and others like Śatrujit doing well ? Is Lord Balarāma, the head of the Sātvata clan in happiness ?

30-31. Is Pradyumna, a great warrior[396] among the

395. Vasu deva is so called as Gods beat the drums at the time of his birth as Lord Viṣṇu was to be incarnated as a son to him.

396. *mahāratha* is thus defined :
eko daśa-sāhasrāṇi yodhayed yastu dhanvinām / Śastra-śāstra-pravīṇaś ca vijñeyaḥ sa mahārathaḥ /

Vṛṣṇis, well? Are glorious Aniruddha, of terrific speed (in fighting), Suṣeṇa (Kṛṣṇa's son), Cārudeṣṇa, Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī, and other prominent sons of Kṛṣṇa like Vṛṣabha along with their sons going on well (lit. living happily)?

32. Similarly, are Kṛṣṇa's followers such as Śrutadeva, Uddhava and others, and other prominent Yādavas like Sunanda, Nanda, Śīrṣaṇya,

33. and all (others) depending on the power of arms of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa hale and hearty? Do the Yādavas our firm allies and friends, think of our well-being?

34. Is lord Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) who is the friend and well-wisher of the Brāhmaṇas and affectionate to his devotees, at ease in the company of his friends in his assembly-hall called Sudharmā[397] in the city (of Dvārakā)?

35. The Primeval Man, the friend of Ananta (Balarāma) lives in the ocean of the Yadu clan for the welfare, protection and prosperity of the people.

36. In their own city (Dvārakā), protected by whose (Kṛṣṇa's) arms, the Yādavas (who are) honoured (by the citizens) sport in delight (or pass their time in great happiness) like the followers of Viṣṇu[398] (the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha).

37. By defeating gods in a battle by their pre-eminent act of serving whose (Kṛṣṇa's) feet, sixteen thousand ladies of whom Satyabhāmā was the first, took away (for their enjoyment) blessed objects (e.g. the *Pārijāta tree*) worthy of Indrāṇī.

38. Yādavas, the great warriors, dependent on the success of whose (Kṛṣṇa's) arms and free from fear from any quarter, often tread on (and occupy seats in) the assembly-hall called Sudharmā, proper for the greatest among the gods, which (i.e. the assembly hall) they (the Yādavas) brought down (on the earth) by force.[399]

A warrior skilled in the use of arm and the military science, who can engage ten thousand warriors simultaneously is called *Mahāratha*.

397. *Sudharmā* : The assembly-hall of Indra in heaven. At Kṛṣṇa's behest, Indra sent it to Ugrasena for the use of Yādavas. After Kṛṣṇa's death, it returned to Indra's heaven.—DHM 306.

398. *Mahā-pauruṣikāḥ* : (i) followers of Viṣṇu—(ŚR, VC, SD, GD).
(ii) Yakṣas (a tribe of demigods, followers of Kubera)—VR., VJ.
(iii) Possessed of great manly vigour—(VB.)

399. According to ŚR verses 34 to 38 form one group.

39. Dear brother[400], you appear to me pale (lit. one who has lost his lustre). Are you hale and hearty? Or did you, who stayed there over-long, not receive due respect and were insulted ?

40. (I presume that) you were not hit at (treated) with harsh, bitter (lit. affection-less) words etc. Or have you not kept your word to suppliants after promising them (and thus creating hopes in them) ?

41. Have you, the giver of protection, abandoned (i. e. refused to extend protection to) a Brāhmaṇa, a child, a cow, an old man, a diseased person, a woman or other being who sought your shelter ?

42. Have you visited (i.e had an illicit intercourse with) a woman not deserving to be approached or a woman worth going but dressed in dirty clothes (i.e during her menses) ? Or were you discomfited on the way by your equals (lit. non-superiors) or inferiors ?

43. Have you taken your meals leaving behind (hungry) children and old men deserving to be fed? Have you committed some censurable act unworthy of you ?

44. Are you always brooding ; "I am now a nonentity[401] (as I am) permanently bereaved of the most beloved, intimate friend and personal relative (Kṛṣṇa)?" Otherwise there is no explanation of your (mental) affliction.

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400. *tāta* A term of affection, endearment or pity, applied to any person, but usually to inferiors, juniors, pupils, children etc.—ASDP 471 (1965 Edn.)

401. Śūnya— (1) Void—ŚR.
(2) Dejected, void of joy—VR., SD.
(3) Inauspicious, unlucky—VJ.
(4) Life-less (GD).

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(*Ascent of the Pāṇḍavas to Heaven*)

Sūta said:

1-2. In this way Arjuna, the friend of Kṛṣṇa, emaciated due to separation from Kṛṣṇa, and whose form became the ground for different suspicions and conjectures by his brother, the king (Yudhiṣṭhira) [and] whose lotus-like face and heart were dried up due to affliction, and who had lost his complexion, was not able to reply as he was brooding over the same powerful (Kṛṣṇa),

3. Controlling (his tears of grief) with great difficulty and wiping out his eyes by his hands, and being nervous on account of increased affection and eagerness due to his (Kṛṣṇa's) disappearance,

4. Remembering companionship, obligations and friendliness in Kṛṣṇa's charioteership, Arjuna spoke to his elder brother, the king, in a voice suffocated with tears.

Arjuna said:

5. Oh great king, I have been deceived by Hari who assumed the form of my kinsman and deprived me of my great lustre, the wonder of gods.

6. I have been undone (now) by that Supreme Man. By separation from whom[402] (him), even for a moment, the world becomes unpleasant (ugly) to look at, just as this (father etc)[403] is spoken of as 'dead' when it is bereaved of the vital spirit;

7. By whose (Kṛṣṇa's) power the prowess of kings who, being infatuated with passion, assembled for *svayaṁvara* (self-election of a husband by the bride) at the palace of Drupada, was surpassed by me (by merely taking up the bow) and the fish was hit (by me) with the equipped bow and won Draupadī.[404]

402. Verses 6-13 form one group and the word *yasya* (whose) is connected with *tenāhamadya muṣitaḥ* in verse 13.—ŚR.

403. eṣaḥ—The body (VJ.)

404. This refers to *Draupadī - svayaṁvara* in which Arjuna fulfilled the condition precedent for winning Draupadī as bride.

8. Ah ! In whose (Kṛṣṇa's) presence I quickly defeated Indra along with gods [405] and donated the Khāṇḍava forest to the Fire-god; and got constructed by Maya the assembly-hall, an illusive marvel of architecture, (lit. the illusion in the form of wonderful architecture) and kings from (distant) quarters offered tributes at the time of your (Rājasūya) sacrifice.

9. By whose prowess (my) elder (and) your younger brother possessing the power and energy of ten thousand elephants[406] killed for the (performance of the Rājasūya) sacrifice (Jarāsandha) who had placed his foot on the heads of kings. As the kings who were captured (by Jarāsandha) for the sacrifice to the lord of goblins (*Mahābhairava*) were liberated by him (Bhīma), they brought tributes for your (Rājasūya) sacrifice[407].

10. Who, by killing their husbands, made the wives of those deceitful gamblers to loosen their hair—the gamblers (by whom) in the assembly-hall, were scattered and seized the beautiful braided hair of your wife which were the most praiseworthy due to the great consecration at the (Rājasūya) sacrifice and from whose (your wife's) face fell tears on the feet when she bowed (to Kṛṣṇa who appeared there in that assembly hall of the gamblers).[408]

11. Who, by coming to the forest and eating the remnant (crumb) of a vegetable preparation, protected us from an unsurmountable calamity (viz. the curse of the sage Durvāsas) engineered by the enemy (Duryodhana) through Durvāsas who wanted to dine at the head of ten thousand (disciples), but whereby (i.e. due to Kṛṣṇa's eating the vegetable) the whole group of sages who were immersed in water, felt the three

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For details MBH.I.Chs. 187, 188, 189.

405. Vide MBH. 1. 226.

406. VJ. reads *gadāyudha-sattva-vīryaḥ* and explains as 'one possessing the mace as a weapon and mental and physical power' *gadākhyaṃ āyudhaṃ ca . . . sattvam mānasa-balaṃ ca vīryaṃ kāyabalaṃ ca vā yasya sa gadāyudha-sattva-vīryaḥ.*

407. This refers to the incident described in MBH. II. Chs. 22, 23, 24.

408. Vide MBH. 11. Ch.67.

worlds as satiated[409] (and did not feel hungry).

12. By whose prowess, Lord Śiva along with Pārvatī was made to surprise in the fight (I put with him) and gave me his missile (Pāśupata). Others (viz. guardians of the quarters of the world) also did the same. And I, in this very physical body, reached the palace of the great Indra (at Amarāvatī in heaven) and shared half the seat of the great (god)*.

13. While I was staying there, for the destruction of the enemies, the gods along with Indra took shelter of the pair of my arms characterised by the Gāṇḍīva bow. Oh descendant of Ajamīḍha, the exploits were performed (by me by his prowess)[410].

14. By whose friendship I succeeded with my chariot, in crossing over the limitless ocean in the form of the Kuru army consisting of (warriors gifted with) irresistible power. I have captured the wealth of the enemies and snatched away the highly effulgent jewelled diadems from their heads.

15. Oh Lord, he moved ahead of me (as a charioteer) in the armies of Bhīṣma, Karṇa, the preceptor (Droṇa) and Śalya, which were adorned with multitudes of chariots of powerful, great Kṣatriyas, (he), by the glance of his eyes deprived the generals of their duration of life, minds (i.e. powers like energy etc.), strength and skills in firing missiles.

409. This refers to MBH. Vana. 263 in which it is described how Duryodhana sent Durvāsas with his ten thousand disciples to Yudhiṣṭhira in the forest at an odd hour. But Kṛṣṇa appeared at the hermitage of Pāṇḍavas and asked them to give him something to eat. He ate a small remanent of vegetable and identifying himself with three worlds expressed appeasement of hunger of all beings in the universe. The sages automatically felt satisfied and left the place refusing the invitation of Yudhiṣṭhira.

*Vide MBH. Vana. 39. 32-64, Vana. Chs. 40, 41, 42, 43.

410. The clause : "I am today robbed (undone) by the Supreme Man", is to be connected with the next three verses (14, 15, 16) as well. The word *bhūmnā* is interpreted differently as follows :

(1) Who is present in His own greatness (*nijamahimā-avasthānena* —ŚR.).
(2) Supreme Man (*parama-puruṣa* —VR.)
(3) The greatest of all (*sarva-mahattamena*—JG.)
(4) The superman whose form consists of limitless joy—VJ.
(5) VC. treats it adverbially as 'I am *thoroughly* or extremely cheated.'
(6) *paripūrṇatamena puruṣeṇa*—GD.

16. Just as the missiles of Asuras hurled at Prahlāda did not hurt (him, similarly), the missiles aimed at me by the preceptor (Droṇa), Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Aśvatthāman (the son of Droṇa), Suśarmā[411], Śalya, Jayadratha[412] (the king of Sindhu), Bālhika[413] and others did not injure me (as I was) dependant on the (power of) his (Kṛṣṇa's) arms.

17. The controller (of the universe), the giver of strength[414] was employed as a charioteer by me, a vicious-minded fellow (though) His lotus-like feet are resorted to by the excellent persons for Liberation (from the cycle of births and deaths), and (overpowered) by whose prowess, (my) enemies, seated in chariots became vacant-minded and did not assail me while I was standing on the ground due to the exhaustion of the horses of my chariot, on the day of killing of Jayadratha[415]

18. Oh king, Mādhava's jokes graced with his dignified sweet smile and his heart-touching words such as 'Oh son of Pṛthā', 'Oh Arjuna', 'Oh friend', 'Oh descendant of the Kuru family', break[416] my heart when recollected.

19. Due to my association with him in all activities such as sleeping, sitting, wandering, prattling (or boasting)

411. Suśarmā, son of Vṛddhakṣema, the king of Trigarta (identified with Jalandhar Doab and Kangra by General Cunningham) was a sworn enemy of Pāṇḍavas; accompanied Dūryodhana in his attempts to carry away Virāṭa's cattle; he along with his brothers collectively known as *Saṁśaptaka* joined the side of Kauravas in the Bhārata war and was killed by Arjuna—MN, p. 393;PCK 398-99.

412. *Jayadratha*—King of Sindhu - Sauvīras; married Duryodhana's sister Duḥśīlā; attempted to carry away Draupadī; was killed by Arjuna on the 14th day of the Bhārata war. —DHM 136.

413. *Bālhika*—Son of Pratīpa, younger brother of Śantanu. He was the king of Bālhikas now identified as the people of Balkh.

414. *ātmada*—(i) the giver of strength (*balada*)—VR, VJ,VD.
(ii) One who offers Himself to His devotees —GD.

415. This refers to the episode when Arjuna who wanted to fulfill his vow of killing Jayadratha before the sunset, found his horses fatigued, got down from the chariot, created a pond of water by shooting an arrow on the ground, and fought single-handed with the enemies, while Kṛṣṇa took care of the wounded, tired steeds. —For details vide MBH. Droṇa.99. 35-63.

416. *luṭhanti*—as it were rolling in the heart, do not go out of my heart—VJ.

and eating, he was taunted by me, 'Oh friend, you are really a speaker of the truth'. He tolerated all my faults (like this), just as a friend forgives the comments of a friend or the father, or (the prattling of) the child.

20. Oh great king! I, being vacant-minded due to the bereavement of my dear friend, the Supreme Man, was defeated like a woman by the wretched cowherds on the way while I was protecting the wives of Kṛṣṇa[417].

21. The same was the bow; the arrows; the chariot and the steeds were the same; I am the same warrior to whom kings pay every respect. But when devoid of the Lord (Lord's power), in a moment, everything became unreal like oblation offered to ashes (instead of to the fire), gifts of a juggler (or 'donations given to an undeserving Brāhmaṇa'). or seed sown in barren ground.

22-23. Oh king, in our friend's capital (Dvārakā) (out of) our friends about whom you have enquired, only four or five have remained alive—our friends who, being overwhelmed by the curse of Brāhmaṇas and with minds excited with intoxication by drinking the wine (prepared from the wild rice), slew each other with clenched fists (full of *erakā* grass)[418] as if (they were) unacquainted with each other.

24. It is definitely due to the design of the great Providence that creatures protect (procreate) or destroy each other.

25-26. Oh king, just as, in water, big acquatic animals swallow smaller ones, the powerful (creatures) devour the weak ones, and those which are big and powerful eat each other, similarly, by making the mightiest and greatest Yadus kill others, and by making Yadus to destroy each other mutually, the Omni-

417. After the internecine fight among the Yādavas and Kṛṣṇa's passing away, Arjuna escorted the wives of Kṛṣṇa and other Yādavas to Indraprastha. On his way the Ābhīras attacked him and carried away the Yādava women. For details—MBH. Mausala 7. 51-72.

418. According to MBH. *Mausala* 3.36 ff., this grass turned into clubs in the hands of the drunk Yādavas who cudgeled each other to death with it. It is explained that grass grew out of the particles of iron pestle which, according to the curse of sages, was to annihilate the Yādava clan and which the Yādavas tried to destroy by reducing it to powder.

present Lord (Kṛṣṇa) lessened the burden of the earth[419].

27. The words uttered by Kṛṣṇa pregnant with significance for the occasion and the place, and alleviating the pangs of heart, captivate my mind when recalled.

Sūta said:

28. In this way, the mind (intellect) of Arjuna who was meditating over the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, with very deep affection, became quiet (blissful) and pure (unattached).

29-30. The mighty Arjuna from whose intellect were completely wiped out all[420] the passions etc. due to devotion the speed (i.e. intensity) of which had been accelerated by continuous meditation of the feet of Vāsudeva, again recollected the knowledge which was sung (explained) to him by the Lord at the head of the battle, but which remained suppressed due to (effects of) time, actions and attachment to pleasure.[421]

31.* Arjuna who, by attainment of (i.e. realization of

419. ŚR. interprets : "In this way, having killed Duryodhana, Jarāsandha and others by the most powerful great Pāṇḍavas and finishing with Śālva and others by Yadus, and by making Yadus destroy each other, the Lord lessened the burden of the earth."

VJ., being more faithful to the wording of the text, is accepted above.

420. According to VJ., this does not imply the annihilation of each and every act but of those only which deserved to be so destroyed by the great divine grace of the Lord :

Ato'tra aśeṣa-śabdo nirmathana-yogya eṣa prārabdha-viṣaya iti bhāvaḥ !"

421. JG. differs. He regards time (*Kāla*) and acts (*Karma*) as Kṛṣṇa's sports and *tamas* as mind's lack of meditation of Kṛṣṇa due to absorption in his sports. Arjuna realised the fulfilment of Kṛṣṇa's promise of absorption in him given at the time of the Kuru-war (viz. *māmeṣyasi* in the BG. 18.65).

To quote JG. *Kālo=bhagavallīlecchā-mayaḥ /*

Karma=tallīlā /

Tamas=tallīlāveśena tad-ananusandhānam /

adhyagamat=tan-mahāvicchedasya tasyānte'pi tathā. . . . punar mām evaiṣyasī'ti etad vākyaṁ yathārthatvena 'nubhūtavān /

* I have followed ŚR. in the above translation. But the terms in this verse have been variously interpreted as follows :

his identity with) Brahman[422] (leading to) attributelessness due to the disappearance of nescience and the absence of the subtle body (which is the indestructible origin of the gross or visible body) became free from (the recurrence of) the gross body (i.e. the cycle of births) and his doubt about duality[423] having been (thus) dispelled, became free from affliction.

32. Having heard of the way followed by the Lord and the annihilation of the Yadu clan, the firm-minded Yudhiṣṭhira decided to proceed to heaven.

422. *Brahma-sampatyā*—(i) By the knowledge of the identity of oneself with Brahman obtained by listening to Vedānta—ŚR.

(ii) By the knowledge of Brahman—VR.

(iii) By the direct apprehension of Brahman (*Brahmāparokṣa-jñānena*) —VJ.

(iv) By the perception of the Supreme Brahman in human form (Kṛṣṇa)—JG.

(v) By the realisation of the identity of one's individual self and everything else with Brahman.

Sarvaṁ khalvidam Brahma, ahaṁ Brahmāsmi iti Brahmātma-jñānena—GD.

423. *Saṁcchinna-dvaita-saṁśayaḥ*—

(1) Whose doubts about the separateness of gods etc. and the duality about one's self are dispelled—VR.

(2) Whose misapprehension and doubt about the distinctness of the individual Soul and the Brahman is removed.

VJ. interprets *dvaita* as 'wrong knowledge' *dve itam dvitaṁ, dvidhā gataṁ jñānaṁ* tasya bhāvaḥ dvaitam anyathā jñānam

while *saṁśaya* is 'the oscillation between two entities'. (For details about "Illusion and Doubt" in Madhva system of which VJ. is a follower see S.N. Dasgupta Hist.Ind. Philosophy, Vol.IV, pp.173-78).

(3) JG. takes *saṁśaya* as the doubt that there is a universe quite distinct from the Supreme Being who resides in the heart.

(4) VC. thinks that the doubt is 'Whether I am in any way related to my body'. He adds : When Kṛṣṇa was in this world, though Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were two persons, their one-ness was due to friendship. After His disappearance, Arjuna doubted whether Kṛṣṇa would absorb him into the bliss of oneness of friendship. This doubt was dispelled.

These different meanings of the above words lead to different interpretations of the above verse. Thus, for example, the gist of VR's interpretation is as follows: "Due to the knowledge of Brahman, he becomes entirely free from misapprehension regarding the Soul as gods, men etc.—a distinction which depends upon the body feeling himself separate from the gross and subtle body, also from the subtle *Prakṛti* and the three attributes (*guṇas*). Thus there being no occasion for rebirth, he becomes free.

33.* Having heard of the destruction of Yadus and of the passing away of the Lord[424] as reported by Dhanañjaya[425] (Arjuna), Kuntī, who, by single-minded devotion concentrated herself on the Lord Adhokṣaja (Kṛṣṇa—lit. one who is beyond the ken of sense-organ) detached herself from the worldly existence[426].

34.* Just as a thorn is removed with another thorn (and both are thrown away), similarly the Unborn[427] Being (Lord Kṛṣṇa), gave up that body with which He removed (the burden of the earth, (because) to the Lord both (the bodies which became burdens and His own mortal body) are equal.

35.* Like an actor, just as he assumed various forms (bodies) like those of fish and others and gave them up, he abandoned the body through (the instrumentality of) which he removed the load on the earth.

36. When Lord Kṛṣṇa whose meritorious legends (stories) are worth hearing, left this earth with his body, on that very day, the Kali (age) which is the cause of irreligious actions in thoughtless (lit. unawakened) minds, followed.

37. Finding the spread of a number of irreligious tendencies such as avarice, untruthfulness, crookedness, violence in houses, towns, the nation, and in his own self, the wise Yudhi-

424. Commentators like ŚR., JG., VC., GD. quote BH. P. 11.31.9 and maintain that Kṛṣṇa's death was not a fact but it appeared to be so to mankind. VJ. omits this and the next 2 verses. Vide Bh. P. XI. 31.6 also.

425. According to VD., 'Dhanañjaya' means Nārada as he got over (*jaya*) thoughtlessness (*dhana—dhaṁ dhairyaṁ nāśayotī' ti dhanam avivekaḥ*). Kunti heard from Nārada the prediction about the annihilation of Yadu clan and death of Kṛṣṇa before she proceeded to Himālayas.

It is to be noted that JG. and other commentators hold that the annihilation of Yadus was only apparent.

426. (1) became liberated while alive (Jīvan-mukta)—ŚR.
(2) Quitted her body—ŚR.
(3) Ceased to be born again; became liberated—JG.
VJ. omits these.

427. Brahman exists. No birth is possible in its case. Hence it is unborn. ASDP (p. 21) quotes on *aja* :

na hi jāto na jāye'haṁ na janiṣye kadācana /
Kṣetrajñaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ tasmādaham ajaḥ smṛtaḥ //

ṣṭhira decided[428] to go away from the worldly life.

38. In the city of Hastināpura, the emperor (Yudhiṣṭhira) installed on the throne his grandson who was self-restrained and equal to him in virtues, as the ruler of the land engirdled by waters (seas).

39. Then the monarch (Yudhiṣṭhira enthroned at Mathurā) Vajra (the son of Kṛṣṇa's grandson Aniruddha) as the king of (the country called) Śūrasena. Having performed the sacrifice dedicated to Prajāpati, he 'drank up' (i.e. established within himself by *yogic* process) the fires (viz. *Dakṣiṇāgni*, *Gārhapatya* and *Āhavanīya*).[429]

40-41. Having given up then and there all his silken garments and gold ornaments like bracelets, and becoming free from all possession, pride and having severed all ties, he sacrificed his speech organ (or offered all sense organs as an oblation to the mind) into the mind, the mind (was merged) into the life-breath, and the life-breath (Prāṇa) into another (viz. *apāna*). (He then merged) this respiratory vital air (apāna) into (the presiding goddess of) Death and verily the Death unto[430] the aggregation of five elements (body).

428. *paryadhāt*—Put on dress (suitable for the life of a recluse)—ŚR., VC., SD.

429. As a householder (*gṛhastha*) one has to maintain these sacred fires, viz. Āhavanīya. Gārhapatya and Dakṣiṇāgni for performing the daily *homa* (P.V. Kane—*Hist. of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II. i. 675-685). Before renouncing one's house the *iṣṭi* (sacrifice) called *prājāpatya* is performed in which all one's possessions are to be distributed and the three fires—maintained by him. are to be 'drunk up, to be presumed to have been established within one's self—by reciting certain hymns.

Prājāpatyā bhaved iṣṭis sarvasvaṁ yatra dakṣiṇā /
Parivrajyā' pakrame sā vihitā pūrvasūribhiḥ //
Prājāpatyā nirūpyeṣṭim sarva-vedasa-dakṣiṇām /
Ātmanyagniṁ samāropya Brāhmaṇaḥ pravrajed gṛhāt //

VD. says that as per Devala Smṛti even a Kṣatriya can follow the procedure prescribed for Brāhmaṇas.

430. As ŚR.. VD. and other commentators explain, this is a figurative description of Yudhiṣṭhira's dissociating his self from all externalities. Yudhiṣṭhira finally thought of himself to be different from his body which is to be quitted unto death. "taṁ mṛtyuṁ pañcatve pañca-bhūtānām aikyaṁ dehe, dehasyaiva mṛtyur nātmanā iti bhāvitavān" /
This process of figurative sacrifice is described in later verses also.

42. Then the silent sage (Yudhiṣṭhira) offered the aggregate of five (elements) into the triad (of the attributes, viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) of *Prakṛti* or *avidyā* and sacrificed these three attributes into Nescience (*avidyā*). (He then) merged everything into the Soul and the (individual) Soul in the immutable Universal Soul (called *Brahman*).

43-44. Clad in tree-barks, abstemious in food, desisting from speech, with dishevelled hair, showing himself like a dullard, madman or a goblin, expecting nothing (or without waiting for anyone) he went out (of the palace and the capital) like a deaf incapable of hearing (anything). Meditating about the Supreme Spirit (*Brahman*) in (his) heart, he entered the northern direction to which other great Souls of the past have proceeded and whence no one returns.

45. Having seen that subjects all over the world were influenced by Kali, the associate of irreligion, all the (Pāṇḍava) brothers, fully resolved, followed him.

46. Knowing in their mind that the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate refuge, they who have well achieved the goals of human life (called *puruṣārthas*) concentrated their minds on the same.

47-48. They whose intellect has been specially purified by devotion increased by meditating upon him, and whose minds are concentrated on that Supreme Man called Nārāyaṇa, attained that position which is very difficult to reach by the non-saints who are attached to objects of sensual pleasures, and being free from sins, attain his abode with their souls free from *rajas* and *tamas*.

49. Having quitted his mortal frame in Prabhāsa, even the self-possessed (or self-knower) Vidura whose mind being possessed by Kṛṣṇa, was one with him rejoined his post[431] (as Yamadharma) along with the Manes.

50. Then, having known the loss of interest (expectation) of her husbands in her, Draupadī concentrated her mind on Lord Vāsudeva and attained to him.

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431. Yama, the god of death and the dispenser of rewards and punishments according to the acts of individuals, wrongly punished the sage Māṇḍavya for which Māṇḍavya cursed him to be born as a Śūdra on the earth. When the period of the curse was over, Yama who incarnated as Vidura, the Śūdra, rejoined his post as before.

51. He who thus faithfully listens to the beneficial and holy (account) of departure of Pāṇḍu's sons, the beloved ones of the Lord, frequently gets devotion unto Hari (engendered in him) and attains liberation.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(Dialogue between the Earth and Dharma)

Sūta said :

1. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka) ! Then Parīkṣit the great devotee of Kṛṣṇa verily ruled the earth according to the education given to him by great Brāhmaṇas (e.g. Kṛpa). He exhibited the same great qualities as predicted by the experts in astrology on the day of his (Parīkṣit's) birth.

2. He married Irāvatī, the daughter of Uttara.[432] He brought forth from her four sons, the first of whom was Janmejaya.

3. Appointing Kṛpa (son of Śaradvat) as the family-priest, he performed, on the bank of the Gaṅgā, three horse-sacrifices with plenty of gifts (to Brāhmaṇas after their completion) wherein sacrifices (deities of the sacrifices) attended in visible form.

4. During the course of his conquest of directions (i.e. the complete earth), at one place, he, by his might, captured Kali, a Śūdra, assuming the insignia of royalty, (while Kali was) kicking a pair of a cow and a bull.

Śaunaka said :

5. For what reason did the king (simply) arrest Kali (and not kill him[433]) as the wretched Śūdra assuming the royal insignia, kicked the cow ?

432. The son of king Virāṭa and brother-in-law of Abhimanyu. Uttara was killed by Śalya in the Kuru war. His daughter Irāvatī married Parīkṣit. —P.I.1.217 DHM 329.

433. What were his (Kali's) special qualities due to which he was spared —SD.

6. Oh greatly fortunate one ! Please tell it (the above query) if it is related to the stories of Kṛṣṇa or concerns the saints who are enjoying (lit. licking) the honey in the lotus in the form of his feet.

7. What is the propriety of speaking on other evil topics which is a worthless waste of life of people with a short span of life but desiring final beatitude.

8. The god of Death (the deity called 'death') has been invited here for killing the beasts for this sacrifice. Therefore no one can die so long as the god of death is here.

9. Your honour has been invited by the great sages in order that words of nectar in the form of sports of Hari should be drunk to the fill in this world.

10. Verily, the lives of the idle, the dull-witted and short-lived persons are taken away by sleep at night and by the useless acts (committed) during the day.

Sūta said :

11. When Parīkṣit heard the not-very pleasant[434] news (report) of Kali's aggression in Kuru-jāṅgala[435] lying within his jurisdiction (he who was) an expert in warfare[436] took up the bow.

12. Surrounded by his army consisting of chariots, cavalry, elephants and infantry, he started from his capital, in his beautifully decorated chariot yoked with dark-coloured horses and flying a banner with the emblem of a lion, for the conquest of the directions (the whole of the earth).

13. Having conquered Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Bhārata, Northern Kurus and big regions such as Kimpuruṣa and

VJ. opines that this is not a question but an objection (for failure in duty) against Parīkṣit.

VR. takes the 2nd line as a separate sentence as follows : 'Who was that Śūdra wearing emblems of a king who kicked the cow ?'

434. (i) He was a bit pleased as he got a scope to show his bravery. —VC

(ii) very unpleasant—VR.

435. According to PSK (*Prācīna Sthala Kośa*) this dry part of the Kuru country corresponds to modern Rohtak-Hissar region (p.539). But Bh.P. 1.10.34 shows it to be on the road from Indraprastha to Dvārakā.

436. v.l. *Saṁyuga-Śauri*—who was like Kṛṣṇa in fighting.

others,[437] he received tributes.

14. Hearing everywhere the extolling of glories of his great-souled ancestors, (which were) expressive of Kṛṣṇa's greatness,

15. And about his own protection from the fire of Aśvatthāman's missiles, of the friendship between the Yādavas and the sons of Pṛthā (i.e. Pāṇḍavas) and their devotion to Kṛṣṇa,

16. Being extremely pleased, the greatminded (Parīkṣit) whose eyes were expanded with affection gave them (the songsters of glory) very costly clothes and necklaces.

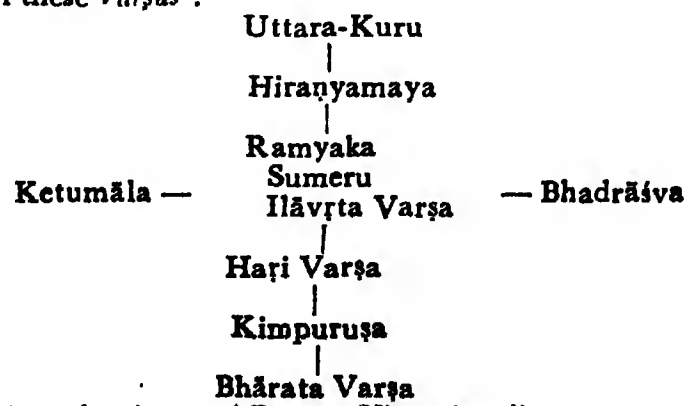
17. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa to whom the world bows, served (his) favourites—Pāṇḍavas—in the capacity of a charioteer, a President of the assembly, an attendant, a friend, an envoy, a sentinel, a follower, praising and saluting (them), the ruler of men (Parīkṣit) became devoted to (his) lotus-like feet.

18. Hear from me a wonderful event which occurred soon, while he was thus every day following the conduct of life of his ancestors.

19. (While himself) walking on one leg, Dharma (in the form of a bull) finding the (earth in the form of a) cow

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437. In the V Skandha of the Bh.P., the ancient geographical ideas are given. The earth consists of seven islands. The first of these islands Jambu-dvīpa consists of nine *Varṣas* (continents) : (1) Ilāvṛta, (2) Bhadrāśva, (3) Hari, (4) Ketumāla, (5) Ramyaka, (6) Hiraṇyamaya, (7) Uttara-Kuru, (8) Kimpuruṣa, (9) Bhārata. India is a part of (9). The mountain Meru stands in the centre of the Jambudvīpa. The following table reproduced from Baladeva Upadhyaya's *Purāṇa Vimarśa* will give some idea of the distribution of these *Varṣas* :



Vide—PSK—Introduction and Purāṇa Vimarśa, vii.5. 317-350 for details.

devoid of (her) lustre and face full of tears like a mother who has lost her young one, asked her.

Dharma said :

20. Oh blessed (one), are you well (free from diseases) ? By your melancholy countenance, you appear pale. Oh mother, I find you full of mental agony. About what distant relative are you lamenting ?

21. Are you aggrieved to find me with one leg and deprived of (the other three) legs ? or about yourself apprehending your being enjoyed by the Śūdras (in near future) or (over) Gods and others whose portion (of the offerings) of sacrifices is lost (due to non-performance of sacrifices) or (over) subjects due to Indra's refusal to pour rain ?

22. Oh earth ! Are you grieved for women who are not protected (by their husbands) or for children who are not only uncared for but are also oppressed by their fathers (cruel) like man-eaters ; or for the goddess of Speech or Learning (who has been) living in the family of vicious Brāhmaṇas or (feel sorry for) those born in the best families('Brāhmaṇas') serving the kings who are not favourable to Brāhmaṇas.

23. Are you sorry for the mean Kṣatriyas who are possessed by Kali or the countries abandoned(or ruined) by them, or for the mankind indulging in eating, drinking, wearing (fancy) clothes, (enjoying) baths and sexual intercourse everywhere (lit. here and there)?

24. Or, Oh mother Earth, (are you lamenting) remembering the deeds on which depends the Liberation[438],—(deeds) of Hari who assumed incarnation for lessening your heavy burden, but has (now) disappeared and (you find yourself) abandoned ?

25. Oh Earth ! tell me the cause of your mental agony by which you are so much emaciated. Oh mother, is your good fortune so worshipped by Gods, stolen away by Time (the god of Death) who is the stronger than the strong.

438. v.l. *nirvāṇa-viḍambitāni*—Final Beatitude which has been ridiculed or surpassed by Hari's deed, i.e. Hari's deeds are superior to the Liberation—ŚR. and JG.

The Earth said :

26. Oh Dharma, you know verily all about which you have asked me. Due to Kṛṣṇa you were possessing four legs which were conducive to the happiness of mankind.

27.* In whom (Kṛṣṇa) truthfulness, purity, compassion, patience, generosity, contentment, straightforwardness, steadiness of the mind, self-restraint, (control of the organs of senses), austerities, equality, endurance, unconcernedness (even to one's benefits), mastery over learning,

28.* Knowledge, non-attachment, capacity to exercise authority, heroism (courage on the battlefield), strength, judgement or perception of what is proper to do, independence, dexterity, beautiful complexion (personal charm), fortitude softheartedness.

29.* Extreme splendour, humility, good behaviour, skilled activities of the organs of senses, receptacle of enjoyment, mental poise (non-perturbation of the mind), faith, fame, adorability, freedom from pride,

30. Oh Lord, these and[439] other eternal, great qualities (which are) prayed and desired for by a person anxious for greatness, perpetually exist (in him) without decay (lit. never get annihilated).

31. I grieve for the people who are affected by the sight of the evil-minded Kali, (as they are) now bereft of Kṛṣṇa who is the receptacle of all qualities.

32. I feel grief for my own self and about you who are the best of gods. Similarly (I feel grief for) the gods, the

* In verses 27, 28, 29, the interpretation of ŚR. is mainly followed though other commentators emphasize slightly different shades of meaning of the qualities enumerated herein.

439. *ca*—In addition to the 39 qualities enumerated above, SD. adds the following eternal great attributes : "beauty, sweetness, tenderness, affection, calmness, protectiveness and others".

JG. has listed 63 attributes while commenting on verses 27-29 and adds 5 more as understood under *ca*—and 17 more as *anye*—which are impossible for a *jīva* (individual soul) to attain. This long list is omitted as it is not directly related to the interpretation of these verses and no other commentator even in the Bhāgavata Vidyā Peeṭh edition subscribes to it.

manes, sages, good persons, all strata of the society (castes) and all stages of life (*āśramas*).

33. Being enamoured of the beauty of (his) feet, the Goddess of Wealth for whose favourable side-glance gods like Brahmā and others performed penance for a long time and (thus) was resorted to by the best, adores those (Kṛṣṇa's) feet leaving her own residence in the lotus-garden.

34. I, whose body was adorned with the Venerable Lord's footprints with the marks of the lotus, the thunderbolt, the goad (to control elephants) and flag, possessed the prosperity from him and surpassed the three worlds in beauty. But subsequently at the time of the annihilation of that prosperity he abandoned me who became arrogant.

35. Verily, the self-reliant Being removed the heavy burden of one hundred *akṣauhiṇīs*[440] (a big division of the army) of the kings of the Asura race, and assuming a beautiful form in the Yādava clan restored to you (who were) distressed by incompleteness in legs, your pristine state (of four-leggedness) by his manliness.

36. What lady can endure the separation from that Supreme Man who by his amorous looks, enchanting smile and sweet conversation, stole away the steadiness of mind along with pride of women of Madhu clan like Satyabhāmā and others? Being adorned with whose footprints there was (thrill and hence) hair-erection in the form of crops of foodgrains etc. due to the happiness felt by me.

37. In this way, while the goddess of the Earth and Dharma were conversing, the royal sage called Parīkṣit arrived there where the Sarasvatī flows to the east.

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440. *akṣauhiṇī*—a division of the army consisting of 21870 chariots, 21870 elephants, 65610 horse and 109350 foot—PASK, p.8.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(*Punishment and Control of Kali*)

Sūta said :

1. There (on the eastern turn of the Sarasvatī in (Kurukṣetra) the king (Parīkṣit) saw the pair of the cow and the bull being beaten like protectionless beings and also the Śūdra wearing the insignia of royalty, with a rod in his hand.

2. (He saw that) the bull, white like the lotus-fibre, as if passing urine through fear, (and thus losing strength every moment), trembling on one leg, sinking down under the beating by the Śūdra.

3. (And) the cow also yielding (milk the products of which, as oblations to sacrifices, are useful for) religion, distressed, (being) heavily kicked by the Śūdra, calf-less, with face full of tears, weak and desiring to eat grass[441].

4. Riding his gold-plated[442] chariot and holding bow equipped (with arrow) he asked in a voice deep like (thunder of a) cloud.

5. "Who are you who, a mighty person, are hurting the weak ones by force in this world under my protection? Like an actor you are dressed as a king but are a Śūdra in your actions.

6. Who are you who after the departure of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna (lit. the master of the Gāṇḍīva bow) to a distant place (the other world) are striking the innocent ones in solitary places ? You are the culprit deserving to be killed.

7. (Address to the bull). Who are you white like lotus-fibre, (who) being defective in three legs, walk on one leg only ? Are you some God who in the form of such a bull make us sorrowful ?

8. With the exception of your tears of sorrow, tears of grief of other animals do not fall on the surface of this earth

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441. SR. clarifies : The earth became lean due to non-performance of sacrifices which led to droughts and failure of crops and that she desired to have her share in sacrifices.

442. *Kārtasvara-paricchadam*—SD. and VB. take this as referring to Kali and interpret as 'wearing gold crown, ear-rings etc.' which Kali as a Śūdra is not qualified to wear.

which is embraced (i.e. protected) by the mighty arms of the best kings in the Paurava dynasty.

9. Oh Son of surabhī, do not feel aggrieved. Let thy fear from the Śūdra pass away. (Address to the cow). Oh mother, do not weep. Good betide thee while I am alive to punish the wicked.

10. Oh pious one, the arrogant king in whose kingdom all the subjects are intimidated by the wicked, destroys his reputation, span of life, good fortune and prospects in the next world.

11. It is the highest duty of kings to remove the trouble of the distressed. Hence I shall slay this wicked-most oppressor of beings.

12. Oh four-legged son of Surabhī, who cut down your three legs? Let there be none (distressed) like you in the jurisdiction of the kings who follow Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

13. Oh bull, good betide you righteous people who never commit sins. Report to me who deformed you and (thereby) spoilt the glory of the Pāṇḍavas.

14. Perpetrators of crimes against the innocents and their accomplices as well have fear from me from all sides.[443] When the wicked are punished, it contributes to the good of the virtuous.

15. I shall pull off the arms along with the bracelets[444] even of the immortal himself if he, being uncontrolled, commits an offence (crime) against the innocent persons.

16. The greatest duty of a king who punishes, as per religious codes, persons going astray in normal times, is to protect in this world persons abiding by their own religion.

Dharma said :

17. This your speech which dispels fear (from the minds) of the distressed, is worthy of the descendants of the Pāṇḍavas due to whose (collection of) good qualities Lord Kṛṣṇa undertook to work as envoy etc.

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443. *sarvato bhayam*—Fear not only from me but from all such as Yama (the god of death) and others—SD.

444. right from the shoulder—ŚR.

18.* Oh great man, we who are extremely puzzled by discordant doctrines (advocated by different theorists),[445] do not know the Being (who is) the cause of misery[446] (of animated beings).

19. Some (i.e. followers of the *Yoga* school) who cover up the differences (between the individual and Universal Souls) call the Individual Spirit as the Master (i.e. dispenser of Pleasure and Pain)[447]; others[448] (Fatalists), regard the fate (i.e. the presiding deities of planets) to possess such power; others (the followers of the Mīmāṁsā) regard actions (such as performance of sacrifices as having this power); while (some)

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* (1) JG. interprets differently : We (the theists) as well as those who are puzzled by the different statements (of *śāstras*) do not know the Being who is beyond the reach of all persons.
(2) VC. explains : We do not know the being from whom 'seeds' of misery are produced. This man Kali who is troubling me is visible. But the very fact that he troubles me only (and not others) shows that there must be some special reason—'seed'—of this trouble. We do not know the Being who is the source of the "seeds" of distress.

445. *vākya-bheda vimohitaḥ*—Confused by a number of Vedic quotations explaining the causes of misery—VJ.

446. *kleśa-bīja* : Sins; faults committed against the Lord—VB.

447. *kecid vikalpa-vasanā* etc.—

(i) Or, the atheists who are covered (possessed) by false logic regard themselves as the Masters (of pleasure or pain) as, according to them Gods have no power to ordain happiness and misery as they (Gods) themselves are slaves of their actions; actions being inanimate—*jaḍa*—cannot dispense pleasure or pain—ŚR.

(ii) Those of uncertain (dubious) speech regard themselves as the source of their troubles (or the Sāṁkhyas regard the mind—*antaḥkaraṇa*—as the cause of one's miseries)—VJ.

(iii) The *advaita* Vedāntins who cover up, i.e. do not recognise the difference between individual Soul and God, hold that there is nobody to dispense pleasure or pain as the duality such as pleasure-pain, is born of the ignorance of the Soul —VC.

(iv) SD. puts forth a similar explanation :
vikalpaṁ nārā-kāraṇa-vādaṁ, vasate ācchādayanti ye vedāntās tadvido vā, te ātmanas tvampadārthasya ātmānaṁ tat-padārtham prabhuṁ sukha-duḥkha-pradaṁ āhuḥ |

448. Others (i.e. persons with correct knowledge) regard Hari, the Supreme among the gods, the cause of misery :
eke samyak jñāninaḥ daivaṁ sarva-deva-pradhānaṁ Hariṁ Kleśa-bījam āhuḥ—VJ.

others[449] (the materialists) presume nature (as the ordainer of weal and woe).

20. Some have determined that this (happiness, misery) is from (God who is) incomprehensible by logic and indescribable by words. Oh sage-like king, ponder over this by your intellect[450].

Sūta said :

21. Oh great Brāhmaṇa (lit. the best among the Brāhmaṇas) while Dharma was speaking thus, the king-emperor with his delusion dispersed, spoke with tranquil mind.[451]

The king said :

22. Oh knower of *Dharma* (righteousness)! (By not disclosing the name of Kali who is maltreating you) you are expounding religion (which ordains) that the place of the perpetrator of an irreligious act is the same as that of the reporter of the act (i.e. the person who commits a sin and the informer of that sin go to the same place, viz. hell).

23. Or it is certain that course of the *Māyā*—power[452] of God—is beyond the reach of the mind and speech of (living) beings.

24. In the *Kṛta* age, austerity, purity, compassion and truthfulness were the four legs (of Dharma). Three of them were broken by (forms of) unrighteousness, viz. pride, contact (with women) and intoxication (from liquor).

25. Oh Dharma, now-a-days (in this Age) your (remaining) leg, viz. truthfulness on which you subsist,[453] exists (but)

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449. *apare*—Followers of the Sāṅkhya School—JG.

450. VJ. differs : "Some conclude that the stream of misery springs from *Prakṛti* which is beyond the range of comprehension or from some positive form of ignorance (or rather Nescience) whose nature (as being existent or non-existent) cannot be decided. Oh great king, consider which of these are supported by the Vedas and Smṛtis, and judge accordingly.

451. *samāhitena manasā*—(The king who considered Dharma's speech) with close attention.

452. *deva-Māyā*—The will of the Almighty (VJ., VR.). The *Prakṛti* of Lord Viṣṇu —SD.

453. *nivarttayet* etc. : Whereby the world will achieve you.

this non-righteousness in the form of Kali who is brought up on falsehood (untruthfulness) wishes to deprive you of that (leg) also.

26. And this earth (in the form of cow) whose great burden has been unloaded by the Lord (Kṛṣṇa) has been made auspicious on all sides by his splendid foot-prints.

27. Being renounced by him, unfortunate and pious as she (the Earth) is, she is shedding tears (being apprehensive) that Śūdras in the guise of Kings and inimical to Brāhmaṇas will enjoy her.

28. In this way having consoled Dharma and the Earth, the great warrior took up (drew out) his sharpened sword against Kali the cause of inequities.

29. Knowing him (Parīkṣit) determined to kill him, he (Kali) being overwhelmed with fear, abandoned the emblems of royalty and bowed down his head at his (Parīkṣit's) feet.

30. The heroic (Parīkṣit) who was kind to the poor, fit for refuge and worthy to be praised, did not, out of compassion, kill him (Kali) who was lying prostrate at his feet and addressed him thus, with a smile.

The King said :

31. Verily there is absolutely no danger to you (who are a supplicant for mercy) with folded hands from (us) the upholders of the glory of Arjuna. But you are the friend of the unrighteous. You should not, under any circumstances, live in any part of my kingdom.

32. Whilst you were existing in the body of kings, a number of inequities (such as) avarice, untruthfulness, theft, vulgarity, renunciation of religion, misfortune, fraud, quarrel and pride have followed (commenced to spread their influence).

33. Oh friend of the iniquitous, you should not therefore stay in Brahmāvarta where persons expert in the performance of sacrifices adore the Lord of the sacrifices therewith (by sacrifices) and (which) is habitable by *dharma* (righteousness) and truth.

34. You should not live in that place where the glorious Hari in the form of Sacrifices, being adored, spreads over (confers upon) the performers of sacrifices happiness and

objects of desire certainly. This (Supreme) Soul is present like air, both inside and outside the mobile and the immobile beings.

Sūta said :

35. Thus being ordered by Parīkṣit, Kali who was trembling, spoke to him who has raised his sword like the God of death (Holder of the rod).

Kali said :

36. "Oh Imperial Majesty, wherever I shall stay by your order, I visualize you ready with a bow and arrows.

37. Oh best of the righteous, it becomes you to appoint a place for me where I may dwell with a steady mind obeying your commands."

Sūta said :

38. (Thus) solicited (by Kali), the King then gave Kali the following places used for gambling, drinking, bad women and slaughtering where four kinds of iniquities thrive.

39. When (Kali) supplicated again, the Lord gave him gold (to live in). Then (he gave Kali) five abodes viz. untruth, pride, passion, ignorance and the fifth—enmity.

40. As pointed out by him, Kali, the cause of unrighteousness, lived in these five places allotted to him by the son of Uttarā (Parīkṣit).

41. Hence these should not be resorted to by persons who are anxious to be good—especially by the r ghteous king who is the preceptor and lord of men.

42. He joined the bull's three legs—austerities, purity and compassion (which had been) maimed. And consoling the Earth (restored to her) the prosperity.

43. Now he occupies the throne worthy of kings only, and bequeathed to him by his grandfather (Yudhiṣṭhira who was) desirous of retiring to the forest.

44. Shining with the goddess of prosperity of the Kaurava Kings, the sage-like king (who is a) great fortunate (person), the Supreme authority and whose fame is extensive, is now ruling in Hastināpura.

45. In this way, this king, the son of Abhimanyu whose prowess is such, is (thus) ruling over the earth when you have engaged yourself for the performance of sacrifices.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(Curse of the Brāhmaṇa)

Sūta said :

1. He (Parīkṣit) who due to the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa of miraculous deeds, did not die in the womb of his mother though he was severely burnt by the missile fired by Aśvatthāman (the son of Droṇa),

2. Who, having offered his heart to the Lord, was not disturbed in his mind by the great peril of death from Takṣaka due to the wrath of the Brāhmaṇa.

3. Who, having abandoned attachment to all matters, comprehended thoroughly the real nature of God (the invincible) and became a disciple of Śuka (the son of Vyāsa), gave up his mortal coil in the Ganges.

4. Even at the time of death, there is no fear or infatuation in the case of persons, acquainted with the life of Kṛṣṇa (lit. one of excellent reputation), and drinking his nectarlike episodes(as) they remember his lotus-like feet.

5. As long as the great king, the son of Abhimanyu (Parīkṣit), was the sole ruler of this earth, Kali could not prevail anywhere (even in places assigned to him) despite his advent here.

6. On the very day, and at the very moment the Lord left the earth, on that very day this Kali, the source of irreligiousness, (in this world), entered here.

7. The emperor did not hate Kali (till his—Parīkṣit's death). He enjoys the essence like the black-bee (which enjoys fragrance without destroying the flower). (For during the Kali age) good actions (even when merely intended) bear fruit quickly while other actions (sins) do not fructify till they are committed.

8. What (harm can be done) by Kali who is brave among the boys, (or powerful among foolish people) and a coward before the valiant and who like a wolf[454] stays among the careless men ?

9. What (you) have asked (me about) this sacred narrative of Parīkṣit connected with the episode of Vāsudeva, has been related to you by me.

10. Whatever anecdotes about the qualities and deeds of the Lord whose great acts are worth narrating, (are there, they) deserve to be listened to by men who are anxious to be good[455].

The sages said :

11. Oh gentle-natured Sūta, may you live for a pretty long years—you who extol to us mortals the brilliant glory of Kṛṣṇa which is like nectar.

12. In this act (of long-term sacrifice) the fruit of which is uncertain, your honour is giving to drink the sweet[456] honey of the lotus-like feet of Govinda to us whose bodies have changed colour due to the smoke of sacrifices[457].

13. We cannot compare the heaven and the Liberation (from the cycle of births) with the slightest period of time (spent) in the company of (devotees who are) associates of the Supreme Lord. What to say of the blessings (i.e. the desired objects like kingdom etc.) of ordinary mortals ?

14. What man capable of appreciating the beauty or excellence will get satiated with the stories of him who is the absolute resort of the best men amongst the great people! The

454. *vṛka*—That which covers or destroys righteousness, knowledge etc.—VJ.

455. *bubhūṣubhiḥ*—desirous of attaining Liberation—VJ.

456. *madhu*—intoxicating (making one forget the experience of pleasure and pain)—VC.

GD. explains 'āsava' as 'the wine making one forget the unhappiness of the worldly existence, and 'madhu' as 'sweet'.

457. *dhūma-dhūmrātmanām*—(i) Or whose minds are covered with (full of) ignorance (and are blindly following the *karmas*)—VR.

(ii) VJ. rather differs : In this series of sacrificial acts (performed for getting the knowledge of Hari), there being no breathing space (*anāśvāse*) for attachment to other things (and hence leisure for listening to Hari's stories) you make us—whose bodies are sanctified by sacrificial smoke—drink the sweet honey of Hari's lotus-like feet.

Lords of Yoga among whom Śiva and god Brahmā are prominent, did not reach the ends of the qualities of the Attributeless.

15. Therefore, Oh learned one, your honour who is the chief of the devotees of the Almighty, describe in details to us who are desirous of hearing the pure excellent life of Hari who is absolutely the refuge of the best among the great.

16. By means of the knowledge imparted to him by Śuka (the son of Vyāsa) verily, the great devotee of the Lord (Kṛṣṇa), Parīkṣit, of no mean intellect, resorted to the feet of Viṣṇu (lit. God having Garuḍa—the lord of birds—as the emblem on his flag) which is (also) called Final Beatitude.

17. Therefore narrate to us in plain language that extremely holy account told to Parīkṣit (viz. the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) leading to firm adherence to the most wonderful (*bhakti*—devotion) Yoga and containing the stories about the Eternal (Kṛṣṇa) (which are) liked by persons devoted to the Supreme Lord.

Sūta said:

18. Oh, what a happy surprise—that we who are born in a (lower) mixed caste, by our service of the seniors (in age and knowledge e.g. of Śuka), have achieved our object in life. The association, even in conversation with the greatest, removes the agony (inferiority complex) of being born in a lower family.

19. What to say again[458] about the person who chants the name of the Eternal Lord Kṛṣṇa, that sole resort of the greatest, possessor of infinite powers and who is called Ananta, as the excellent attributes of the great souls are his own.

20. He is so much unequalled and unsurpassed in qualities by others[459] that it is really enough if it is suggested that the Goddess of Wealth, discarding other suppliants, serves the dust of His feet who does not seek her favour.

458. *kutaḥ punaḥ*—The act of reciting the name of the Infinite removes the contamination of being low born; or where is the impurity of being born in a lower caste in the man who recites the name of the Supreme Lord—ŚR.

459. *asāmyātiśāyanasya*—There is no necessity to describe the attributes of the great Being who has no equal in quality or who does not excel any one in this respect—JG.

22. [460]*Being attached to whom (Kṛṣṇa) wise men, having immediately shed off their rooted attachment to their bodies* etc., attain the final stage of the sacred order of recluse (called *Parama-haṁsa*) in which non-violence, quietness[461] form the religious duty.

23. Oh Sun-like Brāhmaṇas (or Oh Vedas incarnate)[462], I who have been asked by your honour, shall describe to you in details (his glories) to the best of my abilities. Just as birds[463] soar up in the sky to the extent of their might, similarly the learned ones (the god Brahmā and others) impart the knowledge of Viṣṇu[464] to the extent of their capacity.

24. Once upon a time, (king Parīkṣit) with his bow strung, went a-hunting to the jungle and (while) pursuing a deer, became exhausted and was extremely hungry and thirsty.

25. Not seeing any source of water, he entered that (famous) hermitage (of Aṅgiras) and saw a sage seated in tranquillity, with his eyes closed.

26-27. Parīkṣit whose palate was completely dried up, asked water from the sage who had thus controlled his sense-or-

460. Or Persons who are steadfast and attached to the lord having given up rooted attachment fixed on (their) body and other (objects), reach Brahman called (Kṛṣṇa) attainable by the highest ascetic order called *Paramahaṁsa* wherein non-violence and tranquillity are the chief characteristics.—VJ.

461. VJ. reads *uparama* and interprets 'Attachment to Viṣṇu' (*upa* Viṣṇuḥ *sarvādhikas tasmin Harau ramo ramaṇaṁ ratir* viṣaya-nivṛtir vā/VJ).

462. *aryamaṇaḥ*—(i) That which dispels (*minoti*) the darkness (*aryam*) i.e. the sun.

(ii) That by which pure religion (*aryaṁ*-śuddha-dharmam) is comprehended (*mīyate*) i.e. the Vedas—VD. etc.

463. *patatriṇaḥ*—Also: Just as arrows cross the sky to the extent of their latent force (and can never cover the unending sky).

464. *Viṣṇugati*—(i) The deeds or pastimes of Viṣṇu—ŚR., VC.. SD., VB.

(ii) The greatness of Lord Viṣṇu—VR.

28. Being unoffered (a mat of) grass or even (a place on) the ground (to sit on) and not getting (usual) respectful offerings and courteous words, he (Parīkṣit) felt himself disregarded and grew angry.

29. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka), there arose suddenly in the mind of the king who was distressed by hunger and thirst, an unprecedented hostility and wrath against that Brāhmana sage.

30. While coming out (of the hermitage) in anger, he placed round the neck of the Brāhmaṇa sage a dead serpent with the fore-end of his bow and repaired to his capital.

31. (The king wanted to ascertain) whether he (the sage) had controlled all his sense organs and (consequently closed his eyes (in real meditation) or whether he had pretended meditation (thinking) that he had nothing to do with vile Kṣatriyas.

32. Having heard that his father was subjected to ill-treatment, his (the sage's) son (by name Śṛṅgī) who was young (but) very brilliant and was playing with children, spoke there as follows.

33. Ah what unrighteousness it is on the part of rulers grown fat like crows (lit. eaters of offerings).[467] For this mis-

465. *Brahma-bhūtam*—Contemplating about Brahman—*Brahma-viṣayaka-bhāvanayā 'nvitam*/VR.

(ii) Realising the presence of Brahman without any effort—VJ.

(iii) Becoming one with Brahman through its realization—VB., GD.

466. *avikriyam*—(i) Devoid of perturbation due to pairs of contradictory feelings such as pleasure-pain.—VR., VB.

(ii) motionless like a lamp in a windless place or without an activity prejudicial to the deep meditation—VJ.

467. Or How these servants misbehave towards their masters, these dogs that feed upon the offerings and (should) watch the gate.

demeanour perpetrated by door-keeping slaves, is like an evil act by dogs guarding the door ?

34. For the mean Kṣatriyas have been assigned the duty of door-keepers by Brāhmaṇas. How can a door-keeper be fit to partake (food etc.) in the same vessel in that house. ?

35. When Lord Kṛṣṇa, the controller of those who go astray, has departed, I shall today punish the transgressors (of the path of righteousness). Behold my power.

36. Having spoken thus to his companions, the son of that sage with his eye red with anger, sipped (as *ācamana*) the water of the Kauśiki[468] river, and discharged his thunderbolt-like word, i.e. curse.

37. "Takṣaka, urged by me, shall on the seventh day (from today) bite this transgressor of limits (of religion), the fire-brand (destroyer) of his (own) family, who has troubled my father."

38. Then, having approached his hermitage and seeing his father with the dead body of the serpent around his neck, the boy was overwhelmed with grief and wept aloud.

39. Oh Brāhmaṇa, the decsendant of the family of Aṅgiras (viz. Śamika), having heard the loud lament of his son, and having slowly opened his eyes, saw the dead serpent on his shoulders.

40. After throwing away (the dead serpent), he asked his son, "Oh child, why are you crying ? Who has done you any harm ?" When so enquired, the son reported (the details).

41. Having heard that the king was cursed undeservedly, the Brāhmaṇa did not give compliment to his son, (He said) "Alas ! Oh ignorant child ! What a great sin you have committed in inflicting heavy punishment for a minor fault.

42. Oh (child of) immature intellect, you should not equate (judge) the King (lit. God amongst men), known as

468. Modern Kosi; rises in the eastern ranges of the Himālayas in Nepal. Its confluence with the Ganges is at Manhari, Purnea district, Bihar. It was visited by Balarāma. Jamadagni's mother Satyavatī became converted into this river; sacred to Manes (*Pitṛs*)—PSK 637-39, PI.1.475.

It is surprising how a king of Hastinapura strayed a-hunting to such a long distance. Moreover, this contradicts verse 25 above which speaks of non-existence of water nearby. VJ. is probably correct when he explains, "holding Kuśa grass in his hand and performing *Ācamana*".

Para (Viṣṇu) with ordinary men, as the subjects, being protected by his irresistible power, obtain (their) good without fear from any quarter.

43. Oh (child), with the disappearance of god Viṣṇu (the wielder of the discus) designated as king (god amongst men), the world, instantaneously being protectionless and infested with thieves, will be ruined like a flock of sheep.[469]

44. Today the sin committed by robbers of wealth (of people who are) protectorless will be visited upon us (though we are) not concerned[470] with it, for men, most of whom are robbers, kill and curse each other and rob one another of cattles, women and money.

45. Then (in the absence of the ruler), the noble and righteous[471] path of life which consists of the code of conduct for different classes of society and stages of life, prescribed by the three Vedas[472], disappears and there takes place promiscuous mixture of all classes of people as their minds are fixed on (acquisition of) wealth and gratification of the senses as amongst the dogs and the monkeys.

46. But that lord of men who was protector of righteousness, an emperor of great renown, manifestly a great votary of the Supreme Lord, a sage amongst Kings (and) a performer of the horse-sacrifice, being overwhelmed with hunger, thirst and exhaustion was helpless. Certainly, he did not in the least deserve our curse.

47. May the Supreme Lord who resides in all[473], please

469. *avivar ūthavat*—Like an army without a leader.

470. *ananvayam*—(i) That which will annihilate our progeny completely—VR., VJ.

(ii) Unnecessarily; without any reason—VB.

VB. explains : 'Although we have not directly committed robbery etc., the sin has taken place due to our act (of cursing the king to death and rendering the world protectionless). Hence our responsibility for the sin.'

471. *ārya-dharmaḥ*—Religious duties as expounded by noble ones like Manu and other law-givers—SD.

472. *trayī-mayaḥ*—That which has come down from the three Vedas (viz. *Ṛg, Sāman* and *Yajus*)—VR., GD.

473. Both the curser and the cursed—VR.

pardon this boy of immature intellect for the sin committed by him against His sinless servant (devotee).

48. His devotees, even though powerful, do not retaliate even if (they are) reproached, cheated, cursed, insulted or struck."

49. The great sage, though himself maltreated by the king, did not regard it as (the king's) fault at all, but was distressed by the offence committed by his son (in cursing the king).

50. In this world, generally, good persons are subjected to the pairs such as pleasure and pain but they are neither distressed nor delighted as the Soul is not affected by the attributes[474] such as happiness, misery etc.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

(Arrival of Śuka)

1. Thereupon, the Lord of the Earth, pondering over the iniquitous act committed by himself was deeply distressed in mind (and said to himself): 'Alas ! what a heinous offence has been perpetrated by me like a vile person, against an innocent Brāhmaṇa of hidden power.

2. Therefore it is certain that due to the insult of god (-like sage), an unsurmountable calamity is going to befall me in near future. Let that (misfortune) come in full force directly on me (and not on my sons etc.) for the expiation of sin so that I may never commit such act again.

3. Let the fire of the Brāhmaṇa race incensed (by my provocative act) consume[475] even today the kingdom, army and

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474. *aguṇāśrayaḥ*—(i) Their mind is rooted in virtue —VR.
(ii) Their mind does not harbour the pairs such as love, hatred, which are the effects of *guṇas* (attributes)—VB.
(iii) *Jīva* (the individual Soul) is the abode of vices and virtues or merits and demerits.—VG

475. JG. gives a better interpretation : "Even today, the kingdom etc. go away from me like a thing burnt" (*Rājyādikam adyaiva me mattaḥ sakāśād dagdha-vad apayātvityarthaḥ*/) i.e. I may be bereft of kingdom etc. and not that the kingdom should be reduced to ashes. Otherwise Brāhmaṇas who are residing in the kingdom may get burnt.

rich treasury belonging to me—a wicked fellow[476], so that my intellect may not entertain an evil disposition to Brāhmaṇas, gods and cows.

4. While he was thinking thus, he heard of (the cause of his) death named (i.e. which was to meet him in the shape of) Takṣaka impelled by (the curse of) the sage's son. He regarded the fire (of the poison) of Takṣaka as a blessing, as it was the immediate cause of renunciation on the part of a person attached (to worldly objects).

5. Then having renounced this world and the next (the world of gods) which he had already decided as worth rejecting, he who thought the service of the feet of Kṛṣṇa as higher than all objectives in life, sat on the bank of the Ganges (the river of the immortals) with a vow to abstain from food till death.

6. What man about to die will not resort to the river (Ganges) which carries the waters highly sanctified by the dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet mingled with the pollen of the *Tulasi*[477] of refulgent beauty and which purifies here and hereafter the worlds along with the protectors of the quarters of the world including Iśa.

7. In this way, having decided to sit on the bank of the Ganges, abstaining from food (till death), the descendant of Pāṇḍu (i.e. Parīkṣit) with single-minded devotion to the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa took the vows of sage's way of life and freed himself from all attachments.

8. There arrived the great sages along with their disciples purifying the world. Verily, under the guise of going on a pilgrimage, the saints themselves purify the holy places.

9. Afterwards (then came) Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Śaradvana, Ariṣṭanemi, Bhṛgu, Aṅgirasas, Parāśara, the son of Gādhi, (i.e. Viśvāmitra), Paraśurāma, Utathya, Indra-Pramada and Idhma-vāha.

476. *abhadrasya*—(i) of one devoid of light or
(ii) ignorant.
(iii) sleepy—VJ.

477. Tulasi—the holy basil held sacred by Vaiṣṇavites. VJ. derives it as follows :
(i) That which is comparable to knowledge about Brahman.
(ii) That which decorates Viṣṇu.

10. Medhātithi, Devala, Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, Bhāradvāja, Gautama, Pippalāda, Maitreya, Aurva, Kavaṣa, Agastya (the sage born in water jar), Dvaipāyana and the glorious Nārada.*

11. Also others (such as) prominent divine sages and Brāhmaṇa sages, eminent royal-sages and others like Aruṇa (who initiated rites and formed a distinct class by themselves).

Having worshipped the sages belonging to various patronymic groups who assembled there, the king made obeisance to them by bending his head.

12. When they were comfortably seated, the king, with his pure heart, having saluted them again with his hands folded, stood before them and explained to them what he intended to do (with a desire to elicit their opinion regarding the desirability of such a course).

King said:

13. Ah! We whose behaviour is worthy of the favour of the greatest ones (like you)[478] are the blessed-most among the kings. Alas! the race of kings whose job (acts necessary) while governing, (e.g. inflicting punishment etc.) is blameworthy, is relegated to a position beyond a place where the water used for washing the feet of Brāhmaṇas goes.[479]

14.** The Supreme Lord has assumed the form of the Brāhmaṇa's curse (which became) the root-cause of complete

*VB classifies : (i) Rāma to Pippalāda—propagators of religion.
(ii) Maitreya to Nārada—propagators of the path of devotion.

478. *anugrahaṇīya-śīlāḥ*—Also VR. : whose good character or behaviour is due to the grace of the greatest.
(ii) We, of Pāṇḍu's race, being like Svāyambhuva Manu and others who strive to attain grace from you who are the best of great persons—JG.

479. How regrettable is the lot of the race of kings who, due to the censurable nature of their actions, are deprived of the (holy) water with which feet of Brāhmaṇas are washed—VJ.

**Other interpretations :
(i) May this (punishment in the form of) Brāhmaṇa's curse (adversely) affecting my worldly life be the effective (lit. sufficient) cause of renunciation (of worldly objects) in my case whose mind is devoutly attached to the Supreme Lord. For a person attached to worldly objects (like houses etc.) has the danger of worldly existence while he who is attached to god attains fearlessness or liberation—VJ. *

indifference (to worldly objects) in the case of a sinner like me whose mind was firmly attached to houses (wealth etc.); for persons, deeply attached (to worldly affairs) immediately got terrified when so cursed.

15. May (all) Brāhmaṇas and the Gaṅgā know[480] me as the seeker of refuge with the Lord and as one whose mind is fixed on him. Let the cunning Takṣaka deputed by the Brāhmaṇa bite me to his satisfaction. Please sing the songs of Viṣṇu.[481]

16. In whatever birth (form of existence) I may be born again, may I be attached to the Eternal Lord and be associated with those great persons who resort to him for shelter. Let my friendship[482] be with all (like you). I bow to Brāhmaṇas.*

17. The brave king, who had thus made up his mind and placed the responsibility of governing the kingdom on his son, sat on the southern bank of the Gaṅgā[483] on a seat of Kuśa grass the ends of which were towards the eastern direction, himself facing the north.

18. When the king of kings took his seat with the determination of fasting unto death, assemblies of gods in heaven,

(ii) In my case who am born in the family favoured by the Lord but am deeply attached to worldly objects (e.g. houses, wealth) and who have committed a sin (by insulting that Brāhmana Śamika), the Supreme Lord, taking into account my birth in the family blessed with his grace, has assumed the form of the Brāhmaṇa's curse, the cause of non-attachment, but by attachment to whom one immediately become free from fear (by attaining his lotus-like feet)—JG.

480. *Pratiyantu*—accept me. May the heavenly river Gaṅgā accept (receive) me as a person whose mind is fixed on God—JG.

481. (i) Extol to me the deeds of Viṣṇu or sing of his glories.—VR.
(ii) (Setting to musical tunes) sing of the songs of Viṣṇu till my death.—VJ.

482. *maitrī*—Let my outlook be of equality.—JG.

*This verse expresses the following last 4 desires of Parīkṣit :
(i) Devotion to the Lord in every birth.
(ii) Close association with the devotee of the Lord.
(iii) Friendship to all beings.
(iv) Respect to Brāhmaṇas.

483. VJ. states that Parīkṣit sat in a mansion on the bank of the Ganges as mentioned in the Mbh. (Obviously he refers to the Mbh. I.42. 29-32).

praising him, showered flowers on the earth with joy and kettle-drums were sounded again and again.

19. Having praised and approved (of the king's vow of fast-unto-death) as 'well done', the great sages who assembled there and who had the nature and ability to bestow favours on subjects spoke to him what was beautiful due to the attributes of Hari[484].

20. Oh the best of royal sages, amongst you (kings of Pāṇḍu's race) who are the followers of Kṛṣṇa, it is no wonder that when you desire to attain vicinity to the Supreme Lord, you instantaneously vacate the imperial throne served by tributary princes wearing crowns.

21. We shall all stay on here now till this foremost devotee of the Supreme Lord,[485] casting off this (mortal) body, goes to the highest world[486] free from illusion[487] and affliction (grief).

22. Hearing the speech of the congregation of sages which was true, impartial, dripping with nectar, pregnant with meaning, Parīkṣit, complimenting the sages of composed mind, addressed them with a desire to hear the deeds of Viṣṇu.

23. Just as the Vedas appear in bodily forms (in the Satyaloka) above these three worlds, all of you have assembled here from all quarters. Being by nature disposed to do good to others, you have no other objective in this or the next world.

24. Oh Brāhmaṇas, with full faith in you, I specifically enquire about this worth-considering problem as to what one should do in all (types of) circumstances. Oh learned ones, carefully consider (and advise me) what (course of) action is sinless (and hence recommended) for persons about to die.

484. VR. takes *uttama...rūpam* as qualifying the king and interprets; "The great sages...praised the king charming on account of his qualities worth-praising by the great", while VJ. connects it with the sages' speech : 'which was agreeable (conducive) to the description of the glories of Hari.'

485. *bhāgavata-pradhānaḥ*—who feels that votaries should always be served—VR.

486. Will go to Hari who is beyond the three attributes (*guṇas*), perfect and eternally devoid of misery—VJ.

487. *virajaska*—Full of pure *Sattva*-attribute—VR.

25. By lucky chance, there came wandering over the earth venerable (Śuka), the son of Vyāsa, (who was) devoid of all desires, and (who) did not bear any external mark (indicating his caste or stage of life) and was satisfied with the realisation of the self, appearing like one discarded by the society and surrounded by children (and women).

26-28. Those sages recognised him (Śuka) by his special marks though his powers were latent, and rose from their seats to receive him. He appeared sixteen years of age with tender feet, hands, thighs, arms, shoulders, cheeks and body; his face (appeared attractive) with wide beautiful eyes, prominent nose, symmetrical ears and beautiful eye-brows; his neck (was) shapely like a conch, collar-bones covered (with flesh); his chest was broad and elevated; his navel was like an eddy and belly beautified by folds; his clothing (were) the (four) quarters of the world (i.e. he was nude); his curly hair were dishevelled and arms were long upto the knee; he was beautiful like Hari (the best of immortals); he was of dark complexion and captivating to women by the splendour of the permanent youthfulness of his person and enchanting smile.

29. Then Viṣṇurāta (king Parīkṣit) also bowing down his head offered worship to the guest (Śuka) who had just arrived. Ignorant people, women and children then retired. Thus worshipped he (Śuka) occupied a high seat (offered to him).

30.* Surrounded by multitudes of Brāhmaṇa sages, royal sages and divine sages, the venerable (Śuka), the greatest among the great, appeared there extremely brilliant like the glorious moon in the midst of planets, constellations and stars.

31. Approaching that (comfortably) seated sage of serene mind and keen intellect, the devout, attentive king, with folded hands and head bowed down, paid respects (to him) and asked him in sweet words.

Parīkṣit said:

32. Oh Brahman! What a luck that we mean Kṣatriyas

*According to VJ. this verse describes Parīkṣit and not Śuka.

have become today worthy of being served by the good[488], as we are sanctified[489] by venerable persons (like you) by being our guest, out of grace.

33. By remembering whom (holy persons like you) houses of people get immediately purified. What then (of the effect) of seeing you, touching (your feet) and (rendering service to you by acts) like washing your feet and offering you a seat, etc.

34. Oh great Yogin! Verily even the vilest sins of people are instantly annihilated in your presence as the enemies of gods are smashed in Viṣṇu's presence.

35. Most probably Lord Kṛṣṇa to whom Pāṇḍavas were dear and who for the happiness of the sons of his paternal aunt (i.e. Pāṇḍavas) is disposed to be friendly to their family-descendants, is gracious to me.

36. Otherwise how is it possible for us—men especially those who are about to die, to obtain ample sight of yours whose movements are unmanifest to worldly persons and who have attained final beatitude and are the most solicitous (to bestow your favour)[490].

37. Hence I ask of you who are an eminent preceptor of *Yogins*, what a man about to die, definitely should do (which will lead to) Final Beatitude.

38. Oh Lord, kindly tell me what should be heard, muttered, done, contemplated and adored by (such a person like) me and what should be avoided.

488. *sat-sevya*—(i) Deserving to serve saintly persons—VR.
(ii) Worthy of being favoured by good men—VR.
(iii) Whose duty is to serve the great souls—VC.

489. *tīrthakāḥ kṛtāḥ*—(i) made worthy—ŚR.
(ii) Transformed into a highly sacred place—VJ.
(iii) When saints visit even a bad place, it becomes a holy place ; similarly though we are vile (due to sins committed by us), we become sanctified by visits of saintly guests like you—VC.

490. *vanīyasaḥ*—(i) On account of his magnanimity of heart, Śuka expected Parīkṣit to ask him for something—ŚR.
(ii) Spending most of his life in forests in comparison with other sages—VR.

39. Oh Brahman, (you are unavailable) as the stay of your glorious self at (the doors of) the homes of house-holders is hardly for (such a short period as is required for) milking a cow.

Sūta said:

40. Thus addressed and requested in gentle (persuasive) words by the king, the glorious son of Bādarāyaṇa who comprehended religion, spoke to Parīkṣit in reply.

SECOND SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

(The Discourse of Śuka—Description of the Cosmic Form of the Lord)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh king! Out of the topics which deserve to be (carefully) heard (studied etc.) by people, the excellent[491] question posed by you, is very important[492] as it is conducive to the good (final beatitude) of the people, and is acceptable to those who have realized the Soul[493].

2. Oh best of kings, there are thousands of topics[494] which deserve to be heard (studied etc.) by persons who have not visualized the soul, and who are attached to the householder's life (involving five types of sins[495] related to that life).

3. Oh king! life is taken away at night by sleep, in sexual enjoyment, (and evil desires); and by day, for earning money or for maintaining one's family.

491. *para*—(i) Within the range of senses (of hearing etc.)—VR.
(ii) The Supreme Soul—VJ.
(iii) Pertaining to Śrī-Kṛṣṇa *or* by hearing which the highest goal in life is achieved—JG.

492. *varīyān*—(i) Worth undertaking (discussion)—VJ.
(ii) Very great as compared with topics related to other incarnations—JG.

493. *ātmavit-sammataḥ*—(i) approved of mainly by self-knowers like god Brahmā and others—VJ.
(ii) Not that you (Parikṣit) have not realized the soul, but you, who have known the soul, have asked this question for the benefit of the world—SD.

494. VR. states : Persons in worldly life wish to hear thousands of topics, but a man desirous of liberation wishes to listen to (and concentrate) on the Brahman only.

495. In a householder's life, there are generally five articles in the house, whereby living beings are hurt or destroyed. SD. enumerates them as follows : a fire place, a grind-stone (for milling food-grains), a broom, a mortar and a water pot. These prevent a householder from going to heaven. Also vide ASD p. 560. SD. quotes the following verse :

Kaṇḍanī, peṣaṇī, cullī, udakumbhī ca mārjanī /
Pañca-sūnā gṛhasthasya tābhiḥ svargaṁ na gacchati //

4. Being attached to his body, children, wife and other attendants, dependents etc., even though they are unreal, he does not discern their destruction, though he actually sees them die.

5. Oh descendant of Bharata! Therefore, the glorious Hari (reliever of bondage, of *saṁsāra*) the Supreme Lord, the all-pervading soul, should be heard about, eulogised and remembered by a person desiring a state, completely free from fear (i.e. the Final Beatitude or *mokṣa*).

6. *Nārāyaṇa* is remembered at the end of life (time of death), is the highest achievement of human life. This (may be) due to *Sāṅ-khya*[496]-Yoga[497], and through knowledge and performance of one's duties.

7. Oh king! It is well-known (*sma*[498]) that generally, sages[499] who have turned away (abstained) from abiding by religious injunctions and prohibitions[500], and are established (absorbed) in the attributeless (*nirguṇa*) Brahman[501] take delight in discoursing upon the qualities of Hari.

496. *Sāṅkhya*—(i) Accurate comprehension of the Soul and the non-Soul—ŚR.
(ii) The path of knowledge (*Jñāna yoga*)—VR.
(iii) Metaphysics etc. of Sāṅkhyas—VJ.

497. *Yoga* (i) The eight-fold path of *Yoga* and *practice*—ŚR.
(ii) The path of action (*Karma-yoga*) without any desire for the fruit of action—VR.
(iii) Worship of the Lord etc. as prescribed in the *Yoga-Śāstra* (authoritative scriptures on *Yoga*)—VJ.

498. According to GD.

499. *Munayaḥ*—Those who are completely devoted to the meditation of Hari—SD.

500. *nivṛtta-vidhi-ṣedhataḥ*—(i) Not observing Vedic injunctions and prohibitions (to perform rites, with a desire to obtain some particular object or fruit, and to abstain from some actions)—VR.
(ii) Free from contamination of the merit or sin arising from the Vedic prescriptions—GD.

501. *nairguṇyasthāḥ*—(i) Who meditate upon Brahman of pure *sattva* attribute, unalloyed by *rajas* and *tamas*—VR.
(ii) Liberated (*muktāḥ*) as *nairguṇya*=the Liberation granted by the Supreme attributeless Lord (Hari)—JG.
(iii) Established in their own soul who is above the three attributes—VB.

8. At the end[502] of the Dvāpara Age, I learnt this Purāṇa called the *Bhāgavata* ('narrated by the Supreme Lord') which is comparable to the Vedas (or, which succinctly describes the Brahman), from my father Vyāsa.

9. Oh king-sage! Though I was firmly established in (the meditation of) the attributeless (*nirguṇa*) Brahman, I studied this (legendary) work, as my mind was fascinated with the sports of the Supreme Lord.

10. I shall narrate that (Purāṇa) to you, as you are a great devotee of the glorious god Viṣṇu. By entertaining faith in this (scripture), pure motiveless devotion to Mukunda is immediately created (in the faithful listeners).

11. Oh King! This chanting of the name of Hari (and meditating upon him etc.) has been prescribed as the sure means of attaining liberation for those deserving emancipation[503], and wishing freedom from the fear (of the cycle of rebirths), and for yogins[504].

12. What is the use of a number of years to a careless man, if they are wasted in ignorance? In this world, it is better to have a short duration of life, (*muhūrta* or a period of 48 minutes), if one utilizes it for trying for final beatitude.

13. Having known the balance of life-period due to him in this world, the famous king-sage Khaṭvāṅga[505] renounced everything in a short time (*muhūrta*), and resorted to Hari, the liberator from the fear (of the cycle of rebirths).

14. While in your case, Oh descendant of the Kuru family, the duration of life is seven days (from now). Utilise all that time for what will help the attainment of the next

502. In the transitional period of which Dvāpara was the beginning, i.e. the end of Dvāpara. Vyāsa was a contemporary of Śantanu—ŚR.

503. *nirvidyamānānām*—disgusted with the worldly miseries —VR. & VJ.

504. *Yoginām*—Persons who follow the path of action—*Karmayoga* without any attachment for the accruing fruit—VR.

505. *Khaṭvāṅga* a son of Viśvasaha and a *Cakravartin*. Fought for Devas and defeated the demons in battle. Knowing that he had only a *muhūrta* to live, he returned to the earth, renounced everything, and devoted himself to Nārāyaṇa in a detached spirit, and attained Liberation—PI. 1. 495. vide Infra IX. 9. 41-49.

world.[506]

15. At the end of life, a man, becoming devoid of the fear of death, should sever, with the weapon of disassociation, his attachment for pleasure, for his body, and for whatever (e.g. wife and children) is connected with it.

16. Having renounced (his) home, (such) a person of firm resolve,[507] bathed in holy waters at a sacred place,[508] (should) sit on a seat, prepared as per *Śāstric* rules,[509] in a pure secluded place.

17.* He should repeat, in his mind, the great, sacred—syllable consisting of the three letters—a, u, m—symbolizing the Brahman; without forgetting the 'seed' of the Brahman (viz. the syllable OM), he should control his breath and subdue his mind.

18. He, whose intelligence has been his guide (lit. charioteer), should restrain his sense-organ from (being attracted to) objects of enjoyment. If his mind is distracted with actions, he should fix it on the auspicious object (viz. the Lord Kṛṣṇa).

19. With undivided mind, he should meditate upon only one limb (such as feet or face of the Lord Hari). Having restrained the mind, free from external objects, he should not think of anything else. That is the highest abode of Viṣṇu (reaching which) the mind becomes pacified.

20. By fixation of attention, the wise (and courageous) man should bring under control his mind, which is distracted by

506. *sāmparāyika*—Pertaining to the future, i.e. the time for liberation (*mukti-kāla*). Or listen to the *Bhāgavata* which will enable you to remember (muse over) Hari's feet—VJ.

507. This indicates the Ist 'aid' (*aṅga*), viz. *Yama* or 'abstinence' in Yoga. It includes 'abstinence from injury, and from falsehood, and from theft and from incontinence and from acceptance of gifts'. YSP (*The Yoga System of Patañjali*—J.H. Woods HOS 1900), p. 178-80.

508. This stands for the 2nd 'aid' viz. *niyama* or 'observances' in Yoga. They are : cleanliness, contentment, self-castigation, study and devotion to Īśvara or God. YSP—ii. 32, pp. 181-83.

509. This is the 3rd 'aid' viz. *āsana*. See YSP ii-46. pp. 191-92 for details.

*Verses 17-20 explain the remaining 'aids' (*aṅgas*) of Yoga viz. breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*), withdrawal of the senses (*pratyāhāra*), contemplation (*dhāraṇā*) and concentration (*samādhi*) Vide YSP, pp. 195-200.

rajas and confused by *tamas*, and destroy the sin (impurity) created by them.

21. While it (*dhāraṇā*) is being practised, contemplating on (lit. visualizing) the auspicious refuge (of the world i.e. Lord Viṣṇu), *Yoga* characterised by devotion (*bhakti*) is quickly developed in such a *yogin*.

The King said:

22. Oh Brahman! How is the *dhāraṇā* practised? In what way is it approved? What type of dhāraṇā will quickly remove the impurities of man's mind?

Śrī Śuka said:

23. One who has mastered steadiness of seat, and acquired control over one's breath, and mind and senses, should, with determined intellect, fix one's mind on the Virāṭ (gross or great) Form of the Supreme Lord.

24. This special body of the Lord is the biggest among the big. In this (body) is seen the past, present and future universe of gross effects.

25. That Supreme Lord, who is the cosmic Man (*Vairājaḥ Puruṣaḥ*) in this body of the universe, which is like an egg, and is covered with seven sheaths,[510] is the object of contemplation (*dhāraṇā*).

26.* They describe that *pātāla* is verily the sole of his feet, *rasātala* is His heels and the toes *mahātala* forms the ankles of the Creator of the Universe, while *talātala* are the shanks (part of the leg from the ankle to the knee) of this Cosmic Man.

27. *Sutala* is (regarded as) the two knees, and *vitala* and *atala* are the two thighs of this Cosmic Man. Oh King, they

510. ŚR. and other Comm. state that the 'sheaths' are those of the five elements, viz. the earth, water, fire, air and the sky and of *ahaṁkāra* (the ego) and *mahat*, the first evolute of *Prakṛti* according to the Sāṁkhyas.

* Verses 26 to 37 describe the details of the Cosmic Man who is to be contemplated. VR. explains that these are to be meditated as that particular part of his body, e.g. *Pātāla* is to be contemplated as the sole of his feet etc. but VJ. specifically points out that *Pātāla* etc. are *Not* identical with the actual parts of his body which is characterised by bliss, energy etc. *Pātāla* etc. are the parts of the universe which are created from and are supported by his limbs.

(authoritatively) state that the Earth (lit. the surface of the earth forms his hips, and the (vault of the) sky his lake-like (deep) navel.

28. They considered that of this Primeval Man, the host of stars form his (broad) chest, the *maharloka*, his neck; the *jana-loka*, his mouth; the *tapo-loka*, his forehead; and the satya-loka, the heads of this Man of a thousand heads.

29. They described Indra and other gods of shining bodies as his arms; the cardinal points as his ears; the sound as his auditory sense; (the two aśvini-kumāras) Nāsatya and Dasra, as the nostrils of the Supreme Lord; fragrance is his sense of smelling and the burning fire, his mouth.

30. The sky forms his eyes, (and) the Sun, the sense of seeing, and the day and night are eyelids of the All-pervading God (viz. Viṣṇu). His eyelashes are the Brahma-loka; water is his palate, (while) taste is his tongue.

31. They describe the Vedas[511] as the head (i.e. the *brahmarandhra*—the aperture in the skull for the passage of the Soul) of the Infinite Lord; Yama (the god of death) as his large teeth[512] (tusks); Traces of feelings of affection (?) as his teeth; Cosmic Illusion (*Māyā*) which maddens the people is his laugh; and the unending creation of the world, his side-glance.

32. Modesty (bashfulness) is his upper lip, (while) greed is his lower lip. The path of righteousness is his chest, while the unrighteous path is his back. Prajāpati (the god of creation) is his penis, while Mitra and Varuṇa are his scrotum (the testicles). The oceans are his belly, and the mountains are his bone-system.

33. Oh king of kings! the rivers are his arteries; the trees are the hair of the God whose body is the Universe; the wind of infinite force, is his breath; Time is his movement (act of moving); the stream of the three attributes (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) i.e. the worldly existence of beings is his action.

34. Oh Chief (excellent) of the Kuru family, (the wise ones) know that the hair of the Supreme Ruler are the clouds;

511. *Chandāṁsi*—Vedic meters like Gāyatrī and others—VJ.

512. The Sun and the Moon are his two tusks (while) stars are his teeth—VJ.

the twilight is the garment of the all-pervading Supreme Lord. They say that the unmanifest (*avyakta*) i.e. the *Pradhāna* ('primordial nature' of the Sāṁkhyas) is his heart, and the moon is his mind, which is the store of all changes (and passions).

35. It is traditionally known that the *mahat* (the Sāṁkhya principle of intelligence) is his intellectual power, and that Śiva is the internal organ (made up of *manas, citta, ahaṁkāra* and *buddhi*) of the Lord who dwells in the hearts of all; the horses, mules, donkeys and elephants are his nails; all beasts and deer are at his hips.

36. The various kinds of birds[513] are the wonderful expressions (of his skill in arts); (*Svāyambhuva*) Manu is his power of comprehension (understanding); the human race is his dwelling place; Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas and Apsaras are his *svaras* (musical notes or gamut) and *smṛtis*; and the armies of *asuras* are his strength.[514].

37. The Cosmic Man[515] has the Brāhmaṇa[516] as his mouth, the Kṣatriya as his arms, the Vaiśya as his thighs, the dark-complexioned Śūdra as his feet. He is made up of the substance which is of groups of gods of various names; the performance of sacrifices is his essential work.[517]

38. Such is the extent and configuration (formation) of the body of the Supreme Lord described to you, by me. One

513. VJ. reads *vacāṁsi* i.e. Vedic and popular expressions.

514. VR. and SD. read *asurānika-varyyaḥ*—The Supreme Person among the Asura hosts, i.e. Prahlāda.

515. *mahātmā*=Vairājaḥ (Cosmic Man)—VR., SD.

516. VB. explicitely states that these words do not denote a caste but certain qualities: *Brahma-bhāvaḥ kaściddharmaḥ ... Brāhmaṇyaṁ na jātiḥ|* The whole exposition is interesting. Cf RV. (Ṛgveda) 10.90.12, AV. (Atharvaveda) 19.6.6

517. *nānābhidha ... vitāna-yogaḥ*—

The performance of sacrifice is the act for propitiating him. It is to be done with offerings meant for propitiating groups of gods with various names and are so worshipped—VR.

VJ. interprets differently: The Great Soul has his mouth from which Brāhmaṇa-caste is born ... He possesses the power to create *svāhā* and *svadhā* which are to be used for gods and manes. His middle part of the body is the Soul creating Havya (things worthy of being sacrificed). He possesses the means to help all sacrifices like *agniṣṭoma*, etc.

should concentrate one's mind on this very huge body of the Cosmic Man, by one's own intellect (intellectual efforts), as there is nothing beyond this (or there is nothing greater).

39. Just as one sees all one's relatives in a dream, he, the Soul, experiences everything directly by his power of intelligence. One should resort (develop oneself) to him who is the real, and a reservoir of bliss. He should not be attached to anything else, otherwise there will be a fall of the Soul.

CHAPTER TWO

(*Liberation by the Yogic Path: Instantaneous and Gradual Liberation*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. By the grace of Hari who was pleased with the contemplation (*dhāraṇā*) as described in the previous Chapter, god Brahmā (the self-born)[518] regained his memory[519] which was lost at the time of the deluge[520] (*pralaya*). Determined to create[521] (the world again), he (god Brahmā), with unerring insight, created the world again as (it was) before the deluge.

2*. Such is the path of verbal Brahman (the Vedas) that (as a result of the fruits of *karmas* promised therein) the

518. *ātma-yoniḥ*—One born from the Supreme Soul—JG.

519. VR. raises the objection that the occupant of the post of Brahmā is changed after the period of a *Kalpa*. The word 'memory' (*smṛti*) should be interpreted here as 'the knowledge of the procedure of creation (*sarga-viṣayaka-jñānamātra-paraḥ*). VR. endorses this interpretation. VR. explains that god Brahmā, by his penance, could see things in their formative stage and could thus create them again, in this world.

520. *purā* : (i) At the time of the previous deluge — VR.
(ii) At the time of initial creation — VJ.
(iii) After the periodic deluge —VB.

521. *vyavasāya-buddhiḥ*—
(i) Possessing resolute (conclusive) understanding—SR.
(ii) Having the knowledge of the nature of the definite object of memory—VR.

* Other commentators agree in general about the substance of this verse. They, however, interpret some words differently. For example, SD:

mind (wishfully) contemplates over the unmeaningful words (lit. names like heaven—*svarga*—etc.). Like a person who sees (empty) dreams (of pleasure) due to the impressions (left in the sub-conscience or deep mind), he, believing that there is happiness in the path of Māyā (Illusion), wanders (in various *lokas*—heavens etc. without getting real happiness) but does not realize his objectives, viz. unalloyed bliss (of Liberation).

3. [He explains away the doubt or difficulty that the absolute renunciation of the fruits of *karmas* would lead to instantaneous death].

Hence a thoughtful person[521a] should accept that much quantity of objects of enjoyment as is essential for his purpose (of sustaining his life). He should not be attached (even to those objects so accepted) and be convinced (that there is no real happiness in them). When his object is otherwise achieved, he should see (understand) the (wasteful) labour (for attaining them) and should not make attempt for them.

4. When the earth is there, what is the propriety of efforts for bed? There is no necessity of pillows when (one is naturally) equipped with arms. When the hollow of folded hands is available, various kinds of vessels for food are super-

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"The intellect or mind of the follower of *karma-path* longingly broods over names and forms (viz. wife. children etc.) unconnected with (liberation, the highest) goal of life, wanders in this ordinary world of Māyā and gets his objects in life (pleasures of the world according to his *karmas*) but not the *yogic* attainment (Liberation)."

The substance of VJ.'s explanation is as follows :

The main subject of voluminously worded Veda is (the description etc.) of Hari. The individual Soul who, due to the result of his acts (*karmas*), wanders through this transmigration of births and deaths (in this *saṁsāra* which is the creation of God's will), contemplates in mind on unmeaningful words like Indra. These names are meaningless as they do not have the unlimited power etc. connoted by them. Hence one does not get the objects coveted in life by adoring them. Due to the study etc. (of the *karma-kāṇḍa* in the Vedas) the mind is filled with empty names like heaven (*svarga*) etc. But such a person is attached to the world which is created by Māyā and does not achieve the real *Puruṣārtha*, i.e. *mokṣa* or liberation.

521a. *Kaviḥ* (i) Omniscient—VJ.
(ii) One who judges what is to be accepted or rejected —SD., GD.

fluous. The silken cloths are unnecessary when the directions (cardinal points), bark-garments etc. are there.

5. Are there no tattered cloths(lying) on the way ? Do not trees which support others (with their fruits etc.) give alms ? Are the rivers dried up (devoid of water) ? Are caves (in mountains) closed ? Does not the unconquered Lord (Hari) protect those who seek his refuge ? Why should the wise serve persons blinded with the pride of their wealth ?

6. In this way, having fully realized the truth, and become full of bliss, one should meditate on the Soul (*ātman*) who is automatically existent in the heart, and who (being one's own) is lovable and real and who is the eternal (deathless) glorious Lord. Herein lies the end of nescience which is the cause of the transmigration of the Soul (*saṁsāra*) and (leads to blissful liberation.)

7. When one sees people fallen in the river Vaitaraṇī[522] (of *saṁsāra*—worldly existence) and undergoing different types of sufferings as consequences of their past deeds, who else but the beast (the most dullard person) will neglect concentration on the Supreme Soul and indulge in evil concentration of worldly objects.

8. After concentration, some meditate upon the (Supreme) Man, spanful in height, dwelling in the inner space of the heart in the interior of their own body, and who has four arms holding (in each) a lotus, a disc, a conch and a mace.

9. As long as the mind remains steady in concentration, one should gaze fixedly on this Supreme Lord who manifests himself in meditation.

* VJ.'s interpretation :

When (by means of the previously described Path) the mind becomes controlled and quiet by the grace of Hari, the self-dependent Lord, one (the devotee) should realize that the Supreme Soul is far more lovable than one's own body, kinsmen and other things and should resort to him so intensely that one's hair would stand on their ends. This leads not only to the end of Nescience, the cause of Saṁsāra but also to the blissful stage of mokṣa (liberation).

522. *Vaitaraṇī* : The river of hell which must be crossed before entering the infernal regions. It is supposed to be full of blood and all kinds of filth and to run with great impetuosity —DHM 332.

9. The Lord of gracious looks[523], whose eyes are large like a lotus, whose garments are tawnish like the filaments of the *kadamba* flowers, who wears gold bracelets shining with precious jewels and whose diadem and ear-rings are set with radiant precious stones.

10. The Lord whose sprout-like (tender) feet are installed by great *yogins* in the receptacle, at the centre of the full-blown lotus in the form of their heart[524], who bears the special mark of the Goddess of Wealth (called *Śrīvatsa*, on his left breast) and who wears the jewel called *Kaustubha* in his neck and who is beautified by garland of forest flowers (*vanamālā*) of unfading charm.

11. (The Lord) who is adorned with very costly anklets, bracelets, girdle, rings and such other ornaments (studded with precious jewels and whose countenance is lovely on account of glossy, clean bluish ringlets of hair, is beaming with captivating smile.

12. (The Lord) who suggests his unlimited grace (to his devotees) by the free, spcrtive smile, and by the movement of his eyebrows in casting glances askance.*

13. Step by step one should concentrate by his decisive intellect, the parts of the body of Lord Kṛṣṇa (lit. the wielder of the mace), from his feet to his smiling countenance. As one's intellect gets purified, he should proceed from the part of his body realized in meditation (lit. conquered), and concentrate on the part of His body above it, the previous part.

14. So long as intense devotion (characterised by love for the Lord) is not generated in the Lord of the Universe, to whom gods are inferior, one should devoutly concentrate on the huge form of the han, after the completion of his daily religious routine.

15. Oh beloved king, when the recluse (i.e. the follower of the Path of Bhakti) desires to leave this world, he should

523. *prasanna-vaktraṃ* : Ever ready to favour the devotee with grace —VR., VB.

524. Probably the *yogic anāhata cakra* in the cardiac plexus. This is specially useful for meditation in the case of the followers of *bhakti* Path —PYP (*Pātañjala Yoga Pradīpa*), Gita Press, p.252, 5th Edn.

* The 2nd line is translated at the beginning of this group.

adopt steady, comfortable posture and having controlled his breath (vital airs) he should not be attached, (i.e. take into account) time or period (such as summer solstice *Uttarāyaṇa*) or place (e.g. a holy place on the bank of the Ganges etc.).

16. Having controlled one's mind by purified intellect, one should absorb it into *kṣetrajña* and merge it (kṣetrajña) into the Soul and having merged one's Soul into the Supreme Soul or Brahman, the wise person should cease from all activity, and should stay in tranquillity or peace.

17. For, Time, which dominates gods, is powerless there (in the highest stage), much less are gods who control the world, are dominant there. There is absence of the attributes, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (from which the world is created). There is neither self-sense (*ahaṁkāra*) nor the principal called *mahat* nor *prakṛti* (the primordial substance).

18.* They, who, realizing that whatever is different from it (Supreme Soul), is not really existent, are desirous of abandoning it, and who, avoiding the misconcept of the identification of the Soul with the body etc., hug closely every moment to the feet of venerable Lord, by their heart, and their affection to nobody else but to him, regard that the abode of Viṣṇu is the ultimate one (to be achieved).

19. The meditative sage who is convinced (of his complete identity with Brahman) and who has burnt up all his attachments, by the power of the insight derived from the knowledge of *Śāstras*, passes away thus. He should press his anus

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* According to SD. : One should cease from all activity, embracing closely by heart the feet, i.e. the form of the venerable Viṣṇu every moment, and set aside the myth of one's independent existence apart from Brahman. For the Vedāntas, (i.e. the *Upaniṣads*) which deal with nothing else but Brahman, and which exhort that whatever is not Brahman is unreal, and should be abandoned, regard the form of Viṣṇu as the most sublime.

According to VJ : That excellent world is the most exalted place of Viṣṇu on whom devotees seeking liberation from the worldly existence, (i.e. the cycle of births and deaths) meditate and know him to be different from the elements (e.g. the earth, the ether) etc., or the subtle causes of these elements or their presiding deities. Thus they free themselves from worldly miseries and are fixed in firm devotion unto him. They embrace Lord Viṣṇu in their heart every moment and finally attain to him.

and lift up his vital air from that to the six places (*cakras*) described in *Yoga-Śāstra*, and rise above fatigue.

20. He should carry up the vital air residing in the navel (the *maṇipūra cakra* indicated thereby) and take it to the heart (i.e. the *anāhata cakra*). Then by the course of *udāna* (the vital air which rises up the throat and enters into the head), he should take it to the *viśuddha cakra* (located a little below the throat). The mind controlling yogin, with great concentration and restraint, should slowly take it (vital air) to the root of his palate.

21. From that place (*cakra*), he should lift up the vital air to the *ājñā cakra* located between the two eyebrows, and with the seven outlets of the breath (viz. 2 ears, 2 eyes, 2 nostrils and mouth) closed down, and being free from all desires, he should stay for half of a *muhūrta* (about 24 minutes) or so. With a fixed gaze, he should penetrate through the crown of the head (called *brahma-randhra*) and give up the body and merge with Brahman.

22. Oh king! If he desires to go to the place of god Brahmā, or to the sporting grounds or places of enjoyment of the heavenly beings, or for the mastery of the eight superhuman faculties[525], or anywhere in the universe, he should go along with his mind and subtle organs of senses.[526]

23. They say that the masters of *yoga* who have placed their subtle body (*liṅga-śarīra*) into *vāyu* (or mind), possess the power of going anywhere inside and outside the three worlds. Persons (who follow the path of *karma*) do not attain by their *karmas* to that power which is attained by those who are engaged in devotion, penance, yoga and meditation.

24. By passing through the sky, he first goes to the place

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525. These superhuman faculties are eight in number. They are enumerated as follows : atomization (*yogin* becoming atomsized) ; levitation (*yogin* becoming light) ; magnification, extension (the *yogin* can touch the moon with his finger), efficacy (non-obstruction of desire of the *yogin*) ; mastery over the elements; sovereignty over the working of the elements and their products; capacity of determining things according to desire— Vide for details YSP iii. 45, pp. 278-280.

526. VJ. states that he goes to *satya-loka* as well. He increases his knowledge and attains the eight powers.

of the divine fire (*vaiśvānara*).[527] By the path of *suṣumṇā* [this tubular path is extended beyond human body, according to ŚR.], he goes by the shining path of Brahman and becomes completely free from impurity or attachment. Above that is the asterial *cakra* pertaining to Hari. Oh king! the *yogin* then proceeds to that *cakra* called *śaiśumāra* [which will be described in detail in the V *Skandha*].

25. Having crossed the place of Visṇu called *śaiśumāra cakra* which is like the navel of the universe (supporting stars etc.), he proceeds alone with very pure atomic body (subtle *liṅga-śarīra*) to a place where persons who know Brahman stay, and where having the longevity of one *kalpa*, these wise men enjoy themselves.

26. Then (at the end of the *kalpa*), seeing the universe being burnt down by the fire proceeding out of the mouth of the serpent Śeṣa, he (i. e. *yogin*) proceeds to the abode of *parameṣṭhin* where the great *siddhas* stay in their celestial vehicles for a period of two *parārdhas*[528].

27. There is neither sorrow nor old age nor death nor affliction or fear except their mental trouble, out of compassion, at the sight of the endless series of births and unending misery of those who do not know this (path of devotion).

28.* Then fearlessly the *yogin* steadily unites his *liṅga-śarīra* with the elements—the subtle *pṛthvī*, and then the subtle element

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527. This form of fire is supposed to cover in a way the universe. It is present in living beings in the form of digestion. In the universe, it gives heat and light, and thirdly he is the medium whereby the sages go to the abodes of gods, manes and Brahman.

It is supposed that the sage who leaves this mortal body by the *piṅgalā* passage in the right side of the body goes to heaven and the Path is called *devayāna*. Those who depart through the *iḍā* passage in the left side of the body, go to the abode of the manes, and the yogins who give up the body by the *suṣumṇā* passage, reach the Brahman. (Abridged from VJ.)

528. Parārdha = 100,000,000,000,000,000.

*According to ŚR., this verse describes what is technically known as the procedure of 'breaking through the Universe or *Brahmāṇḍa*'. The creation of the universe has taken place as follows : God→prakṛti→mahat →ahaṁkāra—the subtle form of the sound→the element ether→the *tanmātrās* (subtle elements) of touch→Vāyu element→subtle 'form'→the element fire→the subtle taste→the element water→subtle smell→the element earth. This is the *virāṭ* body. This is enveloped by seven 'covers' : the

of water, and assuming the resplendent form of fire, without any haste, he reaches Vāyu and assumes the Vāyu form; then he becomes one with Ākāśa, the prominent symbol of the Perfect Soul.

29. Having reached smell by the sense of smell, taste by the sense of taste, colour by the visual organ, and touch by the sense of touch, sound, the special property of the sky, by the sense of hearing, the yogin reaches the activities of sense organs by means of the vital air (called *prāṇa*).

30. At first, having reached the self-sense (*ahaṁkāra*)—called *vikārya*, because its functions are different, he thus reaches where the subtle elements (*bhūtas*) and (subtle) organs of senses are withdrawn, and which is the cause of the mental (*rājasa-manomaya*) effects as well as of the presiding deities of the organs of senses—the *sāttvic self-sense* (*ahaṁkāra*), the Yogi proceeds to the principle called *mahat* (or *vijñāna*) along with *ahaṁkāra* and to *pradhāna* or *prakṛti* (primordial matter) into which all the three attributes are merged.

31. Oh beloved King! Ultimately the yogin who is serene, in perfect bliss and free from (limiting) conditions, reaches the changeless Paramātman who is bliss incarnate. He who has achieved this glorious divine goal, does not have any attachment to the world again.

32. Oh King! These two paths (viz. of instantaneous Liberation and gradual Liberation) which are described in the Vedas and about which you enquired, are eternal. These were taught by the venerable Lord Viṣṇu to god Brahmā when, in ancient days, he worshipped and delighted the Lord, and asked him about those paths.

33. To the entrant in the worldly existence (*saṁsāra*), there is no other blessed path than this, by practising which, intense devotion unto the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva is created.

34. Lord Brahmā, having thrice studied the entire Veda with concentration, conclusively decided the course whereby intense love to the soul (Hari) is (definitely) generated.

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covers of the five elements (e.g. earth, water etc.) and that of *ahaṁkāra* and *mahat*. So the process of breaking these envelopes is the reverse of creation, viz. the earth—the water etc. up to *mahat*.

35. In all beings (or the creation consisting of elements) the Lord Hari is seen (as the inner dweller—controller—*antaryāmin*) by intellect and other organs of senses (which by themselves are inert and cannot function without the light of the self-luminous soul or Hari), and which are merely characteristics or useful, as tools of inference.

36. Hence, Oh King, in all places and at all times, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only object worthy of being studied, sung and remembered by men, with all their heart.

37. Those who drink this nectar, i. e. the account of glorious Hari, the Lord of the pious people, with vessels, in the form of ears, get their minds purified of the contamination of the worldly objects, and attain to his lotus-like feet.

CHAPTER THREE

(*Devotion to Hari—the only path of Liberation*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. In this way, I have described to you this course (of study etc. about Hari, as prescribed in the Śāstras)—the course about which your honour asked me for the sake of wise and thoughtful persons among men, especially for those who are about to die.

2. One desirous of the glory of Vedic studies should worship the god Brahmā. He who desires to have power and skill of his sense-organs should worship Indra. He who wishes to have progeny should worship Prajāpatis (like Dakṣa).

3. He who longs to have prosperity should propitiate the goddess Māyā (Durgā). One who desires to have personal brilliance should worship the fire-god. One wishing for wealth should worship the eight Vasus. A vigorous person desiring for more strength should propitiate the Rudras.

4. He who wishes to have ample food and eatables should worship Aditi, while he who desires to attain heaven (*svarga*), should propitiate the sons of Aditi, viz. the twelve Ādityas. One desiring to possess a kingdom, should worship the Viśvedevas. One aspiring to control his subjects, should worship the Sādhyas.

5. One desiring a long life, should propitiate the Aśvin gods (both the Aśvinikumāras). He who desires to have increase in physical strength should worship the earth. A man desiring permanent firmness in his acquired position, should worship the Sky and the Earth, the parents of this world.

6. One who desires to have beautiful form, should worship the Gandharvas. One desiring to have beautiful women should worship the heavenly damsel Ūrvaśī. One who desires overlordship on all people, should worship god Brahmā (Parameṣṭhin).

7. One who seeks reputation or success, should worship Yajña, i.e. Viṣṇu. One aspiring after treasures should worship god Varuṇa. One wishing to have learning, should worship god Śiva, and for conjugal love, one should propitiate goddess Pārvatī (chastity incarnate).

8. For the sake of righteousness, one should worship Viṣṇu (the god whose glory is excellent). For the continuity of one's race, one should propitiate the manes (*pitṛs*). One desiring protection from danger, should worship the Yakṣaṣ. One desiring to have strength, should worship the gods called Maruts.

9. One who aspires after kingship or sovereignty, should propitiate Manus, the presiding deities of the eras (*manvantaras*). He who longs for the destruction of the enemies, should worship Nirṛti (*rākṣasas*). One desiring all kinds of enjoyments, should worship god Soma. (But) he who desires freedom from attachment or desires, should devote himself unto the Perfect or the Supreme Man.

10. He who wishes to have no desire at all, or aspiring after all kinds of enjoyments or longing to have Liberation due to the exaltedness of his intelligence, should intensely propitiate, by the path of devotion, the Perfect Man beyond limitations.

11. The attainment of the highest good is this much, in the case of the worshippers (of Indra etc.) in this world, but it is in the association of the devotees of the Supreme Lord that unswerving devotion unto the Lord is generated (that leads to Final Beatitude).

12. Is there anybody who, having got the blissful satis-

faction (of listening to the stories of Hari which is unavailable elsewhere), would not love those episodes, from which arises the knowledge, which completely subsides all whirling waves of passions (like love, hatred etc.), and creates tranquillity of mind and non-attachment to the objects of senses, leading ultimately to the path of devotion which is regarded as the state of liberation itself here and hereafter.

Śaunaka said :

13. After carefully listening to what has been explained to him thus, what other query was again made by the king, the prominent among the Bharata race, to the son of Vyāsa (Śuka) who was a seer of *parabrahman* and well versed in the Vedic lore ?

14. Oh learned Sūta ! You should narrate that to us who are desirous of hearing, for, discourses in the assembly of the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, must definitely lead to the episodes of Hari.

15. Verily, that great warrior king of the Pāṇḍava family, was a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, as he used to worship Kṛṣṇa as a play, while playing with his toys in the childhood (Or he used to imitate the sports of Kṛṣṇa as a child, in his own childhood).

16. The venerable son of Vyāsa was an ardent devotee of Vāsudeva. When there is a meeting of the pious devotees of Kṛṣṇa, there must be (the discussion about) the great episodes or excellent virtues of Hari (lit. the god who is greatly praised in the Vedas).

17. This rising and the setting sun verily takes away the life of men, except that period used in discussion etc. about Kṛṣṇa, (the god whose reputation lifts the devotee from darkness or *tamas*).

18. Do not the trees live ? Or do not the bellows breathe ? Do not the domestic or other beasts eat and have sexual enjoyment ?

19. The man, to whose ears the name of Kṛṣṇa (the elder brother of Gada) has not reached, is described as similar to (despicable animals like) dogs, swine, camels and donkeys.

20. The ears of the man, which do not hear the exploits

of Kṛṣṇa, are verily like empty holes. Oh Sūta ! the tongue which does not sing of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is evil like that of a frog's.

21. The head (though the best part of the body), even if adorned with turban or a crown, is a great burden, if it does not bow to Mukunda. Or hands, which are adorned with bright gold bangles, are like the hands of a dead body, if they do not worship Hari.

22. The eyes of men, which do not carefully see the images of Viṣṇu, are like the eyes (i.e. the big bright spots on the feathers) of peacocks. The feet of men which do not go on pilgrimage to the sacred places of Viṣṇu, are mere vegetations like trees.

23. A mortal, who does not get the dust of the feet of the devotees of the Lord, is as good as a carcass even though alive. The man who has not smelt the fragrance of the Tulasī leaves placed at the feet of Lord Viṣṇu, is only a breathing corpse.

24. The heart, which at the time of taking different names of Hari, is not moved, and the change in it is not indicated by tears in the eyes, and bristling of the hair on the body through excessive joy, is verily the hardest granite.

25. Oh beloved Sūta ! whatever you speak is dear to our hearts. Please narrate to us what did the great Bhāgavata, the son of Vyāsa, who was well-versed in the knowledge of the Soul and who was well questioned, say to the king ?

CHAPTER FOUR

(*Creation of the Universe*)

Prayers to Hari

Sūta said :

1. Having heard Śuka's speech, which led to the definite understanding of the real nature of the Soul, Parīkṣit (the son of Uttarā) set his virtuous and steady mind on Kṛṣṇa.

2. He renounced attachment which was always sticking (to his mind), to his body, wife, sons, palace, cattle, wealth, kinsmen and kingdom well equipped with the seven constituent elements of the state (enumerated in works on politics).

3. He, a man of noble mind and intense faith in listening to the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa, asked him (Śuka) the same topic which you, the greatest among good persons, ask me.

4. Having understood the approach of death and having renounced duties pertaining to the three Purusārthas, viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*, he with great love or devotion for the Lord, solely devoted himself to self-realization in Lord Vāsudeva.

5. Oh sinless Brāhmaṇa ! The words of an omniscient person (like you) are quite good (correct). While you tell me the episodes of Hari, the darkness of my ignorance is dispelled.

6. I again wish to know how the Lord has created this universe by His Cosmic Power (*Māyā*)—the universe which is beyond the comprehension of great gods (such as Brahmā).

7. Also I wish to know by resorting to what powers the Supreme Man of infinite power, creates, protects and destroys (this universe again) and how he sports himself directly and indirectly (through Brahmā and other gods).

8. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! Really the actions of Hari of mysterious and wonderful deeds, appear incomprehensible even to very wise people (what of a person like me !).

9. Whether it is simultaneously or one after another in succession, that he assumes the different attributes of *Prakṛti*, in order to do his work through many incarnations.

10. As your honour is verily well-versed in the Vedic lore and in the knowledge of Parabrahman, Your Worship may kindly explain this doubt to me.

Sūta said :

11. Śuka, who was thus solicited by the king, to describe the attributes of Hari, meditated on Kṛṣṇa and began to address.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. Salute to the Perfect Man of infinite power, who by his sport of creating, sustaining and distroying this world, has assumed three powers, viz. Rajas (Brahmā) etc. [or 'will, wisdom and action which are eternally in him'].

13. I offer my salutations again and again to him who removes the afflictions of the good, who curbs down the growth of the irreligious, who orders all gods of *Sāttvic* body[529] to bestow fruits (upon the devotees, and who confers the knowledge of the self upon those who have established themselves in the order of *Parama Haṁsas*.

14. I bow again and again to the protector of the *Sāttvatas* (or his devotees) who is beyond the reach of devotionless persons. Salutations to him, who being by nature unequalled and insurmountable, enjoys himself in his natural condition.

15. Salutation to him of auspicious fame; (as) to praise him, to remember him, to look at him, to bow to him, to hear about him and to adore him, immediately purifies sins of men.

16. I bow again and again to him of auspicious glory, by resorting to whose feet, the wise men shed off their heart's attachment here and hereafter, and without any trouble, attain to the state of Brahman.

17. I salute again and again to him, without offering whom (the fruit of one's actions), none can attain happiness (or peace), even though they perform penance, or are very charitable or have attained (high) reputation, or practised Yoga, or are knower of very auspicious *mantras*, or are of pure conduct.

18*. The Kirātas, the Hūṇas, the Āndhras, Pulindas, Pulkasas, Ābhīras, Kakas (Śakas), Yavanas, Khasas and other

529. *akhila-sattva-mūrtaye* : One who is the embodiment of perfect goodness—VJ.

*For the role of Bhāgavatism in the social absorption of foreigners *vide* R.K. Mukerjee's *Hist. of Ind. Civilisation* Vol. I., pp. 230-249.

This shows the attempts of proselytisation on the part of the Vaiṣṇavas. The following is the information in brief about tribes mentioned here,

Kirātas—a Himalayan tribe in the eastern region.

(sinful) tribes and other sinners are purged of their sins even by taking refuge in those who depend on him. To that Almighty Lord, we offer our greetings.

19*. May the Divine Lord be propitious unto me—the Lord who is (to be meditated as) the Soul, by the knowers of the Soul,[530] as the Supreme God, by the devotees, as the three Vedas incarnate[531] by the followers of *Karma kāṇḍa*, as the veritable *dharma*[532] by the followers of *dharma* (religion), as

Hūṇas—The famous invading tribes from central Asia who established their dynasties in India.

Āndhras—According to the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, a non-Aryan tribe living on the southern fringe of Āryāvarta. Formerly they were in the Vindhya region. Their settlement to the south in the present Andhra Pradesh is a later development.

Pulindas—An aboriginal tribe mentioned along with the Āndhras in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. They inhabited the Vindhya region upto 600 A.D.

Pulkasas or Pukkasa in Manu—An outcaste people.

Ābhīras—A foreign people who entered India at about the Śaka invasion and went on migrating from the Punjab till they settled in north-west Deccan. They are reported to have defeated Arjuna and carried away Yādava women.

Kaṅkas—Śakas. The original home of these people was in the valley of the Oxus and Jaxartes.

Yavanas—The Indo-Greeks who ruled in the north-western part of India.

Khasas—Identified with modern Khakkas who live in Kashmir.

*VJ. interprets : May the Supreme Soul be gracious unto me—Soul who is the Supreme Lord to those who have directly realized Brahman (and have attained liberation), as the Lord is favourable to the followers of the Veda, *dharma* (path of duties prescribed by scripture) and penance and whose characteristics (e.g. creation of the world etc.) have been inferred by sincere devotees like Brahmā, Śiva etc.

530. *ātmavatām*—(i) Steadfast in pure Yoga—VR.
(ii) Those who have directly realized Brahman or attained liberation—VJ.
(iii) Those who have realized the non-difference from Brahman—GD.

531. *trayī-mayaḥ*—(i) follower of the householder's duties, e.g. *agnihotra* prescribed in the Vedas—SD.
(ii) the students of Veda to worship it in the form of three Vedas—GD.

532. *dharma-mayaḥ*—(propitiated) by followers of the duties of celibates—SD.

the goal (to be achieved), by performers of penance,[533] the Lord, whose form is observed with great amazement by sincere worshippers like gods Brahmā, Śaṅkara etc.

20. May the Lord—protector of the good, be gracious unto me—the Lord, who is the master of the goddess of Wealth, the Lord of Sacrifices of all beings, the controller of mental or intellectual faculties, the protector of the worlds, the Lord of the earth, the Lord and protector of Andhaka, Vṛṣṇi and Śāttvata clans.

21. May Lord Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) be propitious unto me by constant meditation of whose [Kṛṣṇa's] feet, the wise purify their intellect and realize the true nature of the soul, and whom the wise describe as attributeful or attributeless (according to their taste or capacity).

22. May the most Excellent Sage be gracious to me—the sage who formerly (at the beginning of the creation) extended, i.e. awakened, the memory regarding the (procedure of) creation (of the universe) in the heart of Brahmā, and who directed the goddess Sarasvatī (the verbal form of the Veda) along with its characteristic supplements (e.g. śikṣā, vyākaraṇa etc.) to issue from the mouth of Brahmā.

23. May the venerable Lord grace (beautify) my words—the Omnipresent Lord, having created these bodies with five gross elements (or with *mahat* and other elements) lies (dwells) within them as *antaryāmin* and becomes (even etymologically) the real *Puruṣa*—one who lies in a town, i.e. body). He illumines and protects the sixteen qualities (i.e. the constituents) of the body (viz. 11 sense organs and 5 elements), by inspiring with life these sixteen.[534]

(ii) performers of sacrifices should worship him as *dharma*—GD.

533. *'tapo-mayaḥ*—(worshipped) by the followers of *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa āśramas*—SD.

Performers of penance should propitiate him as *Tapas*.

534. *bhuṅkte.....ṣoḍaśātmakaḥ*—VR. explains that the Lord possessing the sixteen constituents, viz. eleven sense organs and five elements, enjoys the sixteen 'qualities' viz. five objects of senses, e.g. sound, touch etc., five functions of organs, e.g. speech etc., five functions of Prāṇas or vital breaths and mind.

24. I bow to the venerable Vyāsa,[535] the learned author of the Mahābhārata etc., from whose lotus-like mouth his gentle disciples drank the honey in the form of knowledge.

25. Oh King, the Self-born God (Brahmā), the source of the Vedas, explained this to the enquiring Nārada, which was directly narrated to him (Brahmā) by Hari.

CHAPTER FIVE

(Creation of the Universe)
Dialogue between Nārada and Brahmadeva

Nārada said :

1. Oh God of gods ! Oh Creator of all creatures ! Oh the ancestor of all beings [one who is born before all] ! I bow to you. Please explain to me in detail the knowledge which leads to the thorough realization of the true nature of the Soul (*ātman*).

2. Oh Lord ! Please tell me factually what it is that manifests itself in this form of the world. What is the support of it all ? From what is it created ? Into what is it merged or withdrawn ? In whose power does it lie ? Of what does it consist (whether of itself or as an effect of some cause) ?

3. Verily Your Honour knows everything about this, as you are the master (lord) of the past, the present and the future). The whole universe is definitely and correctly known to you

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VB. gives in detail how the Lord divides himself in different 'enjoyer-enjoyed' pairs (e.g. man—woman) and sports himself in the enjoyment of the world.

535. Here the reading in the Nirnaya Sagara edition (Bombay 1905) is followed. The text before VJ. reads.....*Vāsudevāya vedhase*—VJ. interprets this differently :

(1) Salute to the Lord Vāsudeva from whose lotus-like mouth Brahmā and others, who deserved to drink the Soma-juice of knowledge, drank the honey of knowledge.

Thus taking *saumya* as (1) *Uddhava* and others, (ii) Nārada and others (iii) Vyāsa and others, (iv) Vaiśampāyana and others, the salutes are offered to Kṛṣṇa, god Brahmā, Nārada and Vyāsa respectively.

like the *āmalaka* (*Emblic myrobalan*) fruit on the palm of your hand.

4. What is the source of your special knowledge ? What is your support (who supports you)? In whose power are you ? What is your real nature ? I think you alone create all these beings, with the elements, by your divine power (*māyā*).

5. You protect those (beings) depending on you, and there is no transformation in you, even though, without any fatigue you create (these beings) by your power, like a spider producing the fibre.

6. Oh Lord ! I do now know anything else, whether it is of superior, equal or inferior status which is created with names (such as men etc.), with form (such as bipeds etc.), or with attributes (such as whiteness etc.), or whether it is gross or subtle—which has a source in anybody else but you.

7. But you (as described above) performed austere penance with perfect concentration. You, thereby, create a suspicion in us if there is any God superior to you.

9. Oh Omniscient Master of all ! Please explain to me who am asking you this, so that I may understand the truth as explained by you.

Brahmā said :

9. Oh child ! Your query is really praiseworthy. You are compassionate (to all beings). Oh gentle child ! You have therefore made me describe in detail the glory of the Lord.

10. Oh child ! What you (think and) say about me is not untrue as you do not know the Power higher than I, from which (I receive) this much power (as described by you).

11. I shed light on (i.e. manifest) the universe which has already been lightened by him by his lustre, just as the Sun, the fire, the Moon, constellations, planets and stars shine due to his splendour.

12. Salutations to the venerable Vāsudeva. We meditate on him deluded by whose invincible power—*Māyā*—people call me the cause of the universe.

13. Persons being beguiled by her (*Māyā*) who fights shy of standing in the range of his sight, get their knowledge

covered by Nescience, and boast that "this is mine and I" (i.e. I am an independent agent).

14. Oh Brahman, whether it is substance (e.g. five elements, the material cause of this world,) deed or *karman* (the cause of *saṁsāra*), Time, Nature, or individual Soul—there is nothing distinct and apart from Vāsudeva.

15. All the Vedas ultimately speak of Nārāyaṇa[536] (implying the omniscience etc. mentioned in *Śāstrayonitva* of the *Brahma-sūtra*). Gods are born out of Nārāyaṇa's body (and hence inferior to him). The words such as heaven or *svarga* are Nārāyaṇa (or all beings regard Nārāyaṇa as supreme). All sacrificial acts are for the propitiation of Nārāyaṇa.

16*. Yoga (breath control, contemplation etc.) is meant for the realization of Nārāyaṇa. All penance is for the attainment of Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa is the highest object of knowledge. The final beatitude depends on Nārāyaṇa. (Or Nārāyaṇa is the highest goal).

17. Being directed by the glance of the Almighty who is the soul of all, (who is the *Antaryāmin*), the Seer, the Controller, the Changeless one, I who am created by him, create this universe which is his creative activity or creation.

18. Though he is attributeless, he, through his Māyā, has assumed the three attributes, namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, for the maintenance, creation and dissolution (of the universe).

19. These attributes which are at the basis of the five elements (i.e. *mahābhūtas*), knowledge (i.e. the gods) and activity (the senses and organs) always bind the individual Soul in effects, cause and agency (known as *adhibhūta*, *adhyātma*, *adhidaivata* respectively. Though he is really free, he is enveloped by Māyā.[537]

536. *Nārāyaṇa-para*—Nārāyaṇa is the ultimate cause of the Vedas—VR. (ii) Vedas propound or declare that Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Being—VR. (iii) Vedas say that out of the topics described by them, Nārāyaṇa is the highest and the best—VJ.

*Cf. Bh.P. I.2.28-29, where *Vāsudeva* is used for *Nārāyaṇa*.

537. VJ. explains : Dravya (matter) is the body produced by *tāmasa ahaṁkāra*. jñāna (knowledge) is the mind and other organs of senses

20. Oh Brahman ! This is the glorious Lord Viṣṇu (adhoksaja) whose movements are incomprehensible[538] through these three attributes (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). He is my lord as well as that of all others.

21. The lord of Māyā desiring to be many (i.e. assuming different forms) accepted as cause, time, action (the fate of *jīva*) and the innate disposition which accidentally (through his will) appeared in him through his *Māyā*.

22. It is due to the presence or direction of God that Time became the cause of the imbalance in the three attributes (*guṇas*), innate nature the cause of modifications or transformations, and *karma* as the cause of *mahat*.[539]

23. *Mahat* which is magnified by or charged with rajas and sattva, undergoes modifications and evolves a thing in which tamas is dominant, and the thing is constituted of substance or gross elements, organs of senses and deities presiding over the organs.

24. That evolute is known as *ahaṁkāra* (I-ness), which undergoing modifications, becomes of three kinds—(1) *vaikārika* (*sāttvika*), (2) taijasa (*rājasa*), (3) tāmasa. It constitutes the power in substance or gross elements, power in activity, i.e. organs of senses and power in the presiding deities of the senses.

25. From the tāmasa *ahaṁkāra*, known as the source of elements (*Bhūtādi*) which underwent modifications, was evolved the ether (the sky). Its subtle form and special characteristic is sound (*śabda*) which leads to the knowledge of the seer and the seen.

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created by *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra*. *Kriyā* (activity) is the speech and other functions of senses. These are produced by *taijasa ahaṁkāra*.

538. *sva-lakṣita-gatiḥ*—(i) Whose cause is comprehensible to his devotees only—ŚR., VJ.

(ii) Whose cause is perceptible to the liberated ones.—SD.

539. According to VJ. this describes the creation of *mahat* from the primeval *Prakṛti*. When Viṣṇu desired to create the universe, at that time the balance of the *guṇas* became disturbed, and by the favourable condition of the *adṛṣṭa* (*karma*) of Hiraṇyagarbha, and by the transformable nature of *mūla prakṛti*, and being presided over by Viṣṇu, the principle *mahat* was produced.

26. Out of the ether undergoing transformation emerged *Vāyu* (air), the characteristic quality of which was Touch. Being an evolute of the other, i.e. the sky, it possesses the quality Sound, and it is the cause of life, vigorousness of senses, mind and the body.[540]

27. Due to (the pressure or force of) Time, Karma (the unseen i.e. *adṛṣṭa*) and innate disposition, Vāyu, i.e. air, underwent modifications, and *tejas* (fire or heat), possessing colour and form (and inheriting the characteristics of the previous elements, viz.) touch and sound, was evolved.

28. From *tejas* undergoing change, was produced water with taste as its special characteristic. Through inheritance from the previous elements, water possessed the characteristics viz., form, colour, touch and sound.

29. Out of water undergoing transformation came forth the earth or the *viśeṣa*, with smell as its special attribute, and inheriting from its previous causes, the attributes of taste, touch, sound and form or colour.

30. From the *vaikārika* or *sāttvic ahaṁkāra* (sāttvic ego) were born the Mind (and its presiding deity the Moon) and the ten gods, five presiding over the five sense organs, viz. *Diś* (deity of cardinal points), Vāyu, Sūrya, Varuṇa and Aśvins (presiding over the sense organs—ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose) and the other five, viz. Vahni (fire-god), Indra, Upendra, Mitra (the sun) and Ka (i.e. Prajāpati) presiding over the conative organs (viz. speech, hands, feet, the anus and the organ of generation).

31. From the *taijasa* (*rājasa*) ahaṁkāra, undergoing change, were evolved the ten organs (five cognitive and five conative sense organs detailed above) viz. the ear (audition), the skin (touch), the nose (smell), the eye (seeing), the tongue (taste), speech, hands, feet, penis and anus. Intelligence or the power of cognition or knowledge and Prāṇa, the power of conation, were evolved out of the *taijasa ahaṁkāra*.

32. Oh knower of Brahman or Vedas! So long as these, viz. *bhūtas* (the elements), *indriyas* (sense-organs), the mind

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540. Prāṇa etc.—vitality of which energy, speed and capacity to hold or strength, are the characteristics—VR.

and the *guṇas* were unamalgamated, they were not able to create the body.

33. Then directed by the will of God, they came together and were assimilated with one another as the main and the subsidiary (or the manifest and the unmanifested) constituents, and brought forth this (body of gross and subtle constituents or collective and distributive aggregates).

34. At the end of thousands of years (during the Deluge), with the help of *kāla* (time), *karma* (action and destiny) and *svabhāva* (innate disposition) the Supreme Soul (who enlivened these and hence was called *jīva*) brought life into the egg (of the universe) of unmanifested life.

35. This very Supreme Man possessing thousands of thighs, feet, arms, eyes and thousands of mouths and heads[541] came out bursting open the egg (*brahmāṇḍa*).

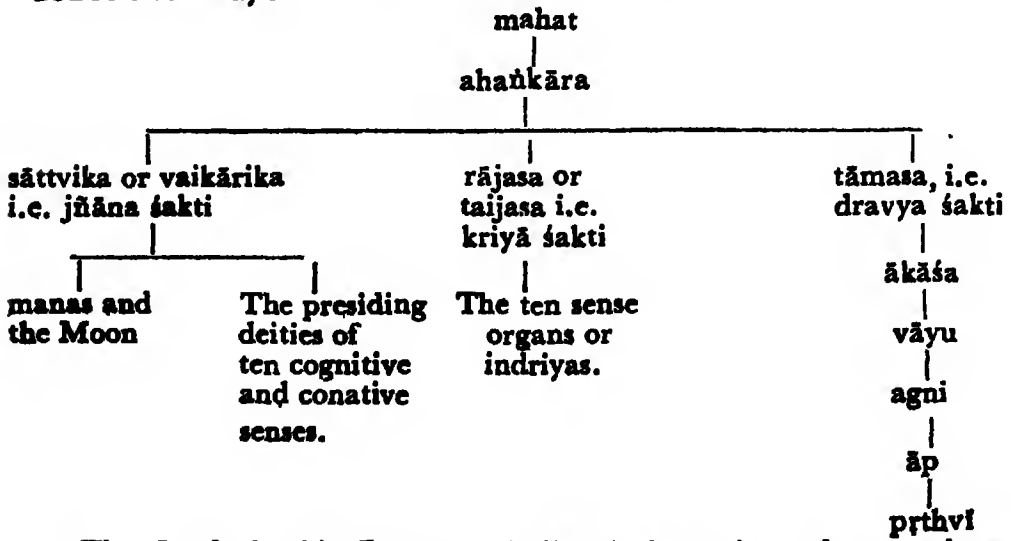
36. The wise locate the different worlds in the body of the Supreme Man, as seven worlds below his loins and seven worlds above, commencing from his hip upwards.*

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541. Cf. RV. X. 90.1.

*The 'creation' or rather evolution of the universe may be briefly represented as follows :

God's will to be many—Influence on *kāla*, *karma* and *svabhāva* by God's Power Māyā—



The Lord, by his Power, assimilated them into the cosmic egg (brahmāṇḍa) and later infused life into it. The virāṭ puruṣa with thousands of heads, feet etc. and with seven upper and seven lower regions located in his body came out and the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe followed.

37. The Brāhmaṇa class is the mouth of this Man. Kṣatriyas are his arms. From the thighs of the lord was created the Vaiśya class and the Śūdra came forth from his feet.[542]

38. The *Bhūr-loka* was created from his feet, the *Bhuvar-loka* from his navel. From the heart of the Great Being was produced the *Svar-loka*, and from his chest, the *Mahar-loka*.

39. On his neck is based the *Jana-loka*, and the *Tapo-loka** came from his lips. The *Satya-loka* is created from the heads. *Brahma-loka* is eternal (and therefore not created).

40. The nether region *Atala* is located in his loins. *Vitala** depends on the thighs of the lord. On his knees rests the holy *Sutala* (holy due to the residence of the devotees of the Lord) and *Talātala* is based on his shanks.

41. His ankles support *Mahātala*, and the forepart of his feet, the *Rasātala*. The *Pātāla* is created from the soles. In this way the body of the Supreme Man consists of all the worlds.

42. Or this arrangement of worlds (is differently given): the *Bhūr-loka* has been created from his feet and the *Bhuvar-loka* from his navel and the *Svar-loka* from his head.

CHAPTER SIX**

(Description of the Virāṭ Puruṣa—exposition of the Puruṣa Sūkta —RV. 10.90)

1. The mouth of the Cosmic Man (*Virāṭ Puruṣa*) is the place, i. e. the source of the speech organs and its presiding deity the Fire. The seven essential ingredients (*dhātu*) such as saliva, blood, flesh, fat, bones and others of his body are the

542. Cf. RV. X. 90.12.

*ŚR. alternatively interprets : *Tapo-loka* was created from his breasts. He adds that for contemplation there is no difficulty if the breasts which are downwards in position from the neck, are taken as the source of the *Tapo-loka*).

** This chapter presents the epic concept of the Cosmic Man which was first elaborated in RV. 10-90 (the *Puruṣa-Sūkta*). This is not exactly a commentary on the *Puruṣa-Sūkta* but it is an elaboration of the Vedic concept of the Cosmic Man. Naturally, as pointed out by B. Bhattacarya in the *Philo. of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*, Vol. 1, 130-38, 305-306 etc., this epic concept is philosophically much more advanced than the Vedic concept.

bases of the seven Vedic metres, (viz., *Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik, Anuṣṭubh, Bṛhatī, Paṅkti, Triṣṭubh* and *Jagatī*). His tongue is the source of food, viz., *Havya* (the food oblated to gods), *Kavya* (the food given to the manes—*Pitṛs*), *Amṛta* (the food remaining after having offered to gods and manes), and all flavours (viz. sweet, sour, pungent, bitter, saline and astringent)—and Varuṇa, their presiding deity.

2. His nostrils are the best places or abodes of all vital airs and of (their presiding deity) Vāyu. His organ of smell is the abode of the two Aśvini-kumāras (the physicians of gods), medicinal herbs and plants, general and special smells.

3. His cognitive sense of sight is the sourse of forms, colours and lights manifesting them, while the sky and the sun are produced in the pupils of his eyes. His ears are the bases of directions and holy places, while his sense of hearing is the source of the ether (the sky) and (its *guṇa*) sound (*śabda*).

4. His body is the base of the essences of all things and their beauty. His skin or organ of touch is the source of touch, Vāyu and all kinds of sacrifices.

5. His hair (on the body) are at the root of all the trees, herbs and plants, supplying the material for sacrifices, while his hair, beard and nails produce rocks, iron, clouds and lightning.

6. His arms are the support of the presiding deities of the cardinal points whose duty is to protect the world. His paces—footsteps—are the support of the three worlds—*Bhūr, Bhuvaḥ, Svar* and of security (protection of the possession) and refuge (protection from danger).

7-8. The feet of Hari are the abode of the seekers of all desired objects. His penis is the source of waters, seminal fluid, creation, rain and Prajāpati. His organ of generation is the source of the gratification (satisfaction) culminating in the joy of the offspring. His anus is the base of Yama, of Mitra (the Sun) and the act of discharging (the faeces), oh Nārada.

9. His rectum is stated to be the source of violence or harm, goddess of misfortune (Alakṣmī), of death and hell. His back-side is the source of defeat, irreligion and *Tamas* (ignorance).

10-11. His arteries and veins (blood vessels) are the source of rivers, big and small. And his skeleton of bones, that

of mountains and hills. His belly is known to be the source or place of the unmanifested primordial matter (*pradhāna*), the essence in food, oceans and the destruction of all beings. His heart is the source of the mind, i. e. of the subtle body (*Liṅga Śarīra*). The *ātman*, i. e. *citta* (reason) of the Supreme Man is the ultimate source of religion, of myself, of yourself, of the four boy-(celibate) sages (Sanaka, Sanandana etc.), Śiva, of knowledge and of *Sattva* (the quality of goodness).

12-17.* Myself, yourself, Rudra, the elders (Sanaka, Sanandana etc.) and sages (e.g. Marīci and others), Gods, demons, men, Nāgas (elephants), birds, deer and reptiles, demigods like Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Apsaras (celestial damsels), Rākṣasas, goblins, serpents, beasts, manes (Pitṛs), Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas and trees and other various kinds of beings living in water, on land and in the air, planets, stars, comets, lightning and thundering, clouds—all are nothing but the manifestation of this Supreme Man. The universe of the past, present and future has been enveloped (encompassed) by him, and he still stands in the span-ful portion in the heart, Just as Prāṇa, i. e. Āditya, the Sun-god, illuminates his own sphere as well as outside (the world beyond it.) so the Supreme Man enlightens (the inside and outside of) the universe (the *Virāṭ Śarīra*). He is the ruler of Lord of mokṣa—liberation or immortality which is free from fear, and hence he renounced (i. e. he is above) the mortal (and hence momentary) enjoyment of the fruits of action. He is not only within all but is a lord of immortality and his own bliss.

18.*-19.* Oh Brahman ! The greatness and power of the Cosmic Man are boundless. They (the knowers) understand that all beings are abiding in the three worlds—*Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svar*—which are the feet, i.e. the feet-like *aṁśas* of the Cosmic Man who is (hence called) *sthiti-pād.* He has placed *amṛta* (deathlessness), *kṣema* (absence of troubles) and *abhaya*[543]

VV. 17*, 18*, 19*, 20*. The SK. text is an echo of RV. X. 90. 2-4.

543. VJ. explains *amṛta* as *anantāsana* (the seat formed by Śeṣa), *Kṣema* (that which annihilates the trouble of death, i.e., *Vaikuṇṭha*) while *abhaya* is Cosmic Waters of Nārāyaṇa, i.e. Nārāyaṇa himself or Śvetadvīpa. Hari has supported these regions on his three heads. He(VJ) offers another

(state of freedom from fear, mokṣa) respectively in the three worlds, viz. *Jana*, *Tapas* and *Satya* which are situated above the *Maharloka*. The three *āśramas* (states of life) which do not procreate children, i. e. *Brahmacarya*, *Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa* are his three feet which are outside the three worlds (viz. *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ*, *Svar*), while the other state of life, viz. that of householders who do not observe strict celebacy are within the three worlds (viz. Bhūḥ, etc.).

20. The Supreme Man as *kṣetrajña* (individual Soul) crossed both the paths, viz. the one characterised by *avidyā* or ignorance and *karma* leading to worldly enjoyments, and the other, by *vidyā* or knowledge and its means, viz., *upāsanā* (religious meditation). But the Cosmic Man is the support of both the paths.

21*. God is transcendental to the matter from which the Cosmic egg (*Brahmāṇḍa*) and the *Virāṭ* consisting of *bhūtas* (gross elements like the earth etc. or created beings), *indriyas* (sense organs) and *guṇas* (objects of sense organs) are born, just as the Sun, which warms and illumines the universe, is distinct from it.

22. When I was born out of the lotus in the navel of this Supreme Man, I did not know the materials needed for performing the sacrifices except the limbs of this Man.

23-26. These materials for the sacrifice were collected by me as they were procured from his limbs : sacrificial animals along with the trees required for sacrificial posts, the *kuśa* grass, specific piece of land for sacrifice, the most auspicious time (e.g. the Spring), things (utensils, spoons, etc. required for sacrifice), herbs and other vegetable products (e.g. rice), ghee, honey and other sweet liquids, metals such as gold etc., (differ-

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explanation : Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are His three heads which support the regions called Satya, Vaikuṇṭha and Kailāsa wherein are placed *amṛta* etc. These are outside the three worlds, viz. the earth (*bhū*) and others and are abodes of god Brahmā who has not begotten any son. VR. however briefly sums up that the three outer regions (feet) are for the liberated ones who are beyond the jurisdiction of Prakṛti, while the fourth foot is inside the three worlds and is meant for householders.

* According to VJ., Hari originally created the Cosmic Egg, from which *Virāṭ*, viz. Brahmā, was born. He was the support of *bhūtas*, *indriyas* and *guṇas*.

ent kinds of) earths, water, the texts of the *Ṛgveda*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Sāmaveda*, Vedic ceremony called *cāturhotra*, names of sacrifices like the Jyotiṣṭoma, the Mantras from *Ṛgveda* etc. (followed by *svāhā*), *dakṣiṇā* (gifts to Brāhmaṇas at the end of sacrifice), *vratas* (special observances), the specific order and special invocation of deities, *kalpa* (procedure of performing sacrificial acts), *saṅkalpa* (the formal statement of undertaking the sacrifice etc.) and the technique of performing sacrifice, movements such as Viṣṇukrama at the end of sacrifice, contemplations of deities, expiatory ceremony for mistakes of omission and commission, and offering everything to God as his own.

27-28. In this way, I who collected materials for sacrifice, from the limbs of the Puruṣa, worshipped the great God, a personification of Yajña, by performing sacrifice to propitiate him. Then your brothers, these nine progenitors of subjects (*prajāpatis*) worshipped, with perfect concentration of mind, the Puruṣa, (though himself unmanifested, but) manifested as Indra etc.

29. Then Manus and other sages, manes (*Pitṛs*), gods, demons, and men, in their own times, propitiated the Omnipresent God, by performing sacrifices.

30. This universe is placed, i.e. rested on the glorious Nārāyaṇa who, though attributeless, assumes by his *Māyā* qualities at the beginning of the creation.

31. Under his direction, I create (the universe); Hara or Śiva who is under his power, dissolves it, and he, in the form of Puruṣa i.e. Viṣṇu, protects it by means of his *Māyā*.

32. Oh child ! In this way, I have narrated to you whatever you have asked me. In creation, which is of a causal nature (or which is manifest and unmanifest) there is nothing wherein he does not exist.

33. As I have meditated upon the lord with intensely devoted heart, my speech is never observed to be untrue, nor my mind goes to paths other than the truth, nor my sense organs leave the proper path (go to the path of untruth).

34. Though I am regarded as Veda incarnate (full of Vedic knowledge), and full of penance (*tapas*), and I am greatly respected as the chief of Prajāpatis, and though follow-

ing *yogic* practice, I am perfect in meditation, I have not understood from whom I am born.

35. I bow to his feet which destroy the *saṁsāra* of those who resort to them (feet)—the feet which bring happiness and are very auspicious. He has not thoroughly comprehended the power or capacity of his own Māyā, just as the sky does not know its end. How can others comprehend ?

36. Neither I, nor you, nor God Śiva or Vāmadeva could understand his real nature. How can other celestial beings know it? We, whose intellects are stupefied by his Māyā, think that we comprehend the universe created (by Māyā) according to our capacity of knowledge.

37. I bow to the glorious lord whose incarnations and deeds we and others sing, but we do not know his essential or real nature.

38.* This is the first Puruṣa, the unborn, who in every *Kalpa* creates himself with himself as the substratum, and the instrument (lit. he creates *ātman* within the receptacle of himself through himself) and protects it and destroys it.

39.** His real nature is absolute, real knowledge which is pure (unrelated to *viṣaya* or object), underlying the interior of all, accurate (and hence above doubt), changeless and attributeless. Being the Truth, it is perfect, full, beginningless and endless (with no changes like birth, death, increase, decrease etc.), eternal and alone (without a second).

40. Oh sage! Sages realize him, when their minds, senses and reason become serene and pure. But the Truth disappears from their sight when it is attacked by the reasoning of non-believers.

41-43. Puruṣa (the inspirer of Prakṛti, described as 'thousand-headed etc. in the *Puruṣa Sūkta*) is the first incarnation of the Supreme Spirit.

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* According to VJ., it is this same Puruṣa who is *ātman*, i.e. Nārāyaṇa, the first of all and has no birth like other beings. According to his own will, he incarnates as *Matsya*, *Kūrma* from age to age. He protects gods and men devoted to him on his own support and he destroys the *daityas*.

** VJ. explains : The knowledge is pure (defectless), absolute (not depending upon others), within all and facing all, well-established, i.e. above doubts, eternally blissful, perfect from the point of space, time and attributes, beginningless and endless, free from *sattva* and other qualities, eternal (hence devoid of change) and non-dual.

*Time, nature, (*Prakṛti's* form) of causal relation, the mind (*mahat*), self-sense (*ahaṁkāra*), attributes, the body, five gross elements, movables and immovables, Myself, Śiva, Viṣṇu, the progenitors (*Prajāpatis*) like Dakṣa and others, yourself and others, the rulers of the heaven (*Svarloka*), and the protectors of the world of birds, Garuḍa and others, the rulers of the human world and those of the subterranean regions, Rulers of demigods like Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas and those of Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Uragas (reptiles) and Nāgas, the leaders of Sages, Manes (*Pitṛs*), Daityas, Siddhas and Dānavas and others, who rule over ghosts, Piśācas, Kūṣmāṇḍas, acquatic animals, beasts and birds.

44. In this world whatever is endowed with great authority (or six powers of *Bhagavān*), energy, mental power and capacity of senses, dexterity and strength, endurance, personal charm, modesty, prosperity, intellectual faculty, fascinating colour (or complexion), whether with form or without form, (all are nothing but God, the ultimate reality).[544]

45. Oh sage ! Give ear unto my narration of the blessed incarnations of the Great Puruṣa (especially of) those which are regarded as his chief incarnation-sports (*līlāvatāras*). As I narrate to you these in a series, let these fascinating accounts which are like nectar and which remove the defects of (i.e. sins committed by) ears, be drunk by you.

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*ŚR. says that though the list of *avatāras* is indiscriminately arranged, it can be thus classified : (i) From time to mind (mahat) etc. are the effects (ii) Brahmā and others are the *guṇāvatāras* and (iii) Dakṣa and others are *Vibhūtis*.

544. Cf. BG. (*Bhagavad-Gītā*) X. 41.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Some Līlāvatāras and their work)*

Brahmā said :

1.*** When the Infinite God assumed the Boar-form which was completely composed of sacrifices (*yajñas*), he determined to lift up the earth (which was sinking in the ocean). He, like Indra breaking down the mountains, tore down by his tusk the first demon (*daitya Hiraṇyākṣa*) who came upon him at the bottom of the sea.

2. Then he was born as a son of Ruci and Ākūti (and was) named Suyajña. He procreated from Dakṣiṇā, gods called Suyama. As he removed the troubles of the three worlds, he was called Hari (the remover) by (his maternal grandfather) Svāyambhuva Manu.

3.*** Oh Brāhmaṇa ! And, along with nine sisters, he was born in the family of Prajāpati Kardama from him and (his wife) Devahūti. He explained to his mother the knowledge of *Ātman* (*Brahman*) whereby she, in this very birth, washed off her impurities caused by the mud of association with *Guṇas* and reached liberation—the goal preached by Kapila or Sāṁkhya Philosophy.

4. To Atri who solicited an offspring (son), the glorious lord, being pleased, said, "I have offered myself (as a son) to you" and hence he was called *Datta* (one who is given). It is by the dust of his lotus-like feet that Yadus, Haihayas and others got their bodies (themselves) purified and attained excellence in Yoga, leading to prosperity here and hereafter.[545]

5. In the beginning (of the creation) when I performed penance with a desire to create various worlds and beings, He incarnated as the four sages whose names begin with *Sana*

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* Vide Supra—Skandha 1.3.6-26 1** Vide infra III. chs 13-19.

***Infra III. chs. 24-33.

545. *ubhayīm*—Leading to enjoyments in this world and liberation hereafter.

VB. explains that the two-fold yogic accomplishment is (1) gradual liberation by possessing *Siddhis* (supernatural powers) like *Aṇimā* (power of atomization) etc. and (2) instantaneous liberation.

VB. derives Atri as "sonless" or "one who desires three sons."

(*Sanatkumāra, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana*), by my offering of my penance. He accurately explained the real nature of *ātman* or *Brahma* which was lost in the deluge of the previous Kalpa. Sages instantaneously realized the soul (*Ātman*) as soon as it (his explanation of the nature of the soul) was heard by them.

6. From Dharma and Mūrtī the daughter of Dakṣa, he incarnated as Nārāyaṇa and Nara. He was distinguished for his penance. The celestial damsels, the army of *Kāma*, the god of Love, having seen Ūrvaśī and other lovelier beauties created by him, were unable to disturb his austerities.

7. The great gods verily burn down *Kāma*, the god of Love, by their angry looks. But they cannot burn down the unbearable anger which consumes them. Such anger is afraid of even entering his pure heart. How can *Kāma* dare to enter his mind again ?

8. The young Dhruva wounded by the arrow-like words uttered by his step-mother in the presence of (his father) King Uttānapāda, took to forest, for performing penance, even as a child. He, who was gracious unto him who praised him, gave an immovable place (*dhruva sthāna*) to him—a situation which is praised by celestial sages who stay above and below him. [ŚR. explains that 'sages in heaven' implies the Great Bear or Bhṛgu and other sages].[546]

9. He, on being praised, saved king Vena who had gone astray and whose might and fortunes were destroyed by the thunderlike curses of Brāhmaṇas and who was falling in the hell. He became his son. In this incarnation he milked the earth of all kinds of wealth.[547]

10. He was born from king Nābhi and Sudevī (another name—Merudevī). He visualised Brahman everywhere and was unperturbed in self-realization with his mind and senses serene and controlled. Being free from attachment, he practised Yoga of undisturbed meditation (and so he appeared as inanimate object)—a state called by sages as the state of a *paramahaṁsa*.

11. That glorious lord incarnated in my sacrifice as Hayagrīva (horse-necked God), of complexion like gold. He is the *Yajña Puruṣa* (presiding deity of all sacrifices). He is the

546. For details vide infra IV. Chs. 8 and 9.
547. ,, ,, ,, infra IV. Chs. 15-23.

main object of worship in the Vedas (or Veda incarnate), the sacrifice incarnate (or for whose grace sacrifices are performed) and who is the soul of all the deities. From the breath of his nostrils beautiful words (i.e. Vedic hymns) came forth.

12. At the end of a Yuga, he was found by Vaivasvata Manu as a Fish who was the support of the earth (or who held the earth which was like a boat), and hence a refuge of all kinds of living beings. He collected the Vedas which fell down from my mouth in the waters, and joyfully sported in the terrible waters (of the deluge).

13. The first divinity in the form of Tortoise supported on his back, the mount Mandara which was the churning-rod, when the Gods and Demons (*daityas*) churned Kṣīrasāgara (the sea of milk). The movements of the mountain while churning were like scratching to him, in consequence of which he enjoyed a pleasant nap.[548]

14. He who removes the great terror of Gods[549], assumed the form of a Man-Lion of terrific appearance with rolling eyebrows and gnashing tusks. He seized and placed on his lap and tore down, in a moment, with his claws, the king of Daityas (Hiraṇyakaśipu) who with rage attacked him with a mace.[550]

15. The king o elephants which became distressed by his leg being caught by an extremely powerful crocodile, in a lake, held out a lotus in its trunk (to offer to the Lord), appealed to him thus : "Oh Primeval Man (the cause of the universe), the lord of all the worlds and beings, one of holy fame, whose name is very auspicious to the ears".

16. Hari of incomprehensible nature, hearing the appeal, took his weapon, viz. the disc *Sudarśana*, mounted on the shoulder of Garuḍa (the lord of birds), cut asunder the jaw of the crocodile by the disc, and holding the elephant by his trunk dragged him out, by his grace.[551]

17. Although the youngest born son of Aditi, he (Viṣṇu) was the eldest (superior to them) in virtues and lord of Sacri-

548. v.l. *nidrekṣaṇo*—whose eyes were half-closed with drowsiness.
549. *traiviṣṭa*—whose laughter strikes terror in the hearts of gods.
550. For details vide infra VII. Chs 8 and 9.
551. For details vide infra VIII. Chs 2-4.

fices. He covered the three worlds in his (three) strides, and in the form of Vāmana (a dwarf), he took over the earth under the pretext of requesting a land three feet in measure (because) kings who are going by the path of righteousness, are not to be removed except (under the pretext of) begging.

18. Bali, who sprinkled his head with the pure water of washing the feet of Vāmana, had no aspiration for sovereignty over gods. Oh beloved Nārada ! He did not desire to do anything else but to fulfil his promise to the Lord and he offered himself by his head to Hari.[552]

19. Oh Nārada ! The Lord, being pleased with your intense devotion, expounded to you the complete details of (*bhakti*) yoga and Bhāgavata which is the means to the knowledge (of *ātman*) which is like a lamp (light) to the truth about soul, which devotees who take refuge to Vāsudeva understand with ease.

20. At the time of the changes of Manvantaras (period of Manu) for maintaining the continuity of Manu's race, he maintains his unchallenged rule in ten quarters like the unobstructed Sudarśana Cakra. He brings discipline among wicked kings and by his deeds his enchanting fame reaches Satya-loka which is above the three worlds.

21. And the venerable Lord incarnated as Dhanvantari who is glory itself. By means of uttering his name (i.e. by the incantation of his *nāma-mantra—Oṁ Śrī Dhanvantaraye namaḥ* —he immediately cures diseases of persons afflicted with many ailments. He, who blesses (his devotees) with immortality, recovered his share in sacrifices which was denied to him (by Daityas). Having come down in this world, he taught it the science of medicine (*Āyurveda*—the Science of life).

22.* The great-souled one of terrific valour (Paraśurāma) twentyone times massacred with his axe of long sharp edge, the Kṣatriya-class which was like a thorn unto the world, and the destruction of which was ordained by fate and which (as if) being desirous of suffering pain in the hell, had left the Vedic way (of life), and hated Brāhmaṇas.

552. For details vide infra VIII. Chs. 18-23.
* Vide infra IX. Chs. 15 & 16.

23. The Lord of Māyā who is favourably disposed to us, incarnated in the race of Ikṣvākus along with his parts (*aṁśas* like Bharata etc.). Abiding by his father's order, he, along with his wife and younger brother, entered (stayed) in the forest where the ten-headed (Rāvaṇa) opposing him came to grief (met his death).

24. To him, who like Śiva, wanted to burn down the city of the enemy, the sea whose limbs of the body were trembling with fear, immediately gave passage (to cross it) when Rāma, by his fiery eyes reddened with rage, exploded on account of his distant sweet-heart, scorched the entire world of acquatic animals like crocodiles, serpents etc.*

25. While prominently moving between the two armies (his and Rāvaṇa's), he (Rāma) will[553] quickly end the life and the boastful laughter of Rāvaṇa[554], the abductor of his wife, and who governed various nations in all directions which were resplendent as the tusks of Indra's elephant (Airāvata) which were broken (and were stuck in Rāvaṇa's chest, when he dashed against his chest).**

26. In order to remove the distress of the earth which was pounded by the armies of Daityas, he, of white and black hair[555], will be born (as Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) by his own

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* Vide infra IX. Chs 10 & 11.

553. The epic-writer presumes that this dialogue between Brahmadeva and Nārada took place before the incarnation of Rāma, hence the use of future tense.

554. ŚR. gives the v.l. *kakubjuṣāḍhahāsam*—It means: the boastful laugh of Rāvaṇa, who ruled over various countries in various directions which appeared brilliant with the pieces of tusks of Indra's elephant, which had been scattered in all directions, when Indra's elephant dashed against Rāvaṇa's chest. Rāvaṇa, boastfully laughed and remarked whether the tusks so scattered have imitated his (white) glory of the conquest of directions.

** For details vide infra III. Chs 2 & 3 and Skandhas X & XI.

555. That God Viṣṇu sent His two hairs down to the earth as the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma is repeated in the M. Bh. I. 196. 32-33, and VP. (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*) 5.1.59.

ŚR. explains that the white hair of the lord is not due to his old age as he is immutable. They show his personal charm only. Quoting M. Bh. (given above), he states that the white hair was born as Balarāma and

aṁśa (part or portion). He whose ways are incomprehensible to men, will perform deeds which will establish his greatness, i.e. supreme nature.

27. That as a child he sucked away the life of Pūtanā (Ulūkikā), and as a child of three months he upturned (and pounded to pieces) the cart (Śakaṭāsura) by his kick, and that while crawling on his knees between two Arjuna trees which were scraping the skies, he uprooted them—this would not have been possible on any other presumption (except that the child was the Almighty).

28. In Gokula, He will bring back to life the cattle of the Vraja and their cowherds who have drunk water mixed with poison, by showering gracious looks at them. He will sport in the river Yamunā for its purification and will drive out the serpent whose tongue always rolls about on account of the power of fierce poison.

29. It must be a miraculous deed, indeed, when in the forest of Muñja grass (on the night of Kāliyādamana) the summer-dry forest caught fire on all sides by forest-conflagration at night. He, of incomprehensible power will, along with Balarāma, save the whole Vraja which remained awake[556] expecting total annihilation, by calling upon them all to shut their eyes.

30. Whatever length of rope or material of binding him will be taken by his mother, it will not be sufficient to bind Him. Yaśodā, the cowherdess, would be astounded to see fourteen worlds in his yawning mouth and (thus) awakened to or made aware of his greatness.

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the dark hair as Kṛṣṇa. These symbolic hair indicate the fair and dark complexions of the two brothers. The hair do not undervalue this incarnation as Kṛṣṇa as the perfect incarnation *Kṛṣṇastu Bhagavān svayam* BH.P. 1.3.28. Viṣṇu wanted to show that the task of removing the distress of the earth by destroying the demonic forces is as easy as could be done by his hair.

VJ. explains that hari was born by his *aṁśa* called *Sita-Kṛṣṇa-Keśa* (white-black-hair). In *Nṛsiṁha Purāṇa* these are stated to be the two powers of the Lord (VD.)

556. *niśśayāna* : VR. explains that Vraja was fast asleep at night and they awoke after their rescue. This is not supported by Bh.p. X.19.7-12, where the cowherds are stated to have appealed to Kṛṣṇa for saving them from the fire.

31. He will rescue Nanda from the fear of Varuṇa's noose. He will bring back the cowherds which were concealed in caves by Vyomāsura, the son of Maya. He will take to his world, viz. Vaikuṇṭha, the whole of Gokula, which spends the day in their daily work and which sleeps at night through utter exhaustion, (thus can spare no time for penance etc.).

32. When the cowherds will obstruct the sacrifice (dedicated to Indra) and when in order to drown the whole of Vraja, God Indra will pour down (torrential) rains, he, out of grace, with a desire to save the cattle, will sportively hold mount Govardhana for seven days, on his single hand, without any fatigue, as if it were some mushroom—even though he was a child of seven.

33. While playing in the forest at night which was bright on account of the rays of the moon, and while he is about to start the *Rāsa* dance, he will cut off the head of Śaṅkhacūḍa, the servant of Kubera who wanted to carry away the young damsel of Vraja in whom passion of love for Kṛṣṇa was aroused by songs with long drawn out musical notes, expressing sweet words.

34-35. And other evil persons such as Pralamba, Khara Dhenuka, Dardura, Keśi, Ariṣṭa, the *mallas* (athletes) like Cāṇūra, the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, Kaṁsa, Kālayavana, Narakāsura and Pauṇḍraka (a pretender of Vāsudeva) and others of whom Śālva, Kapi, Balvala, Dantavaktra and the Daityas in the form of seven bulls (of Nagnajit), Śambarāsura, Vidūratha, Rukmi and those kings who boastfully take up bows on the battlefield such as Kāmboja, Matsya, Kuru, Kaikaya, Sṛñjaya and others, would be killed by Hari in the form and names of Balarāma, Arjuna and Bhīma, and will go to his holy abode (Vaikuṇṭha), which is beyond the sight of men.

36. Considering that the Veda produced by him cannot be studied completely (from the beginning to the end) by men who, in course of time, will become of limited intellectual capacity, and of short span of life, he will take birth from Satyavatī, and will divide the tree in the form of Veda into different branches, in every age (yuga).

37. Seeing that asuras (enemies of gods) who follow the path of Veda, will harass the world, travelling in cities moving

with invisible velocity constructed by Māyā, he will assume the disguise of heretics, deluding the mind and attracting the hearts of asuras, he will extensively explain to them heretic doctrines.

38. At the end of the *yuga*, the Lord will incarnate and punish Kali when there will be no discussion about the deeds of Hari in the houses of the good ones, and when persons of the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya classes will be heretics, and Śūdras will be kings, and the words 'Svāhā', 'Svadhā' and 'Vaṣaṭ' will not be uttered at all (when Vedic rituals will not be performed).

39. At the beginning of creation, *Tapas* (penance), myself, sages and nine Prajāpatis; at the time of maintenance (of the universe), Dharma, sacrifice, Manu, gods and kings; at the time of destruction *adharma* (non-righteousness), Śiva, serpents characterised by wrath and vengeance and powerful asuras—these are the forms assumed by God of infinite powers, by his Māyā.

40*. Can any wise or learned man who might have calculated all the particles of dust in the world, count the glorious or heroic deeds of Viṣṇu who stabilised with his support, the terribly ṭottering Satyaloka, on account of the irresistible velocity (while raising his leg in his Trivikrama incarnation) which shook the universe to its outermost envelop of *Pradhāna* where there is equilibrium of the *guṇas* (sattva, rajas, and tamas.)

41. Neither I nor these sages (like Marīci etc.) and your elder brothers (like Sanatkumāra etc.) know the extent of the power and the greatness of the Māyā of the Supreme Man. How can other people do? The first god Śeṣa, of one thousand mouths (and two thousand tongues) has not yet reached the ends of his excellent qualities of which he has been singing (from times immemorial).

42. Only those can go beyond and understand the real nature of God's *māyā*—power which is very difficult to cross, if the infinite Lord is gracious unto them, and these devotees, with all their heart and soul, sincerely resort to his feet. Such

* The first two lines : Who can recount the great achievements of the wise Viṣṇu who covered in his strides the earth and heavens (Cf. RV. 1.154.1).

persons are free from the idea or notion of "I and mine" (even in respect of their bodies), which are the eatables or food of dogs and jackals.

(Many persons, despite the absence of inner knowledge, know Māyā through Hari's grace. For example).

43. Oh child, (through his grace) I know (the nature etc. of) the *Yoga-māyā* of the Supreme Lord. So do you (Sanaka, Sanandana etc.), God Śiva and Prahlāda, the chief of the Daityas, Svāyambhuva Manu and his wife Śatarūpā and their children, viz., Priyavrata, Uttānapāda and three daughters, Prācīnabarhis,[557] Ṛbhu,[558] and Dhruva.

44. Ikṣvāku,[559] Aila,[560] Mucukunda,[561] Videha (king Janaka), Gādhi,[562] Raghu,[563] Ambarīṣa,[564] Sagara,[565] Gaya,[566]

557. Prācīnabarhis—Son of Harivardhana and Dhiṣaṇā: a Prajāpati : married Sāmudrī (Savarṇā); had ten sons named Prācetasas. He knew the power of Viṣṇu's Yoga—PI.2.438.

558. Ṛbhu—A son of Brahmā : a Siddha who knows Hari; a resident of Tapoloka; initiated *nidāgha* in the mysteries of *advaita*—PI.1.268.

559. Ikṣvāku—Son of Vaivasvata Manu; founder of Solar race of kings; reigned at Ayodhyā. Max Müller thinks this to be the name of a people in the ṚV.—DHM.123.

560. Aila—Surname of Purūravas; got six sons from Ūrvaśī—PI. 1.282.

561. Mucukunda—Son of Māndhātṛ; helped gods against Asuras and got a boon of long uninterrupted sleep. Kālayavana who was lured into his cave by Kṛṣṇa, woke the sleeper who burnt him down by his fiery glance. Kṛṣṇa gave Mucukunda the power to go anywhere for enjoyment, but he went to Gandhamādana for penance. DHM. 210.

562. Gādhi—A king of the Kuśika race and father of Viśvāmitra —DHM. 103.

563. Raghu—a king of the Solar race; reigned at Ayodhyā; a famous ancestor of Dāśarathi Rāma—DHM. 252.

564. Ambarīṣa—The son of Nābhāga; a devotee of Hari; The curse of Durvāsas proved ineffective; though Lord of seven continents, he devoted himself to the service of Hari and knew the power of his yoga—PI. 1. 88-89.

565. Sagara—a king of Ayodhyā of the Solar race; the horse let loose by him for *Aśvamedha* was carried off to Pātāla; his sixty thousand sons dug their way to Pātāla where they found the horse grazing near the sage Kapila who was engaged in meditation; thinking him to be the thief, they disturbed his meditation and were reduced to ashes by his fiery glance; he was noted for his generosity and the chasm dug by his sons and filled by the waters of the Ganges is called Sāgara (sea) after him.—DHM. 271-72.

566. Gaya—A sage who knew the power of Viṣṇu's yoga; PI. 1,514.

Yayāti[567] and others; Māndhātṛ,[568] Alarka,[569] Śatadhanvan,[570] Anu,[571] Rantideva,[572] Devavrata (Bhīṣma), Bali, Amūrtaraya,[573] and Dilīpa;[574]

45. Saubhari,[575] Uttaṅka,[576] Śibi,[577] Devala,[578] Pippalāda,[579] great men Sārasvata,[580] Uddhava, Parāśara,

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567. Yayāti—the fifth king of the Lunar Race, Son of Nahuṣa; married Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā; from the former was born Yadu, the founder of the Yādava clan, and from the latter Puru; the founder of the Paurava race. He became prematurely old by Śukra's curse; he borrowed the youth from his son Puru, but later repenting, returned it to Puru and retired to forest for penance—DHM. 376-77.

568. Māndhātṛ—A king, son of Yuvanāśva, of the Ikṣvāku race; father of Mucukunda, Ambarīṣa and Purukutsa (sons) and fifty daughters. He gave them all to the sage Saubhari. He was killed while fighting with Lavaṇāsura—BPK. 244.

569. Alarka—A pupil of Dattātreya; a sage who realised the force of Hari's *māyā*.—PI. 1.115

570. Śatadhanvan.—A royal sage devoted to Viṣṇu—BPK 306.

571. Anu—A son of Svāyambhuva Manu; knew the power of the yoga of Hari—PI. 1-56.

572. Rantideva—A pious and benevolent king of the Lunar race; sixth in descent from Bharata; he was enormously rich, very religious, charitable and profuse in his sacrifices—DHM. 263.

573. Amūrtaraya—A sage who had transcended the force of *māyā*—PI. 1-85.

574. Dilīpa—Son of Aṁśumat and father of Bhagīratha; ancestor of Rāma; by serving the Nandinī cow at the cost of his life, he was freed from the curse of Surabhi and a son, Raghu, was born to him—DHM. 92.

575. Saubhari—A devout sage; married 50 daughters of king Māndhātṛ and had 150 sons; finding the vanity of *saṁsāra* he retired with his wives to the forest for penance—DHM. 289-90.

576. Uttaṅka—A Brahmarṣi residing on the Meru slope; at his request king Bṛhadaśva of Ikṣvāku line vanquished the demon Dhundhu—PI. 1.215.

577. Śibi—A king famous for the offering of his own body to a hawk to save the life of a dove which had come to his refuge—ASD. 918.

578. Devala—A sage who visited Parīkṣit at the time of the latter's fast unto death.

579. Pippalāda—a pupil of Devadarśa; the sage who communicated the *Aṅgāra-vrata to* Yudhiṣṭhira; came to see Parīkṣit practising *prāyopaveśa*; knew the *yoga*-power of Viṣṇu. PI. 2.333.

580. Sārasvata—a sage represented to be the son of the river Sarasvatī; he protected the Vedas during a great famine. He taught the Vedas to sixty thousand Brahmins who approached him for instruction—DHM. 283-84.

Bhūriṣeṇa;[581] and many others viz. Vibhīṣaṇa, Hanūmān, Śuka, Arjuna, Ārṣṭiṣeṇa,[582] Vidura, Śrutadeva and others;

46. Verily they comprehend and cross over the *māyā* of God. And women, Śūdras, Hūṇas, Śabaras and even sinful souls (*jīvas*) like non-human beings, if they have got the training with regard to the virtuous character of the devotees of Hari of wonderful strides (in covering each world in a step as Trivikrama), can understand and go beyond the *māyā*. What to say about those (i.e. Brāhmaṇas and others eligible to study the Vedas) who can concentrate their minds on the form of the Lord (described) in the Vedas[583] ?

47-48. That indeed is the essential form (nature) of the glorious Supreme Man which the learned ones call Brahman, which is eternally blissful and untouched by sorrow. It is eternal, serene, free from fear, of the nature of pure knowledge, untouched by impurities, *sama* (i.e. one without a second), beyond the pale of *sat* and *asat* (i.e. not related to the objects of senses and non-senses), which is the real principle of the Supreme Soul, beyond the reach of the words, i.e. the *Vedas*, wherein causative circumstances produce no fruit, and in whose presence *māyā* comes back (vanishes as if) blushed. Recluses, having concentrated their minds on him, give up their tools (means) of destroying their idea of difference, just as Indra, the god of rains, would ignore a spade for digging a well[584] (i.e. Indra himself being a god of rains, has no need of a spade for digging a well. Similarly those who visualise the Brahman in medita-

581. Bhūriṣeṇa—A sage who knew the Yoga power of Hari; son of Brahmasāvarni PI. 2.578.

582. Ārṣṭiṣeṇa—A chief Gandharva who sings Rāma's glory in Kimpuruṣa; came to see Parīkṣit practising *prāyopaveśa*; knew the Yoga-power of Hari.

583. *Śruta-dhāraṇaḥ* (1) Who can contemplate on the described object (Hari)—VR.

(2) Men who can immediately concentrate upon the name and form learnt from the preceptor—VC.

(3) Those who can concentrate their minds upon the reality of the Soul as heard from the spiritual preceptor.

—SD.

584. *svarāḍ...Indraḥ*—ŚR.'s alternative explanation :

Just as a poverty-stricken person, after becoming a rich man, does not care for the spade (with which he formerly earned his livelihood).

tion, automatically rise above the notion of difference, and have no need to resort to other means to wipe out that notion).

49. He is the all-pervading lord who is a dispenser of all blessings on men. It is from him that the results of good actions which are done with the natural qualifications or duties (like *śama, dama*) of Brāhmaṇas and others accrue. (Or, from him comes forth the whole world—the effect produced by transformations which are the natural and specific characteristics of *mahat* and other principles, i.e. he is the dispenser of heaven etc). When the constituents of the body are disintegrated, the body is shattered, but not the internal element the ether. Similarly individual soul in the body is also not destroyed, for he has no birth nor death.

50. In this way, oh child, the glorious lord, the creator has been described to you in brief. Whatever is *Sat* or *Asat* (i.e. cause and effect or the manifest and the unmanifest) is not something different from Hari (everything proceeds from Hari)

51. This Bhāgavata which is narrated to me by the lord is only an epitome of the powers and glorious deeds of the lord. You extol them in details (to others).

52. After determining in your mind to make men devoted to the glorious Lord Hari who is the *antaryāmin*, (soul residing in all) and the support of all, describe Hari and his glories (with special emphasis on Hari's sports).

53. The mind (Soul) of the person who describes the *māyā* of the Almighty or who gives his approbation to this or who always devoutly listens to this, is not bewildered by the *māyā*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

(Queries regarding the relation between the body, Soul and God, etc.)

The king said :

1-2. Oh Brahman ! Nārada of godly vision[585] (or who makes his followers to visualise God) who was directed

585. *Deva-darśana*—One who shows the Supreme Soul (to his followers).

by Brahmadeva, to describe in detail the qualities of the Lord, who is free from Sattva and other attributes, expounded to various persons, the real nature of God. Oh prominent one among the knowers of Veda. I would like to know (what is the truth). The episodes of Hari of miraculous powers, are very auspicious to people.

3. Expound to me (those discourses) in such a way that I shall, after fixing my unattached mind on Kṛṣṇa, the *antaryāmin* (the Soul within all), give up my body.

4. The lord enters the heart, within a short time, of those who always hear with faith his deeds and extol the same.

5. Kṛṣṇa who enters the lotus of his devotee's heart by way of the ear, cleanses all the sins, just as the season called Śarad (autumnal season) does unto waters (of rivers etc.).

6. A person whose sins are washed away and who becomes free from all troubles (resulting from love, hatred etc.), does not leave the feet of Kṛṣṇa, just as a traveller (who has returned home after a long sojourn) does not leave his home.

7.* Oh Brahman ! You know really whether it is causeless or with a cause like Karma that the soul, which is not constituted of elements, (still) comes to possess a body made up of elements. Please explain to me the truth about it.

8. He, (God) from whose navel sprouted forth the lotus which represented the configuration of the worlds, is described as possessing the same form and the same number of limbs as a human being, with the difference that He has limbs of separate and of his own dimensions. (If that be the case) what is the difference between the two (God and his miniature (man) ?

9. The unborn god Brahmā creates beings and controls them through his grace. It is due to his favour that Brahmā (though) born from the lotus (grown) out of his navel could get a glimpse of his form.[586]

* Whether it is due only to the will of God or any other cause like Karman, there happens at the beginning the possession of the body consisting of *dhātus* (elements), its material cause, the produce of the Prakṛti, in the case of the Soul which is essentially unrelated to *dhātus* like *Prakṛti*—VJ.

586. VJ. explains verses 8 and 9 : At the beginning, during the great deluge (Mahā-pralaya), when Nārāyaṇa wished to create the

10. In what place does the Supreme Man who dwells in the hearts of all,[587] who creates, protects and destroys the universe, and who is the Lord of *māyā*, stay when he lays aside[588] his *māyā* ?

11. We heard (from you) that the worlds with their protecting deities were created first from the limbs of the Man, and that with these worlds and their presiding deities, the limbs of his body are formed. Please explain this.

12. What is the duration of Kalpa (Brahma-kalpa) ? What is the extent of Vikalpa (*Manvādi-kalpa*) ? How is Time measured ? What is the significance of the past, present and the future ? What is the span of life of men, manes (*pitṛs*), gods etc. ?

13. What is the nature of Time which, though very long, appears to be very short ? What are the places where Karma leads to beings ? Of what nature are they, oh the best of Brāhmaṇas ?

14.* Please tell me about the individual Souls (lit. possessors of attributes) who wish to become gods etc. as a result of the modifications or changes in the attributes, like sattva, rajas etc. ? In what stage does the cumulative effect of good and bad actions take place ? By what combinations of actions

universe, he became the Supreme Man (Parama-puruṣa) and created the Cosmic Egg. He, along with the principles (which led to the creation of the universe) entered the watery portion of the Egg and lay on the bed of Śeṣa. From His navel sprang up the lotus containing fourteen worlds. He came to be called *Vairāja* within that Egg. *ayam puruṣa* (this Man) in verse 8 signifies this Cosmic Egg (*aṇḍakośa*) and is called *puruṣa* (man) due to God's presence in the *puruṣa* form. This Vairāja called Viṣṇu is different from the Egg. But it is due to his presence in the Egg, that the parts of the Egg are represented as his limbs.

587. v.l. *sarva-guṇāśrayaḥ*—VR : Possessing six excellent qualities fully. VJ. : The support of God Brahmā etc. representing *Guṇas* in the beginning of creation, Or, possessing all excellent qualities such as knowledge, bliss etc.

588. *ātma-māyām muktvā* VR. : transcending *prakṛti*; VJ. : Suspending the binding force of *prakṛti* under his control.

* Explain to me the place where the effect of Karma takes place. Through what agency (of gods etc.) and of what nature is it ? Tell us in detail the modifications taking place in attributes and individual Souls and the cause of their attaining the bodies of Gods etc.

and by what procedure of doing them is one qualified to get Godhood and such other status.

15. What is the origin of the earth, the nether-world (*pātāla*), directions, the sky, the planets, the constellations of stars, mountains, rivers, seas and islands ? What is the origin of the inhabitants thereof ?

16. What are the dimensions of the Cosmic Egg, separately from within and without ? What are the lives and deeds of the great in them ? Please tell me definite knowledge about the classes of society and the stages of life (*varṇa* and *āśrama*).

17. What are (the different) Yugas, and what is the extent of each Yuga (age) ? What is (the nature of) religion in each Yuga ? What are the most miraculous incarnations of Hari and his deeds ?

18. What is the course of duties common to men ? What are the special duties of guilds of workers and the royal sages ? What is the course of conduct to men, who have to live under emergency (*āpad-dharma*) ?

19. What is the number of *tattvas* or fundamental principles ? What is their characteristic ? What is their nature for distinguishing them from their effects ? What is the method of worshipping the Supreme Man ? And what is the method of practising Yoga consisting of eight stages ?

20. What is the way (like *arcir-mārga*) of the past masters of Yoga possessing eight miraculous powers ? How is the *liṅga-śarīra* (the subtle body) destroyed ? What is the nature of the Vedas (like Ṛgveda, Yajurveda etc.) Upavedas (like Āyurveda, Gandharva-Veda etc.), Dharma (course of conduct) for different classes of society, different stages of life etc., Itihāsa like Mahābhārata) and Purāṇas (18 Mahāpurāṇas and 18 Upapurāṇas) ?

21. What is the nature of the interim deluge or the creation, sustenance and destruction of all the beings ? What is the correct method of performing *Iṣṭa* (maintenance of sacrificial fire, penance, *vaiśvadeva* etc.) and *pūrta* (such as construction of temples, lakes etc.) and attaining the triad. viz., *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* ?

22. How are the *jīvas* (individual souls) who fall from heaven etc., along with the balance of their karmas, born in

this world ? How did the heretic doctrine come into existence ? What is the nature of the so-called bondage and liberation of the Soul ? How does the Soul attain to his real essential nature ?

23. How does the self-dependent lord sport with the help of *māyā* ? How does the all-pervading lord, at the time of the deluge, cast off the *māyā* and remain aloof as a witness ?

24. Oh venerable great sage ? You should kindly explain to me who suppliantly approached you for knowledge, the reality about all these (and other points as well) in the serial order of inquiring.

25. Oh revered one ! You are the authority on these just like the great God Brahmā, born of the Supreme Spirit, for other people in this world (blindly) follow what was done by the forefathers of their forefathers.

26. Oh Brāhmaṇa! My life (vital airs) will not depart by fasting so long as I drink the nectar (in the form of the stories) of Acyuta, though they may pass away soon due to the wrath of Brāhmaṇa (i.e. the bite by Takṣaka due to the curse).

27. Brahmarāta (i.e. Śuka) was highly pleased, when in that assembly, Viṣṇurāta (i.e. Parīkṣit) respectfully requested him, to narrate the episodes of Hari, the Lord of the good (or god Brahmadeva etc.).

28. He expounded him the *purāṇa* called *Bhāgavata* which is equivalent to Veda, and which was narrated to god Brahmā by the Lord, at the advent of Brahma-kalpa.

29. Whatever Parīkṣit, the foremost in the Pāṇḍava race, asked, (Śuka) began to narrate in all, in the order of questions.

CHAPTER NINE

(Śuka's discourse—Catuḥślokī Bhāgavata)

Śrī Śuka said :

1* Oh king ! No relation is logically (correctly) possible between perceptible object (e.g. the body) and the Soul whose essential nature is knowledge (and hence different from that of the body), except through his own māyā, as (it is not possible) in the case of one who sees visions in a dream.

2. In association with māyā which assumes various forms, he appears to have many forms (viz. that of a child or youth or a god or a man etc.). Amusing himself in her qualities (like the body etc.), he (seeing thus conditioned) thinks (supposes) '(This is) mine, (This is) I.'

3** Only when he will enjoy himself in his own glory which is beyond Time and māyā (or Puruṣa and Prakṛti), and being free from delusion, he gives up both of them, and the false notion 'I and mine' and stands out in his full form unconcerned (with anything).

4. The Supreme Lord who was propitiated by sincere devotion (penance), revealed his own real form to *Brahmā*, spoke to him in order to enlighten him on the truth about Supreme Soul (as distinct from the *jīva*—individual Soul).

5. That first and foremost of gods, the supreme preceptor of the worlds (*Brahmā*) seated himself in his lotus and with a desire to create, began to look (consider) the procedure of creating the world. But he could not get the insight (the vision) into the faultless method of world-creation.

6. Once upon a time, while thinking over the methodology of world-creation the great god Brahmā heard twice a word of two syllables (*Tapa*) uttered near him from under the

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* With VR., as usual, māyā is the prakṛti controlled by the Supreme Soul. With VJ. it is Hari's will which controls the prakṛti characterised by the attributes like sattva etc. God's will is fundamental. Nothing can take place without it.

**According to VR. it is in the stage of liberation (mukti) that the individual Soul (Jīva) becomes free from illusions, and realises his own innate nature and finds delight in the glorious nature of the lord which is beyond influence of Time and Prakṛti.

water. It consisted of the sixteenth (*ta-*) and twentyfirst (*pa—*) letters of the five classes of consonants. Oh king ! that word is the wealth of those who have renounced (material) wealth.

7. On hearing the word (*tapa*) and eager to see the speaker, he looked in all directions. Seeing nobody anywhere, there, he resumed his seat and coming to the conclusion (considering) that (penance) is for his good, he determined to perform penance, as if he was advised by some preceptor.

8. Brahmā whose insight (in grasping the significance of the uttered syllables) was correct, and who is the greatest of the performers of penance (sage of the sages), controlled his breath and mind, and restrained his both types (cognitive and conative) of sense-organs, and in undisturbed meditation, performed for a period of one thousand celestial years penance which threw light on (the procedure of creation etc. of) the worlds.

9. The Lord, who was (thus) propitiated by penance, showed to him (god Brahmā) his region, i.e. Vaikuṇṭha, where afflictions, delusion and fear do not exist, and which is eulogised by gods and men of abundant merits (or men who have realised the Self), and to which there is no higher place.

10. Where (i.e. in the Vaikuṇṭha) there is neither *rajas* and *tamas* nor *sattva* attribute which is mixed up with them. (There is only the pure *sattva* attribute). The Time has no power there. Nor does māyā exist there. What of others ! There attendants (devotees) of Hari are worshipped by gods and *asuras* (demons).

11. In complexion these attendants are like shining emeralds. They have eyes like a lotus of hundred petals, and have put on yellowish garments (*pītāmbaras*) They are excellent in personal charm, and of very soft delicate bodies. All of them have four arms and wear ornaments of gold, studded with brilliant precious stones. They are of extremely brilliant splendour. Their complexions are varied like the coral, the *lapis lazuli* and the lotus-stalk, and they wear shining earrings, crowns and garlands.

12. Just as the sky appears when the clouds therein are illumined by lightning, the Vaikuṇṭha region appears shining by the greatly beautiful and effulgent aerial cars of the great-souled ones surrounded by young women of lustrous complexion.

13. There the goddess of wealth incarnate pays respects to the feet of the highly praised Hari, in various ways, and with various forms of magnificence (or splendour) seating herself on a swing and singing the deeds of her beloved lord, herself being praised in songs by bees, the followers of the spring.

14. There he (Brahmadeva) saw the Lord of the goddess of wealth (Śrī), the Protector of His devotees, the presiding deity of sacrifices—the all-pervading Lord who is waited upon by his chief attendants, viz. Sunanda, Nanda, Prabala, Arhaṇa and others.

15. He saw God who was eager to bless his devotees (servants) whose looks were (like nectar) gladdening the heart of his devotees, whose face was beaming with gracious smiles and brilliant reddish eyes, who had four arms, and who wore crown and ear-ring, and had put on yellow-garment (*pitāmbara*) and had got a distinguishing mark called Śrīvatsa on his chest.

16. (He saw) God seated on an invaluable throne surrounded by the four (*Prakṛti, Puruṣa, Mahat* and *Ahaṁkāra*), the sixteen (mind, the ten cognitive and conative sense-organs and five elements) and five (i.e. *tanmātras*) [in all 25 tattvas or powers] as part of his nature. Supernatural powers which are temporary elsewhere (in yogins) were inherent in him. He was the Master as he was enjoying his own powers and bliss.

17. The creator of the Universe (God Brahmā) whose heart was overflowing with joy at his sight, which can be attained by the path of knowledge (followed by great recluses-*Paramahaṁsas*), whose hair stood erect (with rapture), and whose eyes were full of tears of intense love to him, bowed to his lotus-like feet.

18. The Lord, the beloved of all, was pleased with his dear (Brahmadeva) who loved him intensely, and was standing near him. He touched with his hand Brahmā who deserved his guidance (orders) in the creation of the worlds. Then he spoke to him with words brilliant by his gentle smile.

The venerable lord said :

19. Oh Brahman (in whom all the Vedas exist) I who am impossible to be pleased by hypocritical yogins, am delighted by your long penance performed with the desire of creating the universe.

20. Oh Brahman ! Prosperity to you (good betide you). I can confer any boon. Ask me whatever is desired by you. My vision is the culmination of all human efforts.

21. It is due to my desire (to show you) that you had a view of my region (Vaikuṇṭha). You have performed excellent penance in solitude, after hearing my utterance (containing the instruction to perform penance).

22. Oh sinless one ! When you were at a loss to know what to do, I guided you (to perform penance). As *Tapas* (penance) is my heart, and I am the Soul of *tapas* (penance) [I am *tapas* itself].

23. It is by penance that I create the universe. I eat it up (keep it within me) by penance. I maintain it by means of penance. My strength lies in austere penance which is difficult to perform.

Brahmā said :

24. Oh lord ! You are the ruler of all created beings. You, who dwell in the heart (lit. cave) of all beings, know by your unimpeded unlimited knowledge what one desires to do.

25. Oh Lord ! grant to me, a seeker, however, what I pray, so that I can know the subtle as well as the gross[589] forms of yours who are really formless.

26-27. Oh Mādhava (Lord of Lakṣmī)! Just as a spider weaves a web round itself, so you, of efficacious will-power, indulge of your own accord in your sports, by assuming with the help of your *māyā* various forms (such as Brahmā etc.) for creating, preserving and destroying the universe which is developed with various powers. Please develop (lit. put) in me the intelligence (necessary) to understand this.

28. I shall really carry out the instructions of the lord without any slackness or idleness on my part. It is through your grace that I, who desire to procreate the world, will not be subjected to the bondage of *karma*.

29. Oh lord ! (by your friendly action of touching me with hand etc.) I have been done (treated) by you like a friend.

589. According to VJ. *para* is the Vairāja Puruṣa (the Cosmic Man embracing fourteen worlds) and *apara* is the Cosmic Egg with its nine sheaths.

Still I shall stick to carry out your service of creating the worlds untiringly. May there be no pride in me of thinking myself to be unborn, while I am creating the world with all its differences.

The lord said :

30. Receive from me the knowledge (as detailed in the Śāstras) coupled with experience and along with its mystic doctrine (esoteric teaching), with all the accessories to it, as explained by me, though it is a topmost secret.

31. By my grace, may you have a thorough comprehension of the reality as to my dimensions, my real nature, my attributes and actions as actually they are.

32* In the beginning, before the creation, I alone was in existence. There was nothing else—neither the subtle nor the gross (creation) nor their cause Pradhāna or Prakṛti (the primordial nature)[590] [These were then completely absorbed in me—only I simply existed then]. After the creation of the universe what exists, is I. I am the universe. What remains after the Pralaya is myself.

33. That should be known as my māyā[591] on account of which there appears existence, despite the non-existence of the

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* The four verses beginning from this are said to contain the essence of the Philosophy of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and are hence known as *Catuḥśloki Bhāgavata.*

590. *sadasatparam*—Reality which is distinct from the sentient (spirit or *jīva*) and non-sentient (*jaḍa* matter)—VR.

JG. and VC. have given sermons on the basis of this verse.

591. According to VJ., *māyā* is chiefly the power of Viṣṇu (*mukhyato Viṣṇu-śaktirhi Māyā-śabdena bhaṇyate*). It is also applied to Jīva and Prakṛti. It is not an unreality like magic tricks (*indrajāla*). To briefly state VJ. : Whatever is recognised or known from the Vedas and other means of knowledge, (though of no use or value to God who has all his wishes fulfilled) and whatever is not contradictory (*bādhaka*) to God, such things, i.e. Jīvas and Prakṛti are to be regarded as the māyā of the Supreme Soul.

In a long commentary on this verse JG. explains his concept of *māyā*. Briefly stated : Māyā is that which appears outside Brahman (the ultimate reality), and ceases to appear with the realization of Brahman. Without the support of Brahman, it cannot manifest itself. It is associated with Brahman in two forms, viz., *Jīva-māyā* and *Guṇa-māyā*. The analogy of *ābhāsa* is the reflection of the solar light from outside

basic reality, as in the case of false appearance (of two moons even though the other moon has no existence), and there appears the non-existence of the really existents, as in the case of the planet Rāhu (which is never perceived in spite of its existence in the planetary system)--the Soul is the object of such misapprehension.

34. Just as the great elements (the earth, water etc.) which may be said to have entered into created things, great or small, may (also) be said not to have entered into them (due to their pre-existence as the material cause of the universe), similarly, I am in the elements as well as the creation from the elements, and also not in them[592] (as I existed before them and created them all).

35. This much should be understood by him who desires to know the reality about the Soul (*ātman*), the existence of which everywhere and at all times is proved by logical concomitance and discontinuance [i.e. ātman exists at all times, everywhere, as the cause of the effected things, and being different from them in the causal state (*kāraṇāvasthā*), as being a witness, in the states of wakefulness, dreaming and sleep, and as detached or unconnected from everything in the state of *Samādhi* etc.].

36. Correctly follow this doctrine with perfect concentration. Your goodself will never be infatuated and become proud of being a creator in the different creations of the Kalpas.

Śrī Śuka said :

37. Having thus instructed Brahmā who occupies the

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the solar orb. The solar light cannot exist unless it is supported by the Sun's orb, yet the solar light can have an independent function outside the orb. It may dazzle the eye and blind men to its real nature, or it may manifest itself in various colours. JG. interprets *Tamas* as "darkness" and not Rāhu. Though darkness cannot exist where there is light, it cannot itself be perceived without the light of the eyes. In short, the Prakṛti and its development are appearances brought into being outside the Brahman by *māyā*. But the movement of *māyā* is possible due to the essential power of God. Thus *māyā* and its appearances derive their essence from God and hence cannot affect in any way God or His essential power.

592. *na teṣvaham* : I am both outside and inside them but being unattached, I am not touched by their defects—VR.

highest place in all created beings, the unborn God Viṣṇu withdrew that visible form even while Brahmā was looking on.

38. (God Brahmā) who embodies all creation (by being its head), and who has folded his hands to Hari whose visible form has disappeared, created this universe as it was before (in the previous *Kalpa*).

39. Once Brahmā, the Lord of the created beings and the protector of righteousness, practised the prescribed *yamas* and *niyamas* for attaining the good of the creation which was as if his own objective as well.

40-41. Nārada who was the most beloved of his inheritors (sons), was devoted to his father, and rendered service to him. Oh king, the great sage, being a great devotee of the lord, desired to know from him the Māyā-power of Viṣṇu, the Lord of Māyā, and so pleased his father by his praiseworthy character, modesty and self-control.

42. Finding that his father, the grandfather of all the worlds, was pleased with him, the celestial sage (Nārada) respectfully asked him the very thing you enquire of me.

43. Brahmā, being pleased with him, expounded to him this Bhāgavata Purāṇa of ten characteristics[593], as it was revealed to him by the lord.

44. Nārada narrated it to Vyāsa of immeasurable brilliance, while he was meditating on the Supreme Brahman, on the bank of the Sarasvatī.

45. In recounting the same to you, I shall be satisfying your queries as to how all this world came to be produced from the *Virāṭ Puruṣa* and all other questions.

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593. Vide Bh. P. II.10. 1-7.

CHAPTER TEN

(*The Ten Characteristics of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1.* Here (in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa) the (constituent) topics detailed are : (1) Subtle creation (*sarga*), (2) gross creation (*visarga*), (3) law and order (ensured by God) (*sthāna*), (4) protection—welfare of all (*poṣaṇa*), (5) material lust from Karmas (*ūti*), (6) the period of Manu and history thereof (*manvantara*), (7) accounts of God's deeds (*īśānukathā*), (8) physical annihilation (*nirodha*), (9) liberation (*mukti*) and (10) the last resort of the universe, the ultimate Reality (āśraya).

2. For arriving at the accurate and real knowledge of the tenth characteristic (viz. the last resort of the universe or ultimate Reality) the great-souled persons describe the first nine topics by direct expression[594] (from the Vedas in eulogies etc.) and by way of purport (by episodes containing it).

3. Due to the disturbance in the equilibrium of attributes, the production of the five elements (*bhūtas*), the objects of senses, the sense-organs and the intelligence (i.e. *mahat*, *ahaṁkāra*) is called the subtle creation. The gross creation produced by the Virāṭ Puruṣa is called *Visarga*.

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* The Sūta literature which, in the sacrificial milieu of the Brāhmaṇa period, became encyclopaedic, was classified under five topics which were later regarded as the characteristics of the compilations called the Purāṇas. Every Purāṇa thus consists of the following topics :

(1) Creation (sarga), (2) recreation after dissolution (*prati-sarga*), (3) Genealogy of Gods and sages (*Vaṁśa*), (4) History of dynasties (*vaṁśānucarita*), (5) Manu-periods of time (Manvantara). Purāṇas themselves, acknowledged these topics as forming their essential characteristics. Vide *Agni* P.1.14, *Garuḍa* P.1.2.27, *Kūrma* P.I, 1,12, *Matsya* P. 5.3.64, *Śiva* P.—*Vāyavīya Saṁhitā* 1.41, *Vāyu* P.—*Prakriyā Pāda* 4.10.11; *Viṣṇu* P. 3.6.25. Under the influence of Vaiṣṇava theologies, these five topics were elaborated into ten topics enumerated in the above verses and later Bh.P. 12.7.9-22 with a slight change in the nomenclature. As Baladeva Upādhyāya (*Purāṇa-Vimarśa* IV, pp. 125-139) shows there is not much difference between the contents of the five characteristics of Purāṇas in general and ten characteristics of the Bh. P.

594. *śrutenārthena*—VR. combines these words and explains 'as actually described in authoritative books or Vedas'.

4. *Sthiti* is the triumph of the Lord in the maintenance of (the divine) law and order (in everything), while the protection and welfare of all by his grace is *Poṣaṇa*. *Manvantara* consists of the account of the righteous path followed by Manu who observes his duty of protecting his subjects, while *ūti* is the desire for action (directed by) tendencies resulting from Karma.

5. *Īśānukathā* is the description of the incarnations of Hari, and stories of the lives of his devotees with detailed stories.

6. *Nirodha* is the withdrawal of the Jīva, along with all his powers and limitation in Hari when he enters his Yogic sleep. *Mokṣa* or liberation consists of abandoning the unreal form, and to stay in the essential nature of Brahman.

7. That from which creation and destruction are definitely known to emerge, is the resort which is called the Supreme Brahma, Supreme Soul, etc.

8.* He who regards organs of senses, such as eyes etc., as referring to himself is the seer or witness, the *ādhyātmika Jīva*. He is the same in the form of presiding deities of the sense-organs and is the *ādhidaivika Jīva*. He is the *ādhibhautika* (presiding over physical body) Jīva who is conditioned to see a distinction between the above two. (After the formation of the physical body, the two, viz. *ādhyātmika* and *ādhidaivika*, are separated.)

9. As we do not find (know) one in the absence of the other (i.e. if anyone of the three, viz. *ādhyātmika*, e.g. the eye and other organs, *ādhidaivika* (the presiding deity of the organ, e.g. the Sun or light), and the *ādhibhautika*, the physical sense organ, is absent, we cannot get any knowledge. These are thus

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*VJ. : Viṣṇu is the man who directs the organs of senses pertaining to the body (*ādhyātmika*). He is present also in the presiding deities of the sense organ (such as the Sun, the deity of perception or seeing). He is present in physical objects of perception, e.g. the jar etc. and the determiner between the *ādhyātmika* and *ādhidaivika* (e.g. the eye and the light seen by it). [This Viṣṇu is the *āśraya* (shelter) and controller of Jīvas.]

According to SD. *ādhyātmika* is the set of cognitive and conative sense organs. *Ādhidaivika* is the group of presiding deities of the above organs. Physical body which is different from the above two is the *ādhibhautika Puruṣa*.

interdependent), he who knows all these three is the Soul who is not dependent on others, but is the support (shelter) of all.

10.* When this Virāṭ Puruṣa (Brahmā), bursting open the Cosmic Egg, came out and stood apart from the Brahmāṇḍa, he pondered over a place for himself. He himself being pure, created pure water (called *garbhodaka*).

11. On those waters created by Him, he lay for a period of a thousand years. Waters were created by the Man (*nara*) [and hence came to be called nārā] He is called Nārāyaṇa (as *nārā* or waters were his *ayana* 'place of abode').

12.* It is by His grace that Matter, Action, Time, Innate nature and individual Soul (Jīva) function. They cease to do so when he becomes indifferent to them.

13. Getting up from his yogic bed of meditation, he desired to be many. Through his Māyā power, he divided his golden power (lit. gold-semen) in three parts—*adhyātma adhidaiva* and *adhibhūta.*

14. Listen how the Lord differentiated one and the same energy (semen) of the (Cosmic) Man in three parts as *adhidaiva, adhyātma* and *adhibhūta.*

15. From the ether (*ākāśa*) within the body of the *Puruṣa* who was making movements, were produced the powers of the senses, the mind and the body, and from these was produced (the subtle power of *Prāṇa* called *Sūtra* the chief Prāṇa (vital Power) of all.[595]

16. All the organs of senses in living beings make movements when the chief Prāṇa is active. They stop their activities when he ceases to do so, like servants of a king following him.

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* VJ : Having created principles (*tattvas*), the Puruṣa entered the Cosmic Egg along with them. Having broken it open, he manifested himself as the same Puruṣa. He wished to have place for sleeping on the bed of Śeṣa (another transformation of his Self). Being himself eternally pure, he created pure water suitable to be a material worthy of use in his worship.

* cf. supra II. 5.14 and 22.

595. VR. thinks that from the Prāṇa (vital energy) of god Brahmā, the Prāṇas of all beings were produced while VJ. states that it is from Hari who was active within the interior cavity of the Virāṭ Puruṣa (or Brahmā) that the powers of Hari were produced, and these were the real source of the chief vital energy (Prāṇa), the possessor of the Powers called—*sahas, ojas* and *bala.*

17. By the activities of Prāṇa, hunger and thirst were aroused in the Lord (Virāṭ Puruṣa), When He desired to eat and drink, the mouth (face) first became separate (was formed) as a distinct organ of the body.

18.* From the mouth, the palate became a separate member, and the tongue also was produced then. Then different kinds of tastes which are obtained (appreciated) by the tongue were produced.

19. From the mouth of this great Being who desired to speak, were created the Fire (God agni, the presiding deity), the organ of speech and the speech which is under the control of the two (viz. the organ of speech and the presiding deity). Certainly, his breath was controlled in water for a long time (which led to the creation of nose for breathing).

20. The two nostrils were formed, when the vital air began to move forcibly. When he (the Virāṭ Puruṣa) wished to have smell, the sense of smell was produced with Vāyu, the bearer of smell, as the presiding deity.

21. Being desirous of seeing himself in the darkness within the body of the *Virāṭ Puruṣa* a pair of eyes was created along with light (*tejas*) and the organ of seeing, and the power of seeing (the light, forms, colours).

22. When the Soul wished to hear the eulogies of the sages, two ears as well as the cardinal points (as presiding deities) and the auditory sense-organ were created. Hence the power of audition.

23. When he wished to feel softness, hardness, lightness, heaviness, warmth and coldness (of things), the sense of touch (*tvac*) was created On it grow the hairs (the sense-organ) and trees (the presiding deities). The vital air having obtained the quality of touch by means of the skin, covers it internally and externally.

24. Through his desire to do various activities, hands

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* In this description of the members of the body of the Cosmic Man (*Virāṭ Puruṣa*), the group of four, viz. the place, (*adhiṣṭhāna*), the sense-organ, the object of the sense and the presiding deity, though not stated, are to be understood in these verses. For example, this verse indicates that the palate is the position or place, the tongue is the sense organ, different tastes are the objects of the sense, and Varuṇa is the presiding deity of this organ.

grew to him, i.e. he developed hands). In them, the power (to work) as sense, and Indra (as the presiding deity) were produced. The action of receiving depends on them both.

25. When he wished to go to a desired destination, two legs (feet) grew out (from his body). Along with them, Viṣṇu the sacrifice incarnate became the presiding deity. The collection of materials for sacrifice was made by men by the action of going [The organ of motion whereby men can go for collection of sacrificial material was produced].

26. When he wanted progeny, pleasure and heaven (or immortality by one's continuation of race through offspring), the place of generative organ[596], the organ of generation (alongwith Prajāpati as the presiding deity) appeared. Sexual pleasure depends on them both (the deity and the sense-organ).

27. When he wanted to discharge the impurities of the food etc. (eaten by him), the anus appeared along with the organ discharging excrement, and with Mitra as the presiding deity. On these two depends the function of discharging the the excrement.

28. When he desired to move out (completely) from one body to another, the outlet—the navel—was formed with *apāna* (as the sense organ) and *mṛtyu* (the goddess of death as the presiding deity) was formed. On these two depends the separation (departing) from the body.

29. To him who became desirous for the intake of food and drink, stomach, intestines and veins (blood vessels) appeared with rivers and seas (as presiding deities). The satisfaction and the nourishment (of body) depend on them both (the organs and the deities).

30. When he wished to meditate on the Māyā of the Soul (*ātman*), the heart was produced. Then the mind (as the inner sense organ), the Moon (as the deity) and the functions of thinking and desiring (were produced).[597]

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596. *śiśna* here stands for both male and female organs.

597. This is obviously based on the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* : *Khaṇḍas* 1 and 2. The mutual relations of the physical member of the sense organ, the organ of the sense, and the presiding deity as given in the Ait. Up. are tabulated below, which may be compared with the above description in the Bh.P.

31. The seven essential ingredients of the body[598] are the inner skin and the outer skin, flesh, blood, fat, marrow and bones which were created respectively from the earth, water, fire, prāṇa, ether, water and the air.

32. The organs of the senses have for their soul (i. e. are essentially related to) their objects (such as sound, touch etc.). *Guṇas* proceed from *ahaṁkāra* (ego). The mind consists of all *vikāras* (emotions, perturbations etc.). And Intelligence is characterised by the knowledge of the things as they are[599].

33. I have expounded to you the gross form of the Lord. It is covered from outside, with eight sheaths, of which the earth is the first.[600]

34.* Beyond this (gross—Virāṭ form of the Lord) is the subtlest, unmanifest, attributeless, (form) which has no beginning, middle or end (i. e. not subject to creation, subsistence and destruction). It is eternal and beyond the reach of words and mind.

No.	The member of the body the Physical Part.	Sense-organ.	Presiding Deity
1	Mouth—face	Speech	Agni (Fire)
2	Nose—nostrils	Prāṇa	Vāyu
3	Eyes	Sight	The Sun
4	Ears	audition or hearing	Cardinal Points
5	Skin	Hair	The Lord of herbs (Oṣadhis)
6	Heart	Mind	The Moon
7	Navel	Apāna	Mṛtyu (Goddess of death)
8	Organ of generation	Semen	Water

598. *dhātu*—The usual list is *rasāsṛṅ-māṁsa-medo'sthimajjā-śukrāṇi dhātavaḥ*|—ASD 524.

But here in Bh.P. *rasa* and *śukra* are omitted and the cognitive organ *tvac* (and *carman*) are substituted for them.

599. Intelligence is a form of *mahat-tattva*—VR.

600. The remaining are of water, fire, air, ether, Mahat, *ahaṁkāra* and *Prakṛti*.

According to ŚR., here ends the description of the gross body (*Virāṭ Śarīra*) of the Lord.

* According to ŚR., SD. and VB. this is description of the subtle body (*samaṣṭi-liṅga śarīra*) of God, but VR. interprets this as referring to *mukta-jīvas*, i.e. the individual souls in liberated condition, while VJ. takes it as applying to the transcendental form of the Supreme Lord Hari.

35. I have described to you these two forms of the Lord. But sages[601] (learned men) do not take (accept) either of them as they are created by Māyā.

36. The Lord assumes the form of Brahmā and takes names, forms and actions, himself being both the things designated and the word denoting it. He is both the doer of actions, (through Māyā, but really) non-doer[602]. He is different and beyond the both.

37-39. He assumes (the names, forms and actions of) Prajāpatis, Manus, gods, sages, manes (*Pitṛs*), siddhas, semidivine beings like Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas; Asuras, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, celestial damsels, Nāgas, serpents, Kimpuruṣas (the same as Kinnaras), men, Mātṛs (such as Brāhmī, Māheśvarī etc.), evil beings like demons, Pretas,[603] Piśācas, Bhūtas (goblins), Vināyakas, imps like Kūṣmāṇḍa, Unmāda (like Kālakarṇa), Vetāla, Yātudhāna (a kind of demon), planets, birds, deer, beasts, trees, mountains and reptiles.

40. He creates all beings which fall into two categories (moving and stationary), and those divided into four classes according to their process of birth (viz. born out of the egg, the womb, sweat and seeds): and those classified in three as per their habitat (viz. those which live on the land, in the water and in the air). These are the fruits of the actions—merit, demerit and a mixture of the two.[604]

41. The consequences of the actions are three according to the three attributes, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and (according to the predominance of the attribute) beings become residents in the heaven, this world and the hell. Oh king, when one out of these attributes is dominated by the other two, each of these courses are then subdivided in three varieties.

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601. VJ. reads *a-vipaścitaḥ*, i.e. people who are weak in knowledge. Such persons cannot understand the above described two forms which are created by God's will and *Prakṛti*.

602. *akarmakaḥ*—As God's will works (not he), he is not bound by the actions—VR.

603. VD. applies the term *preta* to those who met an accidental death.

604. This is a reply to Parīkṣit's query *yāvatyaḥ karmagatayo yādṛśīr dvija-sattama* (Bh.P. II.8.156).

42*. This very glorious Lord who created the universe, takes the form of Dharma (upholder of the order) and protects and nourishes the universe, by taking incarnations in beasts, men, gods.

43. Then in due course, he, assuming the form of the Time of the world-destruction, the world-consuming Fire and Rudra[605], like a wind dispersing a host of clouds, destroys the world that is created by him.

44.** The divine lord of unimaginable power, glory etc. has been thus described (in his capacity of creator, protector and destroyer). But wise men should not think him to be of this much description.

45. Para Brahman is not a doer in the activity pertaining to creation (protection or destruction of the universe). It is for the sake of refuting his relation as agent that the description is given. It is imposed on him by Māyā.

46.*** Oh king! this kalpa-period of god Brahmā along with its subdivisions (*vikalpas*) has been described to you. In this kalpa, (subtle) creations from *prakṛti* or *mahat* called *Prākṛtikas* and (gross) creations known as *Vaikṛtika* take place. Such types of creations are common to all *kalpas*[606].

47. I shall fully explain to you later the measure of time (both gross and subtle), the definition of *kalpa* and its division. Listen now to Pādma Kalpa.

Śaunaka said :

48. Oh Sūta ! you told us that Vidura, the best of the devotees of the Lord, travelled to the holy places on the earth

* Having described creation of the universe in the capacity of Brahman, the author describes the protection aspect in the capacity of Viṣṇu in this verse, and destructive aspect of Rudra in the next verse.

605. GD. *Dīpanī*—Radharaman Gosvami.

** The venerable lord (Viṣṇu) is superior to other great gods (like Brahmā and Rudra). He has been described as quite different from others, and free from all defects (despite his actions of creation, destruction etc.). Wise men should look upon him as distinct from others (and not identical with others)—VJ.

*** This is the reply to the question '*yāvān kalpo vikalpo vā* etc. in Bh.P. 2.8.12.

606. *Kalpa*—a day of Brahmā or 1000 *yugas* or 432 million years of mortal beings. JG. quotes from the *Skanda Purāṇa* (*Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa*) the list of 30 Kalpas. The present is the Śveta-Vārāha Kalpa.

after leaving his relatives who are abandoned with great difficulty.

49. At what place did his discussion with Maitreya (Kauṣārava) on topics pertaining to the Soul take place ? What did the revered Vidura ask him ? What was his (Maitreya's) discourse (in reply) ?

50. Oh gentle Sūta ! Please tell us all about it, and about Vidura's activities, the cause of his leaving his brother and his return as well.

Sūta said : Please listen.

51. I shall narrate to you in the order of questions put to the great sage by Parīkṣit and what discourses he gave on these questions.

SKANDHA THIRD

CHAPTER ONE

(Meeting of Vidura and Uddhava)

Śrī Śuka said :

* 1-2.

It is reported that formerly, venerable Maitreya[607] was asked this very question, in the same manner by Vidura who took to forest, after leaving his affluent house—the house, wherein Lord Kṛṣṇa, the ruler of all, (but as) the ambassador (of Pāṇḍavas) entered (and stayed) as if it were his own, after leaving the palace of the Paurava King (Duryodhana).

The King said :

3. Oh Lord ! Tell us in details, at what place did the meeting of Vidura with venerable Maitreya take place ? and when (or what topic) did they discuss ?

4. For, the question posed by Vidura, of pure Soul, to the great (sage) cannot be of less importance —especially so when it was praised as a good question by Maitreya (himself).

Sūta said :

5. When the great sage, master (lit. knower) of different branches of learning, was thus asked by king Parīkṣit, he, being very pleased, replied, "Listen (I shall narrate to you)."

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* VR. interprets : Formerly the venerable Vidura who was the advisor of Pāṇḍavas and was an *aṁśa* of Yamadharma, the controller of all beings, left the house of Dhṛtarāṣṭra which he considered as his own and took to forest. It is reported that when Vidura left his own magnificent house and went to the jungle, he asked the venerable sage Maitreya the same question, in the same way.

VR. adds that leaving his own house as well as that of the Paurava King shows the physical and mental renunciation of Vidura.

607. *Maitreya* or *Kauśārava* A son of Kuśārava and Mitrā and disciple of Parāśara; met Kṛṣṇa on the eve of his departure to Heaven and was ordered to be the preceptor of Vidura:—DHM. 95, PI. 2.739-40.

6. When the blind king Dhṛtarāṣṭra supported in an unrighteous manner, his wicked sons, and deceitfully made the relative-less (fatherless) children of his younger brother, to live (lit. enter) the house of lac and set it on fire.

7. When king Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not prevent his son from censurable act of dragging (lit. touching) the hair of the queen of Kuru king (Yudhiṣṭhira), his daughter-in-law, whose tears washed away the saffron on her breasts [Or, which was the cause of subsequent washing away of the saffron on breasts of the wives of the enemies.]

8. As he succumbed to infatuation (or thoughtlessness, or serving his son), he did not return, as per terms of agreement, his due patrimony to the pious Yudhiṣṭhira who always followed the path of truth, and was fraudulently defeated in gambling, though he (Yudhiṣṭhira) respectfully requested for it (his share), after his return from the forest.

9. When the king whose (remaining small) portion of merit was spent up, did not regard as important the speeches of Kṛṣṇa, the Master of the world, (when) deputed by Pāṇḍavas,—speeches delivered in the (royal) assembly, and which were as if nectar-oozing to men (like Bhīṣma).

10. When Vidura was invited by his elder brother for consultation, he went to the palace. What he (Vidura), prominent amongst counsellors, proffered as an advice came later to be called 'Vidura's Advice' (*Vidura-Nīti*) by (political) advisors.

(*Vidura advised*)

11. "Return the hereditary share (of kingdom) to Yudhiṣṭhira who has suffered unbearable wrongs from you. It is against these that the serpent in the form of Bhīma of whom you are so much afraid, is hissing in rage along with his brothers.

12. The God, Lord Kṛṣṇa, along with Brāhmaṇas and gods, has taken (the side of) Pāṇḍavas. The Lord of the Yadus who has subdued all kings of kings, stays in his own city.

13. You, who have lost prosperity due to your aversion to Kṛṣṇa, are nourishing Duryodhana with the idea that he is your child. But he, the hater of the Supreme Man, is an evil incarnate which has entered your house and is staying. For

the good of the family (at least) remove that inauspicious person."

14. (When) Vidura whose character was praiseworthy to the righteous, spoke thus in that assembly, he was insulted by Suyodhana whose lower lip was throbbing through great rage, and also by Karṇa, his younger brother (Duḥśāsana) and Śakuni.

15. (Duryodhana said): "Who asked this crooked slave-born to be here? He is treacherous to his master with whose food he grew fat, and espouses the cause of the enemy. Let him be immediately driven out of the town alive[608] (confiscating his property.)"

16. Though, in the very presence of his brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he (Vidura) was cut to the quick by such sharp words which pierced the ears like arrows, he was unafflicted, as he well understood (and respected) the power of māyā (as the cause of this insult). Of his own accord, he left the assembly hall, leaving his bow at the door (indicating his neutrality in the ensuing struggle).

17. He, whom Kauravas got by their good luck, departed from Hastināpura (along with good fortunes of the Kauravas). With a desire to accumulate merit, he visited, one after another, holy places sanctified by the sacred feet of Hari—holy places where God has manifested himself in thousand forms (like Śiva, Brahmā etc.).

18. Unaccompanied by anyone, he travelled to towns, holy groves, mountains, bowers, rivers and lakes of translucent waters, and holy places and temples which were richly adorned with the symbols of the Infinite Lord.

19. While wandering over the earth, he practised observances (vows) pleasing to Hari. He lived on pure consecrated food, performing ablutions in every sacred place, sleeping on the bare ground. Wearing bark garments, he was careless about his person, and became unrecognizable to his friends and relatives.

20. In this way, while wandering in the Bhārata-varṣa, he went to Prabhāsa in due course. At that time, with the help

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608. v.l. *Śmaśānaḥ*—(i) inauspicious like a funeral place—ŚR.
(ii) So evil that he will bring misfortune wherever he goes.

of Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pṛthā, was ruling over the whole earth which was (controlled) by the army of one king only (i.e. of Yudhiṣṭhira), and was under (the protection of) one royal umbrella.

21. Then, at that place, he heard (the report of) the annihilation of his friends (relatives) who were burnt down like a forest of dry bamboos consumed by conflagration. Then being deeply grieved, he returned to the Sarasvatī.

22. In the Sarasvatī, he resorted to places sacred to Trita, Uśanas, Manu, Pṛthu, Agni, Asita, Vāyu, Sudās, cows, Guha and Śrāddhadeva.

23. In this region, he visited various temples of Viṣṇu constructed by sages and gods—temples which were especially distinguished by the most important of Viṣṇu's weapons, viz., the disc Sudarśana (carved in the gold tops of the temples) the sight of which reminds people of Kṛṣṇa.

24. Passing through the rich countries of the Surāṣṭras, the Sauvīras, the Matsyas, the Kurujāṅgalas, he reached the Yamunā where he met Uddhava, the great devotee of the lord Kṛṣṇa.

25. With great affection, he closely embraced Uddhava that famous follower of Vāsudeva and a former pupil of Bṛhaspati (in politics), and who was perfectly serene in mind. He enquired of him about the welfare of his relatives who were under the protection of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

26. "Are the two ancient Puruṣas (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) well in the house of Śūrasena—the Puruṣas who incarnated on the earth due to the request of Brahmā born from the lotus in his (Viṣṇu's) navel and who have enjoyed the joy of achieving the welfare of the world.

27. Is the intimate friend of the Kurus, the respected Vasudeva, happy ?—The liberal Vasudeva who like a father, gives sumptuous gifts to his sisters, in addition to the rich gifts given to the satisfaction of their husbands.

28. Dear friend ! Is Pradyumna, the brave commander-in-chief of the Yādava forces, hale and hearty? By propitiating Brāhmaṇas, Rukmiṇī, begot him (Pradyumna), the God of Love in his previous birth, as a son from Lord Kṛṣṇa.

29. Is Ugrasena, the king of Sāttvatas, Vṛṣṇis, Bhojas

and Dāśārhas happy ?—Ugrasena whom the lotus-eyed (Kṛṣṇa) installed as a king when he (through fear of his life) gave up the hopes about kingship.

30. Oh gentle Uddhava ! Is Sāmba, the son of Kṛṣṇa, and similar to him, the chief of warriors who ride chariots in battles, happy ? Is the god Kārttikeya whom Pārvatī bore in the former birth and whom Jāmbavatī gave birth (as a son) after performing many severe observances, happy?

31. Is Sātyaki who learnt the secret technique of archery from Arjuna happy ?—Sātyaki who by his intensely devoted service of Lord Kṛṣṇa attained the path leading to the Lord immediately,—a path which is difficult even for recluses to attain.

32. Is the wise, pious (sinless) Akrūra (the son of Śvaphalka) always devoted to the glorious Lord, happy ?—Akrūra, who lost himself due to his love (for God) and rolled himself in the dust on the road which was adorned with the foot-prints of Kṛṣṇa.

33. Is Devakī, the princess of Devaka of Bhoja clan, happy ?—Devakī, who like the mother of gods (Aditi) of whom Viṣṇu was born, verily bore the Lord in her womb like the Veda triad (*Ṛg, Yajus* and *Sāma Vedas*) which contains the meaning which expands into a sacrifice.

34. Is the revered Aniruddha happy ?—(Aniruddha) who fulfills the desires of the *sāttvatas* and who is regarded as the source of Śāstras by the Vedas, as the director of the mind, for he is the fourth principle presiding over *sattva* or *antaḥ-karaṇa* (the inner organ)[609].

35. Oh gentle Uddhava ! Are also Hṛdika, Sātyaki, Cārudeṣṇa, Gada and others, well?—those who in their absolute devotion to Kṛṣṇa worship him as the Lord of their Soul which is different from their bodies (etc.)

36. Is Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira), with two arms, viz. Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, protecting according to the duties of kings the

609. SR. explains : *citta* (reason), *ahaṁkāra* (self-sense or ego), *buddhi* (intelligence) and *manas* (mind) are four aspects of *antaḥ-karaṇa* (the inner organ) and Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are their respective presiding deities. Hence Aniruddha is called here 'director of the mind' and the fourth principle (deity) governing *antaḥkaraṇa* (the internal organ).

established (socio-religious) institutions ?—(Yudhiṣṭhira) in whose assembly, Duryodhana boiled (with rage and jealousy) at the sight of Arjuna's services and the imperial fortune gained (by him) through victories.

37. Or has Bhīma who is highly intolerant with the wrongdoers and nurtured rage (revenge) like a serpent, given it up (or visited it on the offenders—Kauravas) ?—(Bhīma) whose (heavy) steps the earth could not bear, while he moved about in various ways, brandishing his mace (*gadā*).

38. Is Arjuna, the celebrated warrior among the leaders of armies of chariots, the wielder of the Gāṇḍīva bow, enemy-less (after destroying them all) ? —(Arjuna) with whom was pleased god Śiva who assumed the form of a Kirāta, at his (Arjuna) covering him thickly with volleys of arrows[610]

39. Are the twins (who were brought up as) sons of Pṛthā (Kuntī), who are protected (lit. surrounded) by Kuntī's sons like eyes by the eyelids, enjoying themselves after wresting their share of ancestral kingdom from the enemies in the war, like Garuḍa taking (the share of) nectar from the army of gods?[611]

40. How wonderful, that though bereaved of a great royal sage (like Pāṇḍu), a matchless warrior, who seated in his chariot with only his bow as a helpmate, conquered all the four cardinal points, Kuṇtī stayed alive for the sake of children!

41. Oh mild-natured Uddhava ! I feel sorry for the downfalling Dhṛtarāṣṭra who showed enmity to his departed brother (Pāṇḍu). I (his living brother and), a friend and well-wisher was expelled from his capital by him who followed his sons.

42. (Though thus maltreated), I felt no wonder as I could see the greatness of Hari who confuses the working of the human mind by his assumption of human form; and, being in disguise, I could leisurely perform pilgrimage on the earth.

43. Though the venerable Lord is powerful enough to

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610. This refers to the test of Arjuna's heroism taken by god Śiva before granting him the Pāśupata missile (Vide MBH., II.39.32-64.)

611. *vajri-vaktra*—From the mouth of Indra (ŚR., VR., VJ.) But VD. objects that a thing taken from the mouth of another is unacceptable. Hence he dissolves the compound : *Vajrī vaktram* (*pradhānam*) *yasya* / 'That of which Indra is the leader !

remove the miseries of his devotees, by destroying the kings who were proud of their triple superiority (viz. in learning, riches and heredity), and who constantly made the earth tremble by their armies, he was indifferent to the sinful conduct of the Kauravas.

44. The incarnation of the unborn god is for the destruction of those who go astray. Though unconcerned with actions, his deeds are reclaiming the errants to the proper path. If (that be) not (the case) who, (being) above *guṇas*, would verily like the assumption of the body and the course of activities.

45. Oh friend ! Extol to me the news (episodes) of the unborn Lord of Holy Fame, who was born in the Yadu race for the good of the kings of the world who have submitted themselves to him (his protection) and for the welfare of those who abide by his orders.

CHAPTER TWO

(*The Dialogue between Uddhava and Vidura*)

Śri Śuka said:

1. The great devotee of the Lord (Uddhava) who was thus asked by Vidura about the welfare pertaining to the dear one (i. e. of Lord Kṛṣṇa), could not reply as he was painfully reminded of the Lord and was overcome with sorrow at his bereavement.

2-3. How could he (Uddhava) who, as a child of five years, when invited by his mother for breakfast, did not wish to partake of it while worshipping Kṛṣṇa as a part of his sports in childhood, break the news in reply, when he had spent the whole lifetime in his service, and attained old age, and was reminded (sorrowfully) of the feet of the master.

4. For the period of a *muhūrta* he remained silent (in meditation) highly satisfied by the nectar-like feet of Kṛṣṇa and deeply immersed in intense devotion of the Lord.

5. He, on whose body hair was standing on ends, and who was shedding tears from his closed eyes, and who was

drowned in the flood of love for Kṛṣṇa, was seen (as if) his highest purpose was achieved.

6. Gradually, he returned from the abode of the Lord to the world of men. He wiped out his eyes. Uddhava who was wonderstruck (with the deeds of the Lord) replied to Vidura. *Uddhava said*:

7. What good news can I give to you when the Sun in the form of Kṛṣṇa has set, and our homes, bereft of splendour, have been swallowed up by the boa-constriction (of Time) ?

8. Alas ! it is the misfortune of this world, and especially of the Yādavas who lived with him intimately and yet did not know him, just as the fish (living in the sea along with the moon before the churning of the sea) did not recognize the Moon (as such but regarded him as an acquatic animal).

9*. All the Sāttvatas, though capable of knowing intentions of others, and possessing deep understanding, and of singleness of devotion, regarded the Lord of all created beings[612] as the leader of the Sāttvatas only.

10. Those who have sown (i. e. completely fixed) their intellect in Hari, are not deluded by the words of those who are haunted by the Māyā of the Almighty (e. g. the Yādavas) or by those who entertained evil intention to him (like Śiśupāla and others).

11. He had exhibited his form to men who had not performed proper penance and who had not seen it to their satisfaction. He disappeared from the world taking with him his splendid form which was the centre (of attraction) to the eyes of the world.

12. It was a form which was useful for activities in imitation of human beings which he assumed, showing the power of his *Yoga-māyā*. It was the highest peak of perfect beauty

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*According to SD. this verse praises the Yādavas and Pauravas who knew the real Lord. "The leaders of the Puru-clan (like Yudhiṣṭhira) and Sāttvatas (like Vasudeva) realised the chief of Sāttvatas, namely, Śrī Kṛṣṇa as being the Brahman, the support of all created beings (*bhūtas*) and resting completely on the Lord, were happy thereby."

612. *bhūtāvāsam* : i) A *jīva*, resident in a physical and inner (*kāraṇa*) body—VB.
ii) A leader of a few men—VJ.

and sublimity, parts of which beautified even the ornaments and a wonder to him also.

13. Seeing his form which gave great delight to the three worlds in the Rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira, they (people of the three worlds) thought that in creating beautiful human form, the whole of creator's skill is exhausted today.

14. The women of Vraja who got the honour of his smiles overflowing with love, sportive dances and longing looks, followed him with their eyes and minds, leaving their work unfinished.

15. The Lord of all, [Brahman with attributes and beyond attributes] with compassion for his own gentle forms being troubled by other (wicked) ones, and accompanied with *Prakṛti* of which *Mahat* is but a fraction, (or with Balarāma as his great part), though unborn, took birth like fire (which though ever present in the wood, sparks out after friction).

16. The apparent birth of the birthless Lord in the house of Vasudeva, (his) stay in a settlement of cowherds (*Vraja*) as if out of fear of the enemy (*Kaṁsa*), and the flight of the Lord of infinite power, from his own city—this (behaviour like ordinary human beings) distresses me.

17. It pains my heart to remember how he, bowing down to the feet of his parents, beseeched, "Oh father, mother kindly be gracious unto us who being in great fear of Kaṁsa, could not render you any service."

18. What man who having smelt (experienced the great joy in) even a particle of pollen in the lotus-like feet of the Lord, can forget him—the Lord, who with the movement of his creeper-like eyebrow, a veritable god of destruction, removed the load (of the wicked) from the earth.

19. Verily, you have witnessed how, during the Rājasūya Sacrifice, Śiśupāla, the arch-enemy of Kṛṣṇa, attained Liberation after which even *yogins* aspire by observing carefully *yogic* practices. How can one endure separation from (such a gracious Lord like) him ?

20. Similarly, other warriors who, on the field of battle, drank with their eyes the beautiful lotus-like face of Kṛṣṇa, and attained to his feet after purification (death) from the missiles of Arjuna.

21-22. The Lord, who himself is unsurpassed in excellence (lit. without an equal or superior), and is a ruler of the three (worlds or attributes—*guṇas*), and who due to his intrinsic highest blissfulness, is in enjoyment of all (types of) happiness, whose foot-stool is (as if) eulogised by (the sound on the foot-stool made by) the crests of the crowns of the eternal guardians of the world who bring tributes to him—Such a Lord should stand before Ugrasena who is occupying a high seat (on the throne), and should request him, "Your Majesty, kindly pay attention (to us)." Oh Vidura, the servantlike behaviour of the Lord greatly troubles us, his servants.

23. What mercifulness! The wicked Pūtanā who with a desire to kill him, made him suck her breast smeared with deadly poison, (and for this she) attained the place worthy for his nurse (Yaśodā). Is there any other god so merciful like this, to whom we should resort (for salvation or protection ?

24. I regard asuras as the devotees of the Supreme Lord as their minds are fixed on the Lord of the three worlds, through anger and who on the battlefield visualized him armed with the Sudarśana disc and seated on the shoulder of Garuḍa, attacking them.

25. The Lord took birth from Vasudeva and Devakī, in the prison of Kaṁsa, the chief of the Bhojas, as he was so requested by god Brahmā and desired to restore happiness to the earth.

26. Then, by his father who was afraid of Kaṁsa, he was taken to the settlement of cowherds headed by Nanda. He stayed there with Balarāma with his power unmanifested, for eleven years.

27. Surrounded by cowboys and himself tending the calves, the All-pervading Lord sported on the (banks of the) Yamunā in parks, dense with trees full of warbling birds.

28. He who looked like an innocent young one of a lion, displayed his boyish pranks of (apparent) laughing and crying, to the residents of Vraja.

29. The same Lord tended their wealth in the from of cattle with white bulls (prominent in them) and which was

(as if), the abode of the goddess of wealth. He entertained the cowherds accompanying him, by playing upon the flute.

30. Like a boy breaking down his toys, he sportively killed those wiley conjuring demons who could assume any form at will and who were deputed by Kaṁsa (to kill him).

31. He brought back to life the cowherds and cows who died of poisonous water of the Yamunā. Subduing (and expelling) Kāliya, the king of serpents, he made them drink the water again which was restored to its original condition of purity.

32. The omnipresent Lord made the chief of cowherds (Nanda) to perform a sacrifice in honour of cows (in which cows were worshipped) with the help of the best of Brāhmaṇas, as he wished to spend the great wealth in a good way. (In this way, he subdued the pride of Indra).

33. Oh Vidura ! When Indra, incensed at the discontinuation of his own (traditional) worship, showered heavily, the settlement of the cowherds which became extremely distressed (by the downpour of rain), was protected (by the Lord) with the umbrella in the form of the hill (*Govardhana*) which he sportively wielded and showed thereby his grace.

34. Respecting (as it were) the evenings bright with autumnal moon, he enjoyed himself singing sweet songs and became an ornament of the circle of ladies (performing Rāsa dance).

CHAPTER THREE

(*The Dialogue between Vidura and Uddhava*)
—Glorious deeds of Kṛṣṇa

Uddhava said :

1. Then, with a desire to make his parents happy, he (Kṛṣṇa) accompanied by Balarāma came to the city (Mathurā) and forcibly pulled down Kaṁsa, the head of the enemy-force, from his royal seat, and after killing him, dragged him along the ground (though dead).

2. He learnt from Sāndīpani[613] the Veda with all its details (the six accessories of the Veda) which was recited to him but once. He restored his dead son to him (Sāndīpani) from the belly of Pañcajana[614].

3. Just as Garuḍa snatched away his share (of nectar), Kṛṣṇa, in the very presence of kings invited[615] on behalf of the Princess of Bhīṣmaka, carried away Rukmiṇī—his own share (as she was an incarnation of Lakṣmī)—with a view to marry her by the Gāndharva form of marriage,[616] thus setting his foot on the heads of the kings[617].

4. In another *svayaṁvara*, he tamed the bulls whose noses had not been bored and married the Princess (Satyabhāmā) of Nagnajit. He discomfited the foolish kings who, despite their humiliation (by Kṛṣṇa's fulfilment of the marriage condition) still entertained a desire for her and came to fight him with their weapons, though he could not be injured by them.

5. Like an ordinary man (under the thumb of his wife) the Lord took away the celestial tree Pārijāta to grant the desire of his beloved (Satyabhāmā). At this, Indra (who was incited by Śacī) like a pet deer of women, got blind with rage and pursued him with his army (of gods)[618].

6. Seeing her son (Naraka) who was (as if) swallowing the sky with his body, cut down by the *Sudarśana* disc, he

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613. *Sāndīpani*—Teacher of Kṛṣṇa and *Balarāma* (DHM 279).

614. *Pañcajana*—Name of a demon who assumed the form of a conch-shell and was slain by Kṛṣṇa to recover Sāndīpani's son. But as he was not found in Pañcajana's belly, Kṛṣṇa brought him back from Yama. For details—infra X Ch. 45.

615. ŚR accepts the v.l. *samāhṛta* i.e. who were attracted by her (Rukmiṇī's) beauty etc.

616. Modern 'love-marriage'. So called due to its supposed prevalence among the Gandharvas. ASD 398 is wrong when it states that it is performed 'without ceremonies'. *Smṛti Candrikā* and other digests state that *homa* and *saptapadī* are necessary. For details Kane *Hist. of Dharma Śāstra* Vol. II—i. Ch. IX. P. 521-24.

617. Kings who were invited by her brother Rukmi whose name had two syllables common with the name 'Rukmiṇī'—(ŚR).

618. Indra's ingratitude is obvious, as it was he who invited Kṛṣṇa to get back the earrings of his mother Aditi from Bhaumāsura. Kṛṣṇa went to Svarga with Satyabhāmā and restored the ear-rings (Vide infra X. Ch. 59).

(Kṛṣṇa) was prayed by the goddess of the Earth (Naraka's mother). Having given the remaining (unannexed) kingdom to Naraka's son, Kṛṣṇa entered the harem.[619]

7. Seeing Hari, the friend of the afflicted person, the princesses who were abducted by Naraka, immediately rose to receive him with their glances full of rapture, bashfulness and love.

8. Assuming suitable forms by his *māyā* powers, he simultaneously married them all, with proper formalities, in different apartments.

9. With a desire to expand his *prakṛti* (or to become many for the sake of *prakṛti*), he got from each of them ten children equal to him in all respects.

10. He commissioned his great prowess and glory in his men (devotees like Mucukunda, Bhīma), and through them he got killed Kālayavana, Jarāsandha, Śālva and others who, with their armies, laid siege to his town.

11. He caused the death of some like Śambara[620], Dvivida[621], Bāṇa[622], Mura[623] and Balvala[624] (through others), while he killed others like Dantavaktra[625] (personally).

12. He then caused the destruction of kings who espoused the cause of your brothers' sons (Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas).

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619. For details vide infra X. 59.

620. *Śambara*: A demon who stole away Kṛṣṇa's son Pradyumna soon after his birth, and threw him into the sea. Providentially Pradyumna was saved and he killed Śambara—BPK 197.

621. *Dvivida*—A monkey friend of Naraka; to avenge Naraka's death he went on destroying the towns in Kṛṣṇa's kingdom. At Raivata hill, he offended Balarāma insulting his fair companions. In the ensuing fight Balarāma killed him—PI. 2.150.

622. *Bāṇa*—Eldest son of Bali; a devotee of Śiva; arrested Kṛṣṇa's grandson Aniruddha who courted his daughter Uṣā. In the battle that followed for the rescue of Aniruddha, god Śiva and Skanda assisted Bāṇa but were finally overpowered by Kṛṣṇa. At Śiva's request Kṛṣṇa spared Baṇa's life and returned with Uṣā and Aniruddha—DHM. 42.

623. *Mura*—A demon ally of Naraka; defended Naraka's capital Prāg-jyotiṣa with his seven thousand sons. But he along with his sons was killed by Kṛṣṇa with his disc Sudarśana—DHM. 212.

624. *Balvala*—A demon who ruined the sacrifices at Naimiṣa; was killed by Balarāma at the request of the sages.

625. *Danta-vaktra*—King of Karuṣa; took side against Kṛṣṇa on behalf of Jarāsandha, Śālva and was killed by Kṛṣṇa—DHM. 80.

By the marching of their armies to Kurukṣetra, the earth was as if made to tremble.

13. He was not satisfied when he saw Suyodhana, along with his followers, lying prostrate on the ground with thighs broken and with his royal splendour and life cut short by the evil advice tendered by Karṇa, Duḥśāsana and Śakuni.

14. (He thought to himself): What an insignificant portion of the heavy burden of the earth is relieved, though an army of eighteen Akṣauhiṇīs is annihilated through (the medium of) Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Arjuna and Bhīma ! For there exists an irresistible army of Yādavas headed by (Pradyumna and others who are) my parts[626] (*aṁśas*).

15. There is no other strategem to kill them (Yādavas) except when there will be a quarrel among themselves, with their eyes reddish with intoxication. When I prepare to leave this world, they will automatically disappear.

16. After planning thus, the Lord, establishing the son of Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira) in his own kingdom, gave delight to his friends and showed thereby the path of the righteous people.

17. The continuity of the Puru family, which was properly secured by Abhimanyu in Uttarā, but which was verily destroyed by the missiles of Aśvatthāman, was again restored and protected by the Lord.

18. The Omnipresent Lord caused the son of Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira) to perform the horse-sacrifice thrice. He (Yudhiṣṭhira) who was devoted to Kṛṣṇa, enjoyed himself protecting the earth with the help of his younger brothers.

19. The glorious Lord also, the Soul of the universe and a follower of the path prescribed in Śrutis and Smṛtis enjoyed all worldly pleasures at Dvārakā. But as he was firmly fixed in the Sāṅkhya Philosophy, he remained non-attached (due to his realization of the distinction between Prakṛti and Puruṣa).

20-21. With his lovely smiling looks and words sweet as nectar, with spotless character and with his body as an abode of Śrī (Goddess Lakṣmī) he gave delight to this world as well as to the next, especially so to the Yadus. At night, he showed momentary friendship to women who obtained the pleasure of his companionship.

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626. VJ. construes it with Bhīṣma, Droṇa etc.

22. While he was enjoying himself thus for pretty long years, He became unattached to the householder's life and the pleasures therein.

23*. The objects of enjoyment are in the power of the Fate. Man himself is at the mercy of the Fate. What person devoted to the Lord of Yoga (Kṛṣṇa) by yogic process, will put faith in these (objects etc.) ?

24. Once upon a time, in the city of Dvārakā (some) sages were offended by Yādava and Bhoja lads while at play. The sages who knew the intention of the Lord, cursed them.

25. Then after some months, Vṛṣṇis, Bhojas, Andhakas and others, being deluded by God, rode in their chariots to Prabhāsa, in great delight.

26. Thereafter, performing ablutions and offering libations to Manes, gods and sages they, with that water, gave cows of many good qualities, to Brāhmaṇas.

27-28. They donated to Brāhmaṇas gold and silver, clothes and beds, skins and woollen blankets, horses and chariots, elephants, girls and land sufficient for maintenance, sumptuous food with a view to pleasing the Lord. Those brave warriors whose life was dedicated to the service of cows and Brāhmaṇas bowed to them (Brāhmaṇas) with their heads touching the ground.

CHAPTER FOUR

(The Dialogue between Vidura and Uddhava)
—Destruction of the Yādavas and
Kṛṣṇa's Message.

Uddhava said :-

1. Then, having been permitted by them (Brāhmaṇas), they (Yādavas etc.) drank (the flour-made) liquor. They lost

*ŚR differs : When the Lord himself who had everything in his power, felt non-attachment, who would love or entertain faith in things in the power of the fate? A person devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa would never do so.

their knowledge (sobriety), and cut each other to the quick by bitter words.

2. When their minds became unbalanced and vehement by the evil effect of the wine, the destruction (as a result of fight) among them, after sunset, was like that of bamboos (friction between which creates forest conflagration consuming the forest of bamboos).

3. Seeing that course of events brought about by his māyā, the Lord sipped water of the Sarasvatī, and sat down at the foot of a tree.

4. And (while we were already at Dvārakā), I was asked to go to Badarī by the Lord who removes afflictions of his devotees, (but) who desired to destroy his own clan.

5. Oh conquerer of the enemies ! Though I understood his intention, I followed him, as I could not bear the separation from the feet of the Master.

6. Searching for the most beloved Master (who protects by granting the knowledge of the Soul), I found him, the abode of the goddess Lakṣmī, sitting alone on the bank of the Sarasvatī, without any shelter (as he is the shelter of all).

7. (I saw the Lord) of beautiful blue complexion, composed of pure *sattva*, with calm, reddish eyes, recognisable by his four arms and by yellow silken garments.

8. He was sitting with his lotus-like right foot on the left thigh, leaning against a young Aśvattha tree, with all pleasures of the senses renounced, (yet) in perfect bliss.

9. In the course of his wandering over the world, there came by chance a *siddha* (Maitreya), the great devotee of the Lord, and a friend and well wisher of Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa).

10. While the devoted sage, with his neck (head) bending with joy and devotion, was listening, Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) removing my fatigue with a long smiling look full of love (compassion), said to me :

The Lord said:

11. Being an *antaryāmin* (dweller in the hearts of all) I know what you wish. What I give to you is difficult for others to obtain; (for) in days gone by, in the long sacrificial session performed by Prajāpatis and Vasus, Oh (former) Vasu, you performed the sacrifice with a desire to attaining me.

12. Oh virtuous one ! This is the last of your births, as my grace has been secured by you in the present birth. How glad I am ! that you have come with singleminded devotion to see me when I am about to leave this mortal world (to go to Vaikuṇṭha), in this solitary place.

13. Formerly (in Pādma Kalpa), at the beginning of creation, the highest knowledge throwing light on my greatness (majesty)—which the learned ones designated as the *Bhāgavata*—was imparted by me to the unborn god (Brahmā) seated in the lotus sprouting forth from my navel.

14. I, who was thus respectfully addressed, and who was the recipient of the favour of a long look of the Supreme Man, with my hair standing on their ends due to my affection (to him), with flowing tears, and bowing with folded hands, addressed to him in faltering words.

15. "Oh Lord ! Out of the four goals of life (viz. *dharma, artha, kāma* and *Mokṣa*), which goal is difficult to be achieved by those who resort to your lotus-like feet ? But, Oh Almighty, I do not request you for any one of them, as I am eager to serve your lotus-like feet.

16. That you performed actions, though you are devoid of actions and desire to do them, that you have taken a birth though you are birthless, that you resorted to a castle or fled away through the fear of the enemy, even though the god of Death is your form[627], that you married with ten thousand young women despite your enjoyment of your self-blissfulness—by these the intellect of the learned ones gets confused and fatigued.

17. Or, Oh Almighty Lord ! It throws our mind in confusion that you, whose power of self-knowledge is unobstructed and continuous, should invite me for consultations like an ignorant person, though you are never ignorant or careless.

18. You have completely disclosed to Brahmā, the supreme knowledge throwing light on your own (essential) mysterious nature. Oh Lord, if it be within our capacity to receive it, explain it, to us so that we may easily cross the misery (of the worldly existence)."

19. To me who have thus expressed the cherished desire

627. *kālātmanaḥ*—You are the destroyer of all—VJ.

of my heart, the Supreme Lord of lotus-like eyes instructed me (gave me insight) into his Supreme Nature.

20. I, who have thus learnt the path of the special knowledge of the real Soul from Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose holy feet have been worshipped by me, bowed to his feet, circumambulated the Lord and have come here with my heart afflicted with separation (from him).

21-22. I, who am full of delight at the sight of the Lord, and distressed at my separation from him, shall go to the site of the Badarī—hermitage which was liked by him, and where Lord Nārāyaṇa and venerable sage Nara, both of whom confer blessings on the world, perform a mild (non-troubling) but severe penance for a long period (up to the end of Kalpa).

Śrī Śuka said:

23. Having thus heard from Uddhava, the unbearable (report of the) death of his friends and relatives, the learned Vidura controlled the explosion of grief by his knowledge.

24. The prominent Kaurava (Vidura), due to his confidence in (Uddhava), the great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, prominent among Kṛṣṇa's circle of friends and kinsmen, spoke thus to him while he was about to depart.

Vidura said :

25. Your honour deserves to convey to me the supreme knowledge shedding light on the mysterious nature ofthe Lord—the knowledge which the Lord of Yoga, the ruler (of the universe) imparted to you. For, the servants of Viṣṇu move about to serve the needs of their devotees.

Uddhava said :

26. The sage Maitreya is to be propitiated by you for this knowledge, as it was in my presence that the Lord himself directed him to do so (i.e. to instruct you) at the time of his departure from the world of mortals.

Śrī Śuka said:

27. In this way, in the company of Vidura, Uddhava got his anguish (at the separation of Hari) subsided by the

nectarlike conversation about the excellent qualities of the Omnipresent Lord, and spent like a moment the night, on the bank of the Yamunā, and then left (for Badarikāśrama).

The King said:

28. How did Uddhava remain (safe from the Brāhmaṇa's curse) when Hari who was the chief of the Vṛṣṇis and Bhojas, leaders of the commanders of warriors joined the majority, and who (Hari) was the Lord of the three (gods, e. g. Brahmā and others) gave up his mortal coil ?

Śrī Śuka said:

29-30. The Lord whose will is always supreme (lit. never futile), began to think when he annihilated his own race by the Time (god of death) in the form of a Brāhmaṇa's curse, and was about to cast off his body.
"Now when I am no more in this world, only Uddhava, the best among those who have realised the soul, deserves to receive the knowledge that is within me (or which relates to me).

31. Uddhava is not a jot inferior to me. He is the master (of himself) unpurturbed by worldly objects (*guṇas*). Hence let him remain (after the annihilation of the Yādavas) to make people receive knowledge about me.

32. Thus directed by the lord of the three worlds, the source of the Vedas, (Uddhava) went to the Badarī hermitage and worshipped Hari by deep meditation.

33-35. Having heard from Uddhava praiseworthy acts of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, who out of sport assumed the human body, and of his laying down the body (death) which increased the courage of the wise, and which is more difficult to understand on the part of beasts (beastlike persons) of unsteady minds and of his being seen mentally by Kṛṣṇa, Oh great Kuru, Vidura meditated upon him, but after the departure of Uddhava, became overcome with feelings of love and wept.

36. From the bank of the Yamunā, Vidura, the Siddha, reached the heavenly river (the Gaṅgā) after some (several days, where Maitreya (the son of Mitrā) was met by him.

CHAPTER FIVE

(Dialogue between Vidura and Maitreya)
Tattvas and their Deities.

Śrī Śuka said :

1. At Haridvāra, Vidura, the most excellent among the Kurus, purified due to his devotion to Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa), fully satisfied[628] with Maitreya's straightforwardness, humility and compassion, approached Maitreya of unfathomable knowledge, who was seated there (unoccupied with any work) and asked him.

Vidura said :

2. May your Honour please explain to us what is proper to be done (i.e. the proper course of conduct) in this world, as (we find that) people do some (prescribed) acts for the sake of happiness, but they do neither get happiness nor the pacification or cessation of the other thing (i.e. misery) and are, on the contrary, subjected to misery again and again.

3. It is a fact that really auspicious devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa (like you) move about in this world with a view to be gracious to people who by their misfortune have become averse to Kṛṣṇa, and (consequently) unrighteous and extremely miserable.

4. Hence, Oh great saint, please advise us the course (of conduct leading) to happiness whereby the glorious Lord, installed in the hearts of men purified by devotion, imparts the ancient lore (based on the authority of the eternal Vedâs) leading to the direct realisation of the true nature of the Soul.

5-9. Oh best among Brāhmaṇas ! Please describe (explain) to us : What deeds the Lord, the controller of the māyā consisting of three *guṇas* (or the Lord of the three worlds the self-dependent, performs after taking incarnation; how he, though devoid of activity (or free from desires) created this (universe), in the beginning; how he, having stabilised it (in its existence) arranges for its maintenance; how he abstains

628. v.l. *sauśīlya-guṇābhitṛptam*—Adj. qualifying Maitreya : Maitreya was satisfied with humility and other qualities of Vidura.

from worldly activities by withdrawing it (the universe) into the vacuum(*ākāśa*)in his bosom and sleeps in the cave, viz., his *yoga-māyā*; how this Lord of Yoga, of unimaginable powers, though he is one, entered this (universe) and became many (in the form of Brahmā and others); the actions he does for the well-being of Brāhmaṇas, cows and gods as part of his sports in different incarnations; for in spite of hearing the nectarlike (sweet) deeds of the Lord, who is at the head of persons of auspicious fame, (persons whose name is auspicious to utter); (Describe to me) with what first principles (*Tattvas* like *mahat* etc.) the master of the protectors of this world (like Indra etc.), created and regulated the different regions along with their guardians, and those regions beyond the Lokāloka mountains[629]—regions in which all the different classes of beings are distinguished from each other (as god, man etc.) according to the function of their *Karmas*. (Explain to me) how Nārāyaṇa, the self-created creator of the universe, created differences among beings, according to their inborn nature, deeds (*karma*), form and name.

10. Oh respected sage ! I have often heard from Vyāsa, duties prescribed for the twice-born (higher) castes and lower castes. But with the exception of the ambrosial flood of the episodes of Kṛṣṇa, we are satiated with hearing matters which result in insignificant pleasure.

11. Who would feel fed up with the (description of the) episodes of Kṛṣṇa of holy feet—episodes which are glorified by learned persons (like Nārada) in your assemblies. For as soon as he (Kṛṣṇa) enters a man's ears (i.e. Kṛṣṇa's stories are (heard), he cuts asunder (man's) attachment to the house (worldly life) which involves him in mundane existence.

12. Even your friend, the venerable dark sage (Vyāsa) composed the *Bhārata* (the *Mahābhārata*) with a desire to describe the excellences of the Lord. In it (the *Mahābhārata*), the mind of men is certainly attracted to the stories of Hari through repetition of the lower types of pleasures.

13. The ever-increasing inclination to listen (to the sto-

629. *Lokāloka*—'A mythical belt of mountains bounding the outermost of seven seas encircling the world and separating this world from the regions of darkness' DHM/80; —ASK..820

ries of Kṛṣṇa) engenders (a sense of) aversion to other objects of pleasure, in the faithful. It quickly destroys all the miseries of a man who finds happiness in constantly meditating over the feet of Hari.

14. I feel pity for those ignorant people (who do not understand the teaching of the *Mahābhārata*) who due to their sins, feel aversion to the stories of Hari and (hence) are the pitiable of the pitiables. The vigilant (blinkless) god Time diminishes (destroys) the life of those who waste their time in wasteful verbal, physical and mental activities.[630]

15. Oh Kauṣārava ! Just as the essence (honey) is picked up from flowers, so you extract (the select) narratives from the stories of Hari who bestows happiness. Oh friend of the afflicted! Please recite to us, for our good, the story of Hari of hallowed fame.

16. Please describe to me the superhuman acts performed by the Almighty who, with the power of Māyā under his control, for the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe, has taken (different) incarnations.

Śrī Śuka said :

17. The revered sage Kauṣārava who was thus requested by Vidura for the final beatitude of men, replied to him with great respect.

Maitreya said :

18. Oh virtuous one ! For rendering great favour to people, you have made an excellent query. You, whose heart is set on Hari, will hereby spread your fame in the world.

19. Oh Vidura ! There is nothing surprising in this about you who are born of Vyāsa, you who have resorted to Lord Hari with devotion, fixed on him only.

20. You are god Yama, the controller of all subjects who, due to the curse of Māṇḍavya, were born from Vyāsa of the female servant who served as his brother's (Vicitravīrya's) wife.

630. **The winkless god Time condemns as useless their advocacy etc. for the establishment of their particular philosophical stance (*sva-svamata-sthāpana*)—VC.**

21. Your honour was always esteemed (loved) by the Lord (Kṛṣṇa) and his followers. When he was about to depart (from this world), he instructed me to impart knowledge to you.

22. Now I shall describe to you in serial order the sportive actions of the Lord which were exhibited by his *Yoga-māyā*, and which comprise within them the preservation, origination and destruction of the universe.

23. The Lord, the supreme soul of all the souls (*jīvas*)[631] and their master, was all alone before (the creation of) this (universe). When the will of the Supreme Lord viz. Māyā disappears[632] (or when he wills to be alone), existent as he is as a cause, he is not perceived separately as a seer or anything to be seen, (though) he was comprehended by various conjectures[633] (while the gross creation existed).

24. Verily (though) he was then this (only) Seer and the only illuminator* he saw nothing (due to non-existence of the universe). He whose powers (such as Māyā etc.) are asleep (unmanifested)[634] but whose sight was wakeful (not asleep) regarded himself as if he were not-existent.

25.** Oh highly virtuous (Vidura)! That is verily the

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631. *ātmanām ātmā*—The Master who enters into individual souls to sustain them—VR. (ii) He who is like the orb of the Sun to the individual souls who are like the solar rays (emanating from the orb)—JG.

632. *ātmecchānugatam*—(i) When there was the manifestation of his Will to create the universe—VR. (ii) When he willed to create the universe.—VJ.

633. *nānā-matyupalakṣitaḥ*—(i) He is implied by the ideas like Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu's region)—JG. (ii) He is cognised by various thoughts about actions (effects) and objects—SD.

* *eka-rāṭ*—(i) Of uninterrupted uniform light—VR.
(ii) The Almighty possessing all powers—JG.

634. *supta-śaktiḥ*—(i) Whose power in the form of sentience and non-sentience is in a subtle state—VR. According to VJ., this power is *Māyā*. (ii) Whose powers like Prakṛti and others lie dormant—SD.

**Of the Lord, the Seer of entities possessing existence, Māyā is the power (*śakti*), as it is an attribute of the Lord (not distinct from him). It is Prakṛti having the nature of both sentience and non-sentience (*cetanā—cetanātmikā*). It existed in a subtle form in his person. It is by this power (as the cause) that he created this sentient and non-sentient universe as the effect and remained untouched by the deficiencies of the world—VR. For the convenience of translation the terms *cit* and *acit*

potency of this Seer (God) which is of the nature of both cause and effect (or which is essentially the very soul of the visible and invisible). It is called Māyā (the principle of phenomenality). It is by this power, that the all-pervading Lord created the universe.

26. (When) the commotion of *Guṇas* (attributes) is caused into *Māyā* through the power or effect of Time[635], Viṣṇu, the possessor of perfect intellectual power, inseminates into her his own image or the individual soul through Puruṣa who is his own part (*aṁśa*) controlling prakṛti[636].

27. Then under the impelling force of Time, the *mahat-tattva* was generated from *avyakta* (i.e. Māyā).[637] It is of the nature of *vijñāna* which dispels the darkness of ignorance and manifests the universe lying within the body of the self.

28. And it (the *mahat-tattva*) being under the power of his *aṁśa* or (the resemblance of the Supreme Spirit as the efficient cause) the three attributes (*guṇas* as the material cause) and Time (as the driving force) and within the range of sight of the Lord, manifested itself into another form (called 'Ahaṁkāra'—self-sense or ego-hood) with a desire to create this universe.

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are rendered as 'sentient' and 'non-sentient'. In Rāmānuja's philosophy *acit* as *miśratattva* and *sattvaśūnya* is inert (*jaḍa*) while as *śuddha sattva* it is *ajaḍa* (non-inert, immaterial) but is different from the Soul and God who are also *ajaḍas* (For details vide A. Senagupta—*Philosophy of Rāmānuja*, pp. 78 ff.

635. *kālavṛttyā*—The fate (adṛṣṭa) of individual souls necessary for the fruition of their *karams*—VJ.

636. As usual VJ. puts forth his usual theory of creation that Viṣṇu in the form of Puruṣa, manifested out of his (Viṣṇu's) original form (*mūla-rūpa*), impregnated both the kinds of *māyās* making the intelligent *māyā* to guide the creation while the non-intelligent *māyā* to change in form.

637. VJ. explains : From *māyā* (a synonym of *avyakta*) which was infused with power by the Lord, was produced *Mahattattva* (viz. the body of the four-faced Brahmā). Being impelled by Time (*Kāla*)—the Puruṣa who knows the destiny of every being and who urges on the creation of the universe—Brahmā who is the *vijñānātmā* who (through the grace of Nārāyaṇa) dispels the darkness of ignorance and exhibits the universe in the body of Soul and thinks that it is his body.

29. From the *mahat-tattva* undergoing modifications was born *ahaṁkāra* (ego-hood) which is the substratum of the effect (viz. *adhibhūta*), the cause (viz. *adhyātma*) and the doer (viz. adhidaiva)[638], and which consists of the elements (*bhūtas*) sense-organs (*indriyas*) and the mind (*manas*) which also implies gods.

30. The ego-hood (*ahaṁkāra*) is of three types—*Vaikārika* (characterised primarily by the *guṇa*, *sattva*), *taijasa* characterised by the *guṇa*, *rajas*) and *tāmasa* (characterised by the *guṇa*, *tamas*). From the principle of ego-hood undergoing modifications, the mind was produced from the *vaikārika* type of I-ness (*ahaṁkāra*). Deities (presiding over sense-organs) are the products of the *sāttvika* type of ego-hood. The perception of the objects of senses is due to these (deities)*

31. The cognitive and conative sense organs are the products of the *taijasa* type of ego-hood[639]. From the *tāmasa* ego-hood was evolved the subtle element (*tanmātrā*) viz. sound wherefrom was produced the sky (*ākāśa*) which is the body of the *ātman* (or the means of knowing Ātman).

32.** When due to its union with Time(*Kāla*), the Māyā-

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638. 1. 29.b: (*Ahaṁkāra*) which is the cause of the effect (viz. the body,) the cause (viz. the organs of senses) and *kartātmā* (the doer of the above two), and these result in the form of elements (*bhūta*), organs of senses etc.—VR.

* The term *deva* literally means 'that which reveals'. They reveal the objects of senses; therefore they are called *devas*. The Bh.P. adopted the Vedic doctrine of spiritism and extended Godhood to cover all principles of creation from *mahat* to the subtle elements (*tanāmtrās*). So there were as many gods as there were principles of creation. Vide below 3.5.38—For details Bhattacharya PSB I.290-93.

639. VR. states that *taijasa* ego-hood does not produce anything *per se* unless it is in union with the *sāttvika* or *tāmasa* ego-hood. VB. explains that knowledge is predominantly *Sāttvika* and action is *tāmasa*. Hence both types of organs are produced by *rājasa* ego-hood with their help. VB. adds *buddhi* and *prāṇa* to the list of sense organs, stating this to be implied by *ca* the last word in 31.a

** The Bh.P. has adopted the doctrine of causation (*at-kāryavāda*) to explain evolutionary process. Accordingly, the effect can have no quality which is not already in existence in the material cause. Hence it presupposes a subtle form of each element with a potential quality serving as the intermediary of the causal relation between one element and another. This subtle element is technically called *tanmātrā* (unit-potential). For details—B. Bhattacharya PSB. I. 295-97.

power and his part (or intelligent image—*aṁśa*), *Ākāśa* (space) was viewed by the Lord, the subtle element (*tanmātrā*) of touch was produced from the space (*ākāśa*). It (touch) underwent modifications and produced Air (*vāyu*).

33. Vāyu though possessing great force, underwent modifications in combination with space (*ākāśa*) and created the subtle element of *rūpa* (wherefrom was produced) light, the eye (illuminator) of the world.

34. When viewed by the Lord, the light, in conjunction with *Vāyu* and due to the influence of Time, Māyā and *Aṁśa* (his part or intelligent form) created water with taste (as its main characteristic).

35. And water in combination with light was seen by Brahmā and underwent modification and through the influence of *kāla*, *māyā* and *aṁśa* developed into the earth with smell as its characteristic.

36. Oh excellent one (Vidura)! They (the learned ones) know that among the elements (*bhūtas*) beginning with space (*ākāśa*), every later evolute possesses the attributes of the previous ones according to its rank (in the evolutionary process), due to its connection with previous *bhūtas*.[640]

37.* These gods (presiding over *mahat* and other principles) who show the indexes of *time*, *māyā* and *aṁśa*[641] and who

640. Thus *Vāyu* possesses the attribute sound of *Ākāśa* as well as its own special attribute Touch. The Earth (*Pṛthvi*) possesses its own attribute smell, as well as the special attributes of its previous evolutes, viz. sound (of *ākāśa*), touch (of Vāyu), etc.

* VJ. explains: Brahmā and other gods presiding over *Mahat* and other principles, were created by Viṣṇu. They possess their bodies due to *Kāla*, *Māyā* and *Aṁśa* and were parts (*kalā* or *aṁśa*) of Viṣṇu, and were in a way distinct from him. Due to their mutual unrelatedness, they could not lay the egg of the universe. (Hence) with their hands folded (to their heads) they prayed the Lord.

SD. explains: (The presiding deities of the principles called) *mahat* and others, (though) parts (*kalā*) of Viṣṇu and conditioned by the agitator Time (creating commotion by its influence), Māyā as the material cause, *aṁśa* (the individual soul) and form, were unable on their own to create the universe due to their unrelatedness. Hence they (deities) praised the Lord.

641. According to ŚR, capacity of transformation (*vikṛti*), fickleness (*vikṣepa*) and sentience (*cetanā*) are the marks of *Kāla*, *Māyā* and *Aṁśa*.

are but parts (kalās = *aṁśas*) of Viṣṇu were unable to create (the universe) due to separateness (unrelatedness), they with folded hands, spoke to the Omnipresent Lord.

Gods said:

38. Oh Lord! We bow to your lotus-like feet which are like an umbrella cooling down the heat of those who resort to it. Recluses, taking shelter under them, instantly ward off the great misery of this worldly existence (*saṁsāra*) even from a distance.

39. Oh Supreme Lord! The Creator[642] and controller of the universe! In this worldly existence, beings, affected by three types of miseries, do not get happiness. Hence, Oh Supreme Soul! we are resorting to the shade of your feet which impart knowledge.

40. We take shelter of your sanctifying feet which are the source of the (Gaṅgā) holiest of all the rivers, the waters of which remove sins—the feet which the sages in their detached minds, seek with the help of birds in the form of the Vedas whose nests (dwelling places) are in your lotus-like face.

41. We come for shelter to the place (lit. foot-stool) of your lotus-like feet, concentrating on them in our hearts purified by faith and devotion (with unattached *karma-yoga* and become self-controlled by knowledge which is reinforced by non-attachment.

42. Oh Lord! You have taken re-incarnation for the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe. All of us have come to resort to your lotus- like feet, the contemplation of which gives Liberation (state of fearlessness) to your men (devotees).

43. Oh Supreme Lord ! We adore your lotus-like feet which in spite of your residence in their bodies (as *antar-yāmin*), are far distant (and hence not accessible) to those men who have a foolishly obstinate attachment to the contemptible body as 'I', and to their houses and property as 'mine'.[643]

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642. v.l. *ṛte*—No happiness is possible without resorting to your feet (ŚR).

643. *yatsānu . . . . gehe*—Relatives like wife, sons etc. and property or belongings are the ties of the body and house etc. which are the product or effects of the inert matter—VR.

44. Oh Lord of Lords who are praised by the greatest ! It is well-known that those whose minds are carried away by sense-organs which are attracted by external objects[644], do not therefore, see those devotees who have taken resort to the glory of your gracious foot-steps.[645]

45. Oh God ! Those whose minds are purified by deep devotion generated by drinking the nectar of your stories, get knowledge, the strength of which lies in non-attachment (to the world) and easily attain to *Vaikuṇṭha*.

46. So also other wise persons, having conquered the most powerful *Prakṛti* by their power of *Samādhi-Yoga* (*Yoga* in which mind is to be concentrated on the soul—*ātman*) enter into you—the *Puruṣa*. Theirs is (a path of) hardships. But there is no (such) (harsh) exertion in your service.

47. Therefore, Oh Primitive Being, all of us who have been created serially by you, for the creation of the world, and who possess the three separate *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) as our characteristic, are not able (to coordinate our activities) to present to you your instrument of sports, viz. the universe.[646]

48. Oh unborn Lord ! (Manage thus) that we may offer you your entire oblations at the proper time, and we shall be able to eat our food (i.e. enjoyments as our enjoyment is really your enjoyment) and that these beings (worlds) staying in their own places, may present offerings to us both, and may certainly enjoy their own food without difficulty.

49. Oh God ! You are the primary cause of (us) gods along with our descendants (or along with effects); you are the changeless, primeval Puruṣa presiding over all. You who are unborn, have deposited your semen, viz. the all-knowing[647] principle called *mahat*, in your beginningless power called

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644. *asat*—false. vain—SD.

645. ŚR explains the better reading *patho . . . . lakṣyān*, as follows : Those (whose minds are carried by sense organs) do not see the paths shown by your graceful footsteps viz. the path of the good or the ninefold path of devotion such as *śravaṇa* etc.

646. *sva-vikāra-tantram*—Executing the work assigned to us—(VR).

647. *Kavim*—(i) Brahmā, the *Samaṣṭi-Puruṣa*—VR.
(ii) The individual soul as *samaṣṭi*.
(iii) The Omniscient God knowing the past and future—VJ.

Māyā which is the source of attributes (like *sattva, rajas*) and actions (like birth etc.)[648]

50. Oh Supreme Soul ! What should we, *mahat* and others, do for you to achieve the object for which we are born? Oh God! For the execution of work assigned to us, grant unto us, who are dependant on your grace, your own eye (the power of knowledge) along with your power (of action).

CHAPTER SIX

(Cosmology : *Creation of the Universe*)

The Sage said :

1-2. Having seen the state of his existing potencies that they were disparate and that their power of creating the universe lay dormant, the Supreme Lord of miraculous deeds bearing with him his divine power called time[649] (which has no separate existence from him) entered simultaneously the group of twenty-three principles (viz. *mahat*+egohood+5 subtle elements+5 gross elements+10 organs of senses both conative and cognitive+mind).

3. The Lord who entered the group (of 23 principles) made the separate principles to work together by his power of action (*kriyā-śakti*) rousing up their dormant working capacity.[650]

4. The group of twenty-three principles, the potency of which to work is thus roused by the Lord, and which were thus impelled by him, created the Virāṭ Puruṣa by contributing their individual parts.

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648. You have deposited your power of creating the universe and god Brahmā, (the *samaṣṭi-Puruṣa*) in Prakṛti, which is your own power (an attribute with no separate existence outside God)—the Power which is the cause of the organs of senses, both conative and cognitive—VR.

649. *kāla-saṁjñam* : (i) The divine power which creates commotion to produce the effects; or *Prakṛti* roused to action by Time—ŚR.

(ii) (Lord Viṣṇu entered along with) Lakṣmī, the intelligent *prakṛti*, designated as Kāla.

650. Karma—The actions or fate in store (*ceṣṭa*) of *jīvas*.

5. The group of the creative principles of the universe, due to the entry of only a part (*aṁśa*) of the Supreme Lord in them, became assimilated with each other and were in commotion leading to the creation (of the Virāṭ Puruṣa) in which are the movables and immovables.

6. That Virāṭ Puruṣa of gold (of the complexion of gold) containing all the beings (in invisible forms) stayed in the egg (called *Brahmāṇḍa*) on cosmic waters for one thousand years[651].

7. Verily he (the *Virāṭ Puruṣa*), the offspring (the product) of the principles of the universe, the possessor of the divine potency of knowledge, action and spirit,[652] divided[653] himself as one (in the form of the spirit residing in the heart), as ten (in the from of the vital airs — *Prāṇas* — viz. *Prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna, samāna, nāga, kūrma, kṛkala, devadatta* and *dhanañjaya*), and as three (viz. forms related to *adhibhūta, adhidaiva* and *adhyātma*).

8. This[654] (*Virāṭ puruṣā*) is the individual soul within all beings. He himself is a part of the Supreme Soul (*paramātman*). He is the first incarnation (*avatāra*) in whom is supported the multitude of all beings.[655]

9. The Virāṭ Puruṣa (God Brahma) has three forms, viz. those related with *adhyātma, adhidaiva* and *adhibhūta*[656], ten forms

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651. Cf. Bh.P. 2.5.34; 2.10.11.

652. *deva-karmātma-śaktimān*—According to VR. these powers are : *Jīva śakti* or *avidyā*, the *karma* of *jīvas* and the spirit or intelligent power (*cit śakti*) useful in the creation of the body and other conditions of *jīva*. VJ. reads 'daiva-' for 'deva' and interpreting *garbha* as the Inner controller (*antaryāmin*) of the principles e.g. *mahat* and others, enumerates the potencies as (1) Power superior to gods like Brahmā, (2) the fate (*adṛṣṭa*) of *jīvas* and (3) *Prakṛti* the medium of enjoying pleasure, pain etc.

653. This division is clarified in verse 9 below.

654. *eṣaḥ*—VR. thinks that this refers to god Brahmā who is the support of all individual beings, and who is an incarnation (*avatāra*) of the 'possession' (*āveśa*) type. VJ. states that word *eṣa* refers to Hari in the Puruṣa incarnation. On the support of the Puruṣa depends the creation and preservation of all beings.

655. It is in the body of the *Virāṭ* (*Puruṣa*) that the whole of the universe consisting of mobiles and immobiles is seen—GD.

656. According to VR. *sādhyātma*=with *jīva* (indweller of the body). Sādhidaiva=with the senses in the *samaṣṭi* stage as in the Sun etc. Sādhibhūta=with sounds etc. which are the characteristics of elements (*bhūtas*).

viz. the ten vital airs (*prāṇas*) and one form, viz. that connected with the heart.

10*. Lord Viṣṇu (*adhokṣaja*), remembering the prayer (vide supra 3.5.48) of (the presiding deities of) the Principles of creating the universe, planned (the person of) the *Virāṭ* (or *Hiraṇyagarbha*) by his power of knowledge (or spiritual light), for enabling them to perform their functions.

11. Now, hear from me, how many places of residence of gods (Presiding deities of sense-organs) were created in the body of *Virāṭ* by his penance, viz. the power of his knowledge.

12** (When) his mouth was differentiated, (formed) Fire, the protector of the world, entered it along with his power called speech. Hence *jīvas* (people) get the power of speech.

13. Palate was evolved in Hari (the *Virāṭ Puruṣa*). The protector of the world, called Varuṇa, entered it along with part (*aṁśa*) called tongue (the conative sense-organ of taste) whereby the *jīva* attains the power of taste.

14. (When) the nostrils of Viṣṇu (the *Virāṭ Puruṣa*) were formed, the two Aśvinikumāras occupied (entered) them by their power, viz. the sense of smell, whereby the *jīva* attained the capacity to smell.

15. (Then) the two eyes (of the *Virāṭ Puruṣa*) were formed. The Sun, a protector of the world, entered them with his power, viz., the sense of sight. Hence the *jīvas* get the perception of forms and colours by the eyes.

16. (Then the *Virāṭ Puruṣa* had) his skins developed. The protector of the world called Vāyu entered it along with his power of breath (Prāṇa) whereby the *jīva* gets the sense of touch.

17. (When) his two ears were evolved, the (presiding deities of) quarters along with their power of audition, entered them as their place, whereby he (the *jīva*) can hear the sound.

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* Lord Viṣṇu entered the person of Virāṭ (God Brahmā) as an *antaryāmin* (controller from within). He enlarged the body of Virāj (god Brahmā) to provide accommodation to the deities (such as Fire etc.) —VJ.

** Cf. supra II.10. 17-30.

18*. (When) the skin was evolved (of the *Virāṭ Puruṣa*), the presiding deities of herbs (and plants) occupied it as their place, by their parts called hair, whereby the *jīva* can feel the itching-sensation.

19. Then his penis was evolved. God Ka (i.e. Prajāpati) along with his power—semen—entered it as his residence. (It is) by this (organ) that the *jīva* (or the world) gets (sexual) pleasure.

20. Then the anus of the Virāṭ Puruṣa was evolved. Mitra, the controller (protector) of the world, along with his part (known as) *Pāyu* (anus), entered it. (It is) by this that the *jīva* has the organ of excretion.

21. His hands were (then) developed. Indra, the lord of the Heaven (*Svarga*), along with his power of making sales and purchases, entered them, whereby a man can earn his livelihood.

22. Then his feet were evolved. Viṣṇu, the Lord of the world, entered them along with his power of locomotion, by which man can reach his desired place.

23. And intellect was evolved in him. God Brahmā, with his power of accurate perception, entered it as his place. (It is) by this faculty that the object of knowledge is comprehended.

24. And his heart was evolved. The moon, along with his faculty called mind, entered it as his abode. Hence the *jīva* (or the world) understands changes (in the state of mind, thoughts etc.).

25.** God Rudra (*abhimāna*) along with his capacity of action (or principle of activity) entered as his place, the evolved egohood (*ātman*) of *Virāṭ Puruṣa*. It is by this (ego-hood) that *jīva* executes his work (as his own).

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* ŚR. is conscious of the duplication of *tvac* and *carman* (in verses 16 and 18) and explains it as the difference of place and difference in functions, viz. touch and itch. VD. explains that the outer part of the skin is *carman* and *tvac* is related both to its inside and outside.

** VJ. follows a different text as shown by his interpretation : Then the special *nāḍī* called *ātmanāḍī* was evolved. Bṛhaspati with his faculty of intelligence entered it. Hereby god Brahmā arrives at correct conclusion.

26. And his *sattva*[657] (mind and intellect was evolved). *Mahat* (god Brahmā) occupied this abode along with *citta* whereby he (the *jīva*) arrives at comprehension (understanding).[658]

27. From his (Virāṭ Puruṣa's) head was produced the *svar-loka*. The earth came forth from his feet, and the sky from his navel. The products (effects) of *guṇas* (like *sattva*) such as gods and others are seen in these (regions).[659]

28. Gods attained the Heaven by their excellence of *sattva* attribute. Due to their nature predominated by *sattva*, *Paṇis* (i.e. men who deal with gods by performance of sacrifices) and their belongings (like cows etc.) remained on the earth.

29. Due to their nature characterised by the third (*guṇa* viz. *tamas*), the mass of the followers of Rudra resorted to the Lord's navel, viz. the space between the two regions mentioned above.

30* Oh leader of Kurus! From the mouth of the Puruṣa came forth Brahman (the Veda) and the Brāhmaṇa class like syllables coming out from the mouth (head). Hence the Brāhmaṇa Varṇa became the foremost among the Varṇas.

31. From his arms emanated the power of protection and the Kṣatriya class who follows that vow, viz. the duty of protecting the world. This class born from Puruṣa (Lord Viṣṇu) protects the classes of people from wounds (i.e. injuries or troubles) caused by thorns (in the form of miscreants).

32. From the thighs of that All-pervading Lord were born the vocations like agriculture which maintain the livelihood of the public. The Vaiśya class, born from the same part of the

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657. *Sattva*—The nāḍī called *sattva*—VJ.
The inner organ called *Buddhi* and *citta*—VR.

658. *Vijñānam*—Correct understanding of what should be done—VR.

659. Gods, men etc. possessing the *guṇas* like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are seen (i.e. created) in these regions—VR.
(ii) Beings in whom the states of happiness, activity etc. which are the characteristics of *guṇas* (like *sattva* etc.) are found in these regions.—VJ.

* VR. explains that as the Vedas (Brahma) which is the subsistence of the Brāhmaṇa class, came forth from the mouth (or head), the Brāhmaṇa Varṇa became the chief (head) class (Varṇa) of all.

body, carries out trades and agriculture for the maintenance of people.

33. From the feet of the Lord was born service for the achievement of religion. Formerly the Śūdra class was born for the sake of service, whereby Hari is pleased.

34. These classes (Brāhmaṇas etc.) who are born along with their means of livelihood (and duties) from Hari, worship with faith their creator and master Hari for self-purification, by following the path of their duties.

35. Oh Vidura! Who can even dare to wish (confidently) to describe fully in details this (universe) which has been created by the *yoga-māyā* of the Almighty Lord who assumes the forms of *kāla* (time), *karma* (action) and *svabhāva* (nature).

36. It is for purifying my tongue of the impurities caused by uttering things unrelated with Hari that I, however, describe the glory of Hari to the best of my intellect, according as I have heard of it.

37. They say that the description of the excellent qualities of him who is the best amongst personages of holy fame, brings the highest benefit to the power of speech of men, and listening to the nectarlike stories (of Hari) as described by the learned is the greatest benefit of the power of hearing.

38. Oh child! Was the greatness of Lord Hari thoroughly comprehended by the First Sage (Brahmā) with his intelligence matured by *yoga* after (performing penance for) one thousand years ?

39. The *Māyā* of the Lord deludes even the possessor of *Māyā* so much that the Lord himself does not know the course of his Māyā. What of others ?

40. Salutations to the Almighty Lord without reaching whom (without realizing whose glory) the Vedas (or the powers of speech), mind (though purified by *yoga*), Rudra (ego-hood) and other deities presiding over organs of senses, have returned.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Vidura's Queries)

Śr· Śuka said :

1. To Maitreya who was speaking thus, Vidura, the learned son of Vyāsa, addressed (the following), as if to please him with his request.

Vidura said :

2. Oh Brahman ! How is it possible that attributes (like *sattva*, *rajas*) and activity can be predicated of the Supreme Lord who is pure consciousness, devoid of attributes and changeless, even by way of sport (the *līlā*-theory) ?

3. It is the desire in the case of a child which propels it to play, and that desire to play comes from something else (e.g. a toy or invitation to play), but how (is it applicable to God) who is self-satisfied and who is ever without a second.

4-5. (It is argued that) the Supreme Lord created the universe by his Māyā consisting of *guṇas* and (which deludes the Soul to feel that he is the doer and enjoyer). It is by *Māyā* that he protects it and withdraws it. The Soul is essentially of the nature of knowledge or consciousness and unaffected by place, time or condition either internally (through himself) or externally (through other agency). How can such Soul be united with the unborn (*Māyā*) ?

6. Only this Supreme Lord alone is present in all bodies. How can he be subjected to misfortune or pain by *karmas* ? (i.e. *saṁsāra* does not exist in the case of *jīva* as he is the same as Brahman).

7. Oh learned one ! My mind feels depressed in this calamity of ignorance. Oh Lord ! Please remove this great mental delusion from our mind.

Śrī Śuka said :

8. The sage who was thus prompted by Vidura who was desirous of knowing the truth, smilingly replied, with his mind concentrated on the Lord, and free from pride.

9. It is the *Māṿā* of the Almighty Lord that is against all logic (supra-logical). Hence (the experience of) affliction

and bondage to (the soul who is essentially) free from bondage (and misery)[660]

10. Just as a man witnessing a dream gets an inconsistent experience of being beheaded etc., though it is not a reality.[661]

11. Just as trembling and other disturbances caused by the water appear to be the attribute of the moon (reflected) in the water, even though it is not attributable to the (real) Moon (in the sky), similarly attributes of the non-Soul (the physical body etc.) seem to belong to the Soul (*jīva*), a seer (who identifies himself with the body).[662]

12. Verily it is by the path of *nivṛtti* (abstinence from work—by giving up desire for its fruit), through the grace of Vāsudeva, and by devotion to the Almighty Lord, that this (mistaken identification of the Soul with the body) slowly disappears here.

13. Now, when the organs of the senses (instead of pursuing outer objects) become steadfast on Hari, the Seer, the internal controller (*antaryāmin*), the Supreme Lord, all the afflictions completely subside (disappear) as in the case of a man who is fast asleep.

14. Repetition (of the description of) and listening to

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660. JG. in his long com. raises the point why the Soul (*jīva*) who is a form of God suffers the bondage of affliction, and explains that it is due to the supra-logical nature of the *māyā-śakti* of God. The power of God is both internal (*antaraṅga*) and external (*bahiraṅga*). Hence what happens in the region of the external of God cannot affect his own internal nature. Thus though God in the form of *jīvas* may experience bondage or suffering, he is internally unaffected. It is this supra-logical conception which explains how God can be within the power of the *Māyā* as well as its controller.

661. Just as in the case of *jīva*, in the stage when he has not realised the Soul (*ātman*), he wrongly identifies himself with the body which is in reality different from him, and experiences beheading etc. But after self-realization, knowing his separateness from the body, and his being a part of God, he is not thus affected.—VR.

662. VR. points to the distinction between the Soul (ātmā) or *jīva* and Supreme Soul (*paramātmā*). Sorrow, delusion etc. are caused, as *jīva* mistakenly thinks himself to be the body. The Supreme Soul who is not influenced (lit. covered) by *Avidyā* and who is the controller of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is unaffected by the effects or working of *avidyā*.

the attributes of Hari, cause the complete subsidence (disappearance) of miseries. What again (need be spoken of the effect of) the love felt in the heart, for worshipping the pollen-dust of His lotus-like feet.

Vidura said:

15. Oh Lord ! my doubt has been cut off by the sword of your happy exposition. My mind can properly grasp both the absolute independence of the Supreme Lord and the dependence of *jīva* on him[663].

16.* Oh learned one, you have well explained that all these unreal, rootless, miseries appear due to the basis of the *ātma-māyā* (*māyā* deluding the Soul or *jīva*). The root-cause of the universe is not outside (the *māyā*).

17. Only those two, viz. one who is the stupidmost (and attached to physical body etc.) and one who has reached beyond *Buddhi* (i. e. *Prakṛti* and realized God live happily in the world. But the person who is between these (extremes), undergoes sufferings (as he desires to leave the worldly life but cannot do so, for want of experience of the inner bliss.

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663. *ubhayatra...sampradhāvati* : (1) Or : My mind can grasp the concepts of bondage and liberation—ŚR.

(2) My mind is attracted both to the listening and repetition of his attributes as well as to the service of his feet—VR.

(3) By 'both' VJ. takes (i) attachment to the body and its belonging and (ii) God, Hari.

(4) JG. understands (i) the Supreme Lord and (ii) jīva or (i) knowledge and (ii) devotion which is a means to it.

(5) VB. follows ŚR above.

* VR. differs : You have explained it well that *ātman* (individual Soul) and *māyā* (prakṛti) are Hari's place of residence. The source of the universe (i.e. Brahman) is outside it and has not created it. Therefore the universe being rootless appears purposeless, a delusion.

(ii) VJ. explains. Oh possessor of the proper knowledge for realization of Brahman, your explanation that all this is due to Hari's own power called *māyā* is convincing enough to clear up all doubts. The idea of delusion in the *māyā* concept is dispelled. But all this appears to me purposeless and baseless except on the presumption of *adṛṣṭa*.

18. Having determined the unreality of the world despite its apparent existence, I shall dispel even that sense by serving your feet.

19. It is by service (of persons like you) that ardent intensity of love for the feet of the changeless Lord Hari (the enemy of the demon Madhu), is created leading to the destruction of miseries (*saṁsāra*).

20. The service of those who are on the pathway to Vaikuṇṭha,[664] and amongst whom the deeds of Janārdana, the God of gods are always eulogised, is very difficult to be obtained (for rendering) by people (who have little penance to their credit).

21. (You said that) having created in the beginning, the principles like *mahat* and others with their modifications in due course, and having raised the *Virāj* (the Egg of the universe) out of them, the All-pervading Lord entered into it.

22. (The *Virāj*) who is called the First Man (*ādya Puruṣa*) possessing thousands) of feet, thighs and arms, and in whom all the worlds along with their modifications are accommodated.

23. As explained by you, in him are the vital-airs (*prāṇas*) of ten kinds, and also in the three forms viz. the sense-organs, the objects and the presiding deities of the sense-organs (also called *indriyas*—sense-organs—here), and the castes (*varṇas*) came forth (were formed) from him. Please describe to us his powers.

24. (*Virāṭ*) wherein lived beings of different forms, with their sons, grandsons, daughter's sons and other descendants of their *gotra* (clan) who have filled the world.

25. Who were the lords of the created beings (*prajāpatis*) created by lord of Prajāpatis (Brahmadeva)? What are (god Brahmā's) creations, subcreations? Who were the Manus and kings in the *manvantaras* (periods of Manus) created by him?

26. Oh Maitreya, describe to me their dynasties, and the deeds of those born in their families; and the situation and the area, dimensions of this world and of the worlds that are above and below this.

27. Tell us about the creation and classification of beasts,

664. Or : who can guide to the path of Vaikuṇṭha—VR.

human beings, gods, reptiles and birds and those born of womb, sweat, eggs (or twice-born) and vegetables.

28. Expound to us the great exploits of Viṣṇu, the creator, the support of the (process of) creation, sustenance and destruction of the world through his *guṇāvatāras* (incarnations characterised by *guṇas*, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, such as Brahmā etc.)

29-30. Oh Lord (Maitreya), explain the classification of *Varṇas* (castes) and stages of life (*āśramas*) according to their external characteristics, courses of conduct and nature, the births and deeds of sages, the division of the Vedas, the details of sacrifices, the paths of Yoga, Sāṅkhya characterised by renunciation of the fruit of Karmas, and the *Tantra* as enjoined by the Supreme Lord.

31. Oh sinless one, explain to me in details :

The crookedness of the path of the non-believers in Veda, the place etc. of the progeny of the reverse (*pratiloma*) type of marriages, and the several courses of *jīva* as a result of their attributes (*guṇas*) and deeds (karmas).

32. The ways of accomplishing the *puruṣārthas* (objects of life such as *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*) without mutual conflict, the different methods of commerce and agriculture, the duties of kings (or politics), and the courses of study.

33. The prescribed way of performing *śrāddha*, the creation of the manes (*pitṛs*) and the arrangement of planets, constellations and stars in the division of Time.

34. The fruits of charitable gifts, of penance, of meritorious acts (such as performance of sacrifices, constructions of amenities like tanks etc.), the religious duties of men on travel, and of men in adverse circumstances.

35. The course (of action) whereby Janārdana, the source of Dharma will be propitiated, and favours one with his grace.

36. Oh best among the twice-born persons ! Teachers who are kindly disposed to the distressed, explain to obedient disciples and sons, even without being enquired about it.

37. Oh revered one ! In how many ways is the withdrawal (destruction) of the principles takes effect ? At that time

who will resort to him and who will follow him in his *yogic* sleep ?

38. (Tell us) what the real nature of *jīva* is, and the essential state of the Supreme Soul and the knowledge pertaining to *Upaniṣads*, and the purpose of the pupil-teacher relationship.

39. Oh sinless Maitreya, explain the means prescribed by the wise ones, for the acquisition of that knowledge here. Otherwise how can that knowledge, devotion or non-attachment develop in men automatically (if there be no grace of the spiritual guide) ?

40. As a friend, please tell me who am making these queries with a desire to know the deeds of Hari, and who am ignorant due to the loss of the vision of knowledge through (the influence of) *māyā*.

41. Oh sinless, one all Vedas, sacrifices, penances and charitable donations will not amount even to a fraction of the act of offering shelter to a Soul (by imparting the knowledge of the Truth).

Śrī Śuka said :

42. The prominent sage who was thus asked by a prominent person among the Kurus, about matters explained in the Purāṇas was overjoyed at being urged to narrate the episodes of the Lord, and spoke to him smilingly.

CHAPTER EIGHT

(Creation of Brahmā—His Vision of Nārāyaṇa)

Maitreya said :

1. The lineage of Pūru is really worthy of being served by the good, as you, who (as an incarnation of Yama) are one of the Protectors of the world, and who regard the Lord as the chief object, are born in it. At every step and at every moment, you bring freshness to the garland of the glory of the invincible Lord (Hari).

2. It is for removing the great misery of people who get into it for the sake of petty pleasures, that I commence the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which the venerable Lord narrated to sages.

3. With a desire to know the real nature of the God, higher than Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, sages, of whom (Sanat-)Kumāra was prominent, asked the respectable Saṅkarṣaṇa, the first of gods, whose ken of knowledge was unobstructed, and who was seated on the ground.

4. (Saṅkarṣaṇa) who was highly worshipful of his support whom (they)call Vāsudeva, and who had turned unto himself his eyes which were closed like a lotus-bud (while in meditation), and who slightly opened them for favouring wise sages (like Sanaka and others).

5. Sages (like Sanatkumāra) touched with their matted hair dripping with the sacred waters of the heavenly Ganges (Mandākinī) the lotus-foot stool of Saṅkarṣaṇa—the foot-stool which the daughters of the king of Snakes worship by offering various gifts with love for getting(good) husbands.

6. (The sages) who knew Saṅkarṣaṇa and (hence) constantly eulogised his deeds in words pronounced falteringly due to intenselove, (asked) Saṅkarṣaṇa whose thousand raised hoods were brightened by excellent precious stones studded in a thousand crowns.

7. It is traditionally reported that the most venerable Saṅkarṣaṇa taught this to Sanatkumāra who was devoted to the duties of the path of renunciation; and that he (Sanatkumāra), when requested, taught it to Sāṅkhyāyana,[665] the observer of vows.

8. With a desire to extol the powers and glories of the Lord, Sāṅkhyāyana, the foremost among the Parama-haṁsas, narrated it first to his disciple and our preceptor Parāśara and then to Bṛhaspati.

9. The merciful sage, blessed by Pulastya[666], expounded

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665. *Sāṅkhyāyana*—A sage of the Vasiṣṭha family, probably the same as the author of the Sāṁkhyāyana Brāhmaṇa of the Ṛgveda and other *Śrautasūtras* known by his name BPK 341, DHM 280.

666. ŚR. records a traditional story: When Parāśara's father was eaten up by a Rākṣasa, Parāśara wanted to destroy the Rākṣasa race. But Vasiṣṭha dissuaded him. Pulastya finding that his progeny was thus spared, blessed Parāśara that he would be a narrator of Purāṇas.

to me the first (i.e. the most important) Purāṇa (viz. the Bhāgavata). Oh child (Vidura), I narrate this to you who are faithful, and always devoted (to the Lord).[667]

10. When Viṣṇu delighted in the blissful stage of his own self, inactive and alone, lay on the bed of the king of Snakes (Śeṣa) and closed his eyes in sleep without any interruption of his vision (power of intelligence), this whole universe was immersed in water.

11. Having conserved the subtle elements within his body, and arousing his power called Time, he stayed in the water which was his abode, just like the fire which resides in the wood, without exhibiting his power (of burning).

12. Sleeping over the waters for a period of one thousand aggregates of four *yugas*, he who had obtained the whole system of doing actions through his power called Time, which was vigilant, visualized all the worlds lying dormant in his own body.

13. Then the (aggregate of) subtle elements lying within him which he viewed intently, got agitated by the attribute called *rajas*, (which was) impelled by Time. It sprouted forth from the region of his navel, in the process of evolution.

14. By (the propelling force of) Time which awakens the *adṛṣṭa* (fate) of beings, the Self-born lotus-bred sprouted forth suddenly, illuminating like the Sun, the vast expanse of water with its splendour.

15. Oh Vidura, that very Viṣṇu entered (as an *antaryāmin*) the world-lotus which shows all the *guṇas* (objects) essential for the enjoyment of *jīvas*. Within the lotus was born the creator of the world, the Veda incarnate, whom they call self-born (*svayambhu*).

16. Occupying the stalk of that lotus, and not seeing the worlds, the self-born god Brahmā cast his glances on all sides in the sky, and thus got four faces corresponding to the four directions (of world).

17. The first god Brahmā, seated upon the lotus which sprang up from the unending high billows of waters, tossed heavily by world-annihilating stormy winds, did not under-

667. This tradition of the Bhāgavata is different from that given in the previous *Skandhas* (vide supra I.4, II.9).

stand with certainty, the real nature of the lotus which contained the world, and even of his own self.

18. "Who am I seated on this lotus? Whence has this solitary lotus grown on the waters ? There must be something beneath on which this lotus rests supported. That must be surely some positive existence."

19. Thinking thus, the unborn god (Brahmā) entered through the hollow passage in the stalk of the lotus, into the waters. Going deep down in search of the support of the rough stalk of that lotus, he did not reach it.

20. Oh Vidura ! A very long time with three tyres (divisions, viz. the past, the present, the future) elapsed while he (Brahmadeva) was searching the source of the lotus (the cause of his creation) in the fathomless darkness—Time which is a weapon in God's hand which creates terror in beings and reduces (their) life.

21. Then the God (Brahmā) who did not achieve his objective, returned thence. Having resumed his seat, he gradually restrained his mind by controlling his breath, and sat down resorting to *samādhi-yoga* (the path of deep meditation).

22. The unborn God (Brahmā) in whom knowledge arose by the practice of *yoga* for a period of man's life-span (100 years), visualized that unforeseen Brahman manifested of its own accord in his heart.

23. He saw a Man (Puruṣa) lying on the bed of the spacious body of Śeṣa white like lotus fibres, on the waters of the deluge, the darkness of which was dispelled by the lustre of gems on the myriad heads of the umbrella-like hoods (of Śeṣa).

24. Who excelled in beauty a mountain of emeralds, with (golden) evening clouds overhanging its slopes like garments (which is surpassed by his *Pītāmbara*—yellow silken garment), with a number of gold peaks (which are outdone in their splendour by his crown), with its Vanamālā—garland of forest flowers—abounding in precious stones, springs, herbs and flowers (excelled in beauty by his Vanamālā), and with bamboos resembling its arms, and trees as its feet (surpassed his arms and feet).

25. Who, by the dimensions of his beautiful and uncomparable body, accommodated the three worlds (viz. *Svarga*,

Mṛtyu and *Pātāla*), and who (with his body) decorated by a variety of heavenly ornaments and silken garments beautified the ornaments and garments themselves, by his beautiful person.

26. To men who, for attaining their desired objects, worship him in the pure ways, prescribed in the Vedas, he shows, out of grace, his lotus-like feet with toes beautiful like petals and shining in the rays of his moon-like nails.

27. Who (reciprocally) honours his devotees by his face with a smile that removes the afflictions of the world, (with ears) beautified by resplendent earrings, (face) appearing reddish on account of his lower lip like *bimba* fruit, and shapely with its beautiful nose and eyebrows.

28. Oh child (Vidura), (he saw the Puruṣa) who appeared beautiful and adorned with a garment, golden in colour, like the pollen of the Kadamba flowers, and with a girdle round his waist, and his chest adorned with an invaluable necklace, and with (his) favourite decoration called Śrīvatsa.

29. Who was (like) a great tree of the universe with thousand branches in the forms of arms resplendent with priceless precious stones, and the armlets (*keyūra*), with its root invisible (in Brahman), and whose arms are coiled round by the body of great snake (or Śeṣa).

30. Who was like a great mountain, the support of the movables and immovables, a dear friend of the best of snakes (Śeṣa), who is surrounded by waters, whose thousand crowns are like golden peaks, and the gem Kaustubha (adorning) his chest (was like a mine of precious stones).

31. (Brahmā saw) Hari who wore a Vanamālā (garland of Tulasī leaves, etc.) in the form of his glory, (Vanamālā) which beautified by the Veda singing sweetly his glory like humming bees and who is unapproachable to (gods like) the Sun, the Moon, the Wind and the Fire, and who is unassailable due to the weapons with range throughout the three worlds, circling round him.

32. At that very instant (when Brahmā saw Hari), he obtained the knowledge necessary for the creation of the world. He saw the lotus sprouting out of the (Lord's) pond-like navel, himself, the (cosmic) waters, the Wind (blowing

tempestuously during the deluge) and the sky. He saw nothing more (than these).

33. When he (Brahmā), being associated with the attribute *rajas*, became desirous of creating beings, and having seen only these (the abovementioned five objects such as the lotus, the cosmic water, the wind, etc.) as the causes of the world, fixed his heart on God and, began to praise the Lord who deserved it.

CHAPTER NINE

(*Brahmā's Prayer and Viṣṇu's Boon*)

Brahmā said :

1. Oh Lord ! It is after a penance for a very long time that you have been (luckily) realized by me today. It is indeed the defect of beings conditioned by body that your real essential nature is not understood by them. Nothing other than you, exists. (Anything else that appears to be) is not pure (is false) because it is you who appear to be many due to the intermixture of the *guṇas* of Māyā.[668]

668. According to VR. : This verse expresses the self satisfaction of Brahmā's God-realization, viz. the whole of this universe consisting of *cit* and *acit* is the body of God, and it explains that there is nothing which is outside Brahman.

Oh Lord! Really it is after the acquisition (accumulation) of penance for a pretty long period that you have been now seen by me in your real form. The *Kṣetrajñas* (individual Souls) conditioned by physical body as a result of their *karmas*, do not know your real nature which fully possesses the six attributes of Bhagavān. Oh Lord, there is no such thing as is other than you. (You are its soul When you are realised everything is realized). Gods and other things which appear independent of (other than) you are not the objects of correct perception, due to the effect of the attribute of Māyā or Prakṛti. Though you are one, you shine (manifest yourself) as many.

nanu . . . avadyam etc.—VJ. explains : That the real nature of the Lord is not realized by beings is erroneous, as the Lord, though invisible in form, is realized by devotion. It is due to sin

2. This is your form from which, due to eternal manifestation of the power of intelligence, ignorance or *tamas* disappears,—form which, from the beginning, you have assumed for conferring (your) grace on the good; and which is the seed (source) of hundreds of incarnations. And from His region of the navel-lotus, I came into existence (lit. was manifested).

3. Most excellent Lord ! I do not see any form of yours other than this beautiful one of manifest light, beyond (i.e. destitute of) differences, and full of bliss. Hence I resort to this one form of yours which creates the world but itself is different from it, and which is the source of the *bhūtas* (elements) and sense-organs[669].

4. Oh auspiciousness incarnate (i.e. God who is auspicious to the universe), you have really manifested this very (form) to your devotees in their meditation for their good (or prosperity), we offer obeisance to you (a gracious) Lord who is spurned by the atheists (like Mīmāṁsakas, Sāṅkhyas etc.) and believers in false logic and who therefore deserve (stay in) Hell.

5. Oh Lord, you do not go away from the lotus-like hearts of your men (devotees) who enjoy by the passage of their ears the fragrance of your lotus-bud-like feet which is carried (to them) by wind (in the form) of the Vedas and who clasped your feet with intense (and unswerving) devotion.

6. So long as the people do not resort to your feet which offer freedom from fear of *saṁsāra*, they face the fear

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that God is not realized by beings. Not that there is non-existence of things other than the Lord, but they do not exist independently, but owe their existence to him. But things other than you are impure, and you are absolutely pure. You are present by your incarnations in *mahat* and other principles. It is due to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* that things other than you are defective.

JG. : Though you are pure in your internal capacity of infinite glory, you appear many in the form of the world as a result of the intermixture of the attributes of your external power called Māyā.

669. Oh Supreme One, I do not see your essential form other than this form which is full of bliss (dispelling all miseries), devoid of the differences of *jātis* and *guṇas*, whose knowledge (or will—*saṅkalpas*) is unobstructed; which is different from the universe, yet it is the cause consisting of *bhūtas* and sense organs. I take shelter of this form—VR.

pertaining to wealth, house and friends (and caused by) sorrow, desire, dishonour, covetousness and false sense of attachment to possessions (lit. 'this is mine') which is the cause of sorrow.

7. Those are verily deprived of their senses by their fate, whose senses (minds) are averse to (listening and eulogising) your deeds which remove all inauspiciousness (misery etc.). Those wretched ones, with minds overpowered with avarice, continuously perform misdeeds for a very slight pleasure for gratifying their low desires.

8. Oh Acyuta, Lord of wide strides (as Trivikrama), my heart is deeply pained to see these (people) constantly afflicted by hunger, thirst and the disturbance of three bodily humours (viz. *kapha*, *pitta* and *vāta*), by heat and cold, by wind and rain and by other (*ādhibhautika*) factors and by unbearable fire of desires and anger.

9. Oh Lord, while (so long as) people will see (regard) this body (and other things) as different from the Soul (or God), due to the dominant influence of the Lord's Māyā, appearing as the organs of senses and their objects, this worldly existence (*saṁsāra*), unreal as it is, will not disappear, but will bring a host of troubles (and miseries) as a result of *karmas*.

10. Oh God, even sages revolve in the course of worldly existence (*saṁsāra*) in this world, if they are averse to eulogizing your deeds (and such forms of devotion). They who by day, have their senses absorbed in doing actions (for getting worldly objects), and go to sleep with minds full of different desires, get their sleep disturbed every moment, and their endeavours after their objects are frustrated by Fate.

11. Oh Lord, you, path to whom is perceived by the (type of devotion called) *śravaṇa* (listening to the glories of the Lord)[670], really dwell in the lotus-like hearts of men (devotees)

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670. VR. takes *śruta* as 'knowledge derived from *Śāstras* and *īkṣita* as 'knowledge derived from deep thought about what is permanent and what is perishable'.

VJ. takes *īkṣita* as 'knowledge derived from meditation' and interprets, 'Those to whom the path of devotion to Viṣṇu is shown by study of *śāstras* under a pious and devout preceptor.'

purified by *Bhakti-yoga*. Oh Lord of unbounded glory, in order to confer your grace on the devotees, you manifest yourself in whatever form they meditate upon you.

12*. The Lords dwells in all things. He is the only friend and ruler from within. He becomes extremely pleased by compassion to all beings which is impossible to be found in non-devotees. He is not so much pleased even though he is propitiated with rich articles of worship, (even) by gods who cherish some desires in their hearts. (God is easily attainable only to desireless devotees).

13. The righteous acts which are offered to you never perish. Hence your propitiation, Oh Lord, is the best fruit of all religious acts, such as various righteous deeds, performance of sacrifices, religious gifts, austere penance and observance of religious vows.

14. Salutations to (you) the Supreme Lord, who are eternally free from the illusion of difference,[671] by your own essential light of intelligence, and whose *vidyā-śakti* is know-

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VC. : The path which was first heard (learnt) from the preceptor, and then realized by meditation.

* VR. : You are not so much pleased (so as to favour the bliss of Liberation) with your devotees (*suraganaiḥ*) who cherish desire into their hearts and propitiate you with various articles (etc.) of worship, as you are pleased by that type of unselfish compassion, which is based on the knowledge that ill feeling towards any being is ill feeling against you—a compassion impossible to be found in people who identify body with the Soul (*asad-alabhyaya*). Though present within all, you are not affected by their defects, as you support and control them as an *antarātmā*.

GD. : Just as God becomes extremely pleased by compassion to all beings (without any ulterior selfish motive), he is not pleased by the rich worship even of gods who cherish some desire in their hearts, i.e. though the Lord grants the desired objects to his *sakāma* devotees, he does not bless them with *self-realization*. The Lord being present in all, the ill feeling of *sakāma* devotees against some persons is an ill feeling against the Lord whom they try to propitiate. Hence he is not much pleased with them as with desireless devotees.

671. *bheda-moha* : VD. enumerates these misapprehensions—

(1) the notion of the Lord being imperfect: (2) Some other deity, other than Viṣṇu being the Supreme Ruler; (3) the distinctions (between the levels of) *avatāras*; (4) The notion that the individual Soul is the Supreme Being. (5) That the Supreme Soul is not the individual Soul. (6) That both the Supreme Soul and the individual Soul are distinct.

ledge itself[672]. We offer our homage to you, the controller (of the universe), whose sports and diversion are the Māyā, the cause of the origin, sustenance and destruction of the universe.

15. I resort to that unborn Being by uttering whose names signifying his incarnations (e g. *Devakī-nandana*—'Devaki's son'), his attributes (e.g. *sarvajña* 'Omniscient'), deeds (e g. *kaṁsāri* 'Enemy or killer of Kaṁsa) (even) in an unconscious stage, at the time of death, people at once become free from the sins of many births, and attain to Brahman uncovered by (the veil of) Māyā.

16. Salutations to the Lord who is the universe-Tree which is the only one, but has three feet (branches) viz. Brahmā, I (Viṣṇu) and Śiva, each of which has numerous branches (e.g. the seven sages etc.)—the tree which has its roots in the Supreme Soul and has differentiated itself by three attributes (*guṇas* under the names of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) who are the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe.

17. Salutation to the all-powerful, ever-vigilant (unwinking god in the form of) Time who instantaneously cuts asunder the hope of life of this world as long as the people shirk[673] the performance of your worship which is conducive to their own good, and which has been directly ordained by you, and are engaged in the prohibited path of *Karma*.

18 Even though I have occupied a place (viz. Brahmāhood in Satya-loka) which lasts for a period of two *parārdha* years and which is bowed down by all the worlds, I

VR. takes *bheda* as the difference in the categories of *jīva*, e.g. man, God and *moha* as the ignorance caused by the misapprehension of the identity of the Soul and the body.

672. VC. (i) Whose enjoyment (*rasa*) is the sportive looking at Māyā the cause of the origination etc. of the universe.

VC. : (ii) Oh cause of the creation etc. of the universe, whose sport is the special dance with *gopīs* known as *rāsa*.

673. VR. reads an *avagṛaha* (i.e. *a-*) before *vikarma-niratāḥ* and *pramattāḥ* and explains : Time severs shortly the attachment to *saṁsāra* of a man who is very careful in the performance of auspicious and sacred duties of propitiating God according to his caste (*varṇa*) and stage of life (*āśrama*) —duties prescribed by you in the Vedas—and who does not indulge in impious deed.

am afraid of him (your form called Time). Hence with a desire to attain you, I practised penance for many years and performed many sacrifices. My salutations to you, the Almighty Lord of sacrifices.[674]

19. Salutations to Lord Puruṣottama who, with a view to observing the laws ordained by him, assumed of his own accord the bodies (*avatāras* or incarnations) in the various forms of living beings, such as sub-human beings (e.g. birds, beasts), human beings, gods etc. and enjoyed himself, though he is (absolutely) unattached to worldly pleasures.

20. Though he is never affected by the five varieties of Avidyā[675], he, who has conserved the universe in his belly with a view to increasing the pleasure of rest (for people who are exhausted by their activities in the previous *kalpa*—period, assumed on the waters, tossed with terrible waves, *yogic* sleep, for which the touch of the body of the Serpent Śeṣa was favourable.

21. Oh Praiseworthy Lord, I, who came into being in the lotus-mansion of your navel, and who became, through your favour, an instrument for the creation of the three worlds, bow to you in whose stomach lies the whole world, and who has opened his lotus-like eyes at the completion of your *yogic* sleep.

22. May the Lord furnish my intelligence with that knowledge and omnipotence with which he gladdens the world, so

674. SD. construes differently : I bow to the presiding deity of sacrifices of whom I am afraid, though I occupy the post (Bahmāhood) lasting for two *parārdha* years. With a desire to attain Vaikuṇṭha (your residence) which is honoured (bowed to) by all people, I performed penance for many long years.

675. Bh. P. III. 12.2 enumerates the following *vṛttis* (powers) of Avidyā : viz. *mahā-moha*, *moha*, *tāmisra*, *andha-tāmisra* and *tamas*. As PYP (*Pātañjala-Yoga-Pradipa*) points out, the hindrances (*kleśas*) in YS. II.3, viz. *avidyā* (=tamas), *asmitā* (=*moha*) *rāga* (=*mahā moha*), *dveṣa* (=*tāmisra*) and *abhiniveśa* (=*andha tāmisra*) are known in the Sāṅkhya system by the names given in the brackets above (*Classical Sāṅkhya*, p. 295).

Īśvara Kṛṣṇa further classifies them as follows : "There are eight varieties of obscurity (*tamas*) and delusion (*moha*); ten kinds of extreme delusion (*mahā-moha*); both gloom (*tāmisra*) and utter darkness (*andha-tāmisra*) are 18 fold. G.J. Larson's *Classical Sāṅkhya*, p. 275.

that I may be able to create this (universe) as it was in the previous *kalpa*—the Lord who is the friend of all the worlds, and dwells within them as the *antaryāmin*, is gracious (dear) to his devotees.

23. This (Lord) grants boons to those (devotees) who resort to him. He takes incarnations retaining (his original) qualities (like omnipotence, omniscience), along with his own (or soul-) power called Lakṣmī (and not his Māyā power). May he direct my mind to whatever he does while I create, by his order, this universe which is also his own glory, so that I can renounce my attachment to actions, and the consequent sin.

24. I am born here as the *vijñāna-śakti*[676] (the presiding deity over *citta* or the principle called *mahat*) from the deep lake-like navel of the Man of infinite powers, lying on the (cosmic) waters. May there be no loss of the utterance[677] of the Vedas, while I am detailing the wonderful form of this Man viz. the universe.

25. May this Lord, the most Primitive Man, of infinite grace, get up, opening his lotus-like eyes, and with profusely affectionate smiles. May he remove our dejection by his sweet words for the successful creation of the universe.

Maitreya said:

26. Thus having seen his own creator by his power of penance, knowledge and meditation, and having praised him to the best of the abilities of his mind and speech, the god Brahmā remained silent as if exhausted.

676. *vijñāna-śakti*—(i) The competence to utter the Veda—(VD.) (ii) my knowledge-form—(VR.) (iii) my knowledge of Vedas—(VJ.) (iv) myself being the *vijñāna*; my being the presiding deity of the principle of intelligence (VC.).

677. *visarga*—(i) Contact of teaching and studying (the Vedas) —VD.

(ii) *utterance*—ŚR., VR., ŚR. explains that as per the famous adage "The plough is the end of Vedic lore", Brahmā was afraid that he would be out of touch with the Vedas while engaged in creation. Hence this prayer to retain his Vedic lore.

(iii) The definite conclusion (viz. Viṣṇu is the most supreme) —VJ

27-28. Then noting the difficulty of Brahmā who got nervous at (the lack of) his knowledge regarding (prospective) construction of the universe, and whose mind was dejected at the sight of the tumultuous deluvian waters, Madhusūdana (Viṣṇu) spoke to him in deep emphatic voice, as if to remove his dejection (lit. sin).

The Lord said :

29. Oh Vedagarbha (i.e. Brahmin), do not get lax (due to despair). Exert yourself for the creation (of the universe). What you pray of me, has been already obtained for you.

30. Oh Brahman, perform penance again and practise the (*yogic*) lore of concentrating on me. You will find in your heart, the unfolding of (the plan of the creation of) the worlds, by both of these (*tapas* and *samādhi*).

31. Oh Brahman, when you are full of devotion and properly poised in meditation, you will see me pervading you and the world, and yourself and the world reposing in me.

32. When the people will realize me as dwelling within all beings like fire dormant in the wood, they will immediately shed off sins or misery.

33. When a person sees that his Self is free from *bhūtas* (elements), *indriyas* (sense-organs), *guṇas* (attributes) and *antaḥkaraṇa* (the mind), and is essentially one with me, he attains identification with Brahman.

34. It is my great blessing that your mind will never get despaired of this creation of the universe, while you desire to create innumerable subjects with various details of actions.

35. As your mind is firmly fixed on me, the evil attribute of *rajas* shall not bind you, the first-born sage, even while you indulge in procreating the beings.

36. Inasmuch as you realize me as unconnected with *bhūtas*, sense-organs, attributes and egohood (*ahaṁkāra*), I have been known by you today, though I am very difficult to be known by corporate beings (or beings attached to body).

37. When through the lotus-stalk you tried to find out the root of the lotus under water, and when a doubt as to my

existence arose in your mind, my true self was revealed to you within you.

38. It was indeed my grace that you made the prayer composed of my glorious deeds, or that you had firm adherence to penance.

39. I am pleased with you. May you be prosperous, as you, desiring success (in the creation) of worlds, have praised my describing me as attributeless (though I appear to be full of attributes.

40. I, who am the Supreme God, the bestower of all desired boons, will immediately be pleased with a person who will always worship me, and pray to me with this prayer (which you have composed).

41. It is the considered opinion of the knowers of the Reality, that my grace is the *summum bonum* to be achieved by *pūrta* (acts for public welfare), penance, sacrifices, gifts and *yogic* meditation.

42. Oh Brahmā, I am the (Supreme) Soul of all beings, the most beloved of all the beloved objects. Hence one should concentrate his love in me, as body and its other belongings are loved for my sake.

43. By means of yourself who is the Veda incarnate, and is created by me, you create again as before (in the previous *kalpa*) the beings that are lying within me.

Maitreya said :

44. Having explained this (the process of creating the universe) to the creator of the world (Brahmā), the Controller of Prakṛti and Puruṣa, with lotus-like navel disappeared in his own form (as Nārāyaṇa).

CHAPTER TEN

(Brahmā's Penance and Ten-fold Creation)

Vidura said :

1. How many types of beings did Brahmā, the grandfather of the world and master of his senses procreate, both from his body and his mind, after the disappearance of the Lord Almighty ?

2. Oh Lord, the foremost among the learned, please explain to me, one by one, whatever points I asked you, and solve all our doubts.

Sūta said :

3. Oh Bhārgava (Śaunaka), the sage Kauṣārava, being thus urged by Vidura, was pleased with him, and began to reply those questions which were raised in Vidura's mind.

Maitreya said :

4. Concentrating his mind on the Supreme Soul (Nārāyaṇa), as desired by the unborn Lord, Brahmā accordingly performed penance for period of hundred divine years.

5. God Brahmā, born of the lotus, found that both the lotus occupied by him, and the cosmic waters, were rocked by Wind due to the force acquired by it during the period of the deluge.

6. As his knowledge and power were specially developed by his increasing penance and knowledge pertaining to the Supreme Soul, he swallowed the Wind along with the waters.

7. Having seen that the lotus, which was his seat, pervaded the whole of the space, he thought he should, by this lotus, create again the worlds which were formerly (at the time of the deluge) withdrawn.

8. Being prompted by the Almighty to perform (the act of creation to be done by him), Brahmā entered the calyx of the lotus, and divided the one (lotus) into three divisions though it could have been broken into fourteen (worlds), and many more parts.

9. Thus is explained the arrangement of the world of living beings. The region of god Brahmā is the result of religious duties performed, without desiring their fruit.

Vidura said:

10. Oh Brahman, you have described the form called Time of Hari who has many forms and whose actions are miraculous. Please describe to me that form as it is (actually).

Maitreya said:*

11.** Time is that which has for its form the modification of *guṇas* (like *sattva* etc.). Of itself, it has no special property, but is beginningless and endless. Puruṣa (God) sportively procreated himself in the form of the universe by using Time, as the instrumental cause.

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* Maitreya here discusses the concept of Time. According to the Bh.P., Time as the power of motivation, does not simply break the equilibrium of tri-partite matter (*guṇamayī ātma-māyā*), but pursues the creative process at every stage. If God is the agent-cause of creation, Time is the efficient cause. Through the operation of Time, ten kinds of creation consisting in material (*prākṛta*), elemental (*vaikṛta*) and mixed (*prākṛta-vaikṛta*) were brought into existence as represented below :

Creation

Material (*Prākṛta*)	Elemental (*Vaikṛta*)	Mixed (prākṛta-vaikṛta)
(1) mahat	(1) vegetation	
(2) ahamkāra	(2) animals	divinely human souls, e.g. Sanatkumāra etc.
(3) tanmātras	(3) human beings.	
(4) external sense-organs.		
(5) presiding deities of senses and the mind.		For details on the concept of Time vide B.Bhattacharya —*Philo. of the Bh.P.* I.11. 247-59.
(6) avidyā (with its five knots)		

** VR. explains : Time has for its form *Pradhāna* which is a result of (the disturbance of the equilibrium of) the *guṇas*. It is devoid of special characteristics like the Earth (and other elements). He is not dependent on another cause i.e. he exists of his own accord. Hence he is endless. The Supreme Man, with *Pradhāna* as the efficient cause, created himself in the form of the world.

GD. explains : The form of Time is known by the perturbation of the equality in the balance of *guṇas*. It is the cause of this inequality in *guṇas*. It is to be known from its effects. It is not characterised by any peculiarity, and hence it is beginningless and endless. With Time as the instrumental cause, God sportively re-created himself in the form of the universe.

12* Verily this universe is the subtle Brahman which was covered (withdrawn) by Viṣṇu's Māyā. It is manifested by God with the help of Time, of invisible form.

13. Just as it (Time) was now, so it was in the past and shall remain so in the future. His creation is nine-fold (both material and elemental) due to *Prakṛti* and *vikṛti***. (The tenth creation is *prākṛta-vaikṛta*).

14. The destruction of the universe is of three types—(1) brought about by Time, (*nitya*), (ii) done by substance viz. Saṅkarṣaṇāgni (*naimittika*), (iii) due to *guṇas* (*prākṛtika*). The production of mahat is the first creation, which is caused by God (ātman) by disturbing the equilibrium of the *guṇas*.

15. The second is the creation of *ahaṅkāra* wherein rises the knowledge of substance and action. The third is that of *tanmātras* (subtle elements) which possess the potential for the creation of gross elements (*bhūtas*).

16. The fourth creation is that of organs of senses, both of knowledge and of action. The fifth is that of gods (presiding over organs of senses) from *vaikārika ahaṅkāra* whence is evolved the mind.

17. Oh Vidura, the sixth is that of ignorance (*tamas*)

* VR. explains : The universe is the effect—a gross form of Brahman with the attributes of *cit* and *acit* developed. Time is regarded as possessing controlling capacity as the creation or destruction of the universe takes place through Time which is an invisible form of God. The existent universe during *pralaya*, returns to its subtle form of Brahman along with its attributes of *cit* and *acit*.

VJ. : For the sake of creation etc. of the universe, the *Puruṣa* assumed three forms : Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Iśvara. Creating Brahmā and entering into him as four-faced god Brahmā, he created the world. Similarly he protects the world as Viṣṇu. He created Rudra called Kāla who was of invisible form, entered into it, and destroyed universe. But it is his power of destruction as Iśvara.

VB. : The gross universe is the effect, the subtle Brahman is the cause. Brahmā is the subtle and earlier stage of the universe. The universe subsists or meets destructions by the Māyā of God (Viṣṇu). Time (Kāla) which is endowed with controlling capacity of God and is formless, helps to bring about this process.

**VJ. explains that all creation outside the Egg of the universe is called *prākṛta* and includes in it all the principles from *avyakta* to *Pṛthivī*. And creation within the Egg is *Vaikṛta*.

whereby rises *abuddhi*[678] (which obscures the correct understanding of *Jīva* and deludes him from the correct perception of God). These six creations pertain to *Prakṛti*. Now listen to those arising from *Vikṛti* (*vaikārika ahaṅkāra*).

18. This (creation) is the sport of the Lord Viṣṇu who assumes the *rajo-guṇa* (the attribute *rajas*), and meditation (lit. retentive memory) about whom liberates from *Saṁsāra*.[679] The seventh is the prominent creation of six types of immovables.

19. *Vanaspatis* (Trees like the holy fig tree which bear fruit without blossom), *Oṣadhis* (plants which die immediately after fruit-bearing), *latās* (creepers), *tvaksāra* (trees of strong bark, e.g. bamboos), *Virudhs* (strong creepers like canes not requiring support for them), *drumas* (trees bearing fruits after blossoming)—all these draw up their nourishment from below, are full of *tamas* (of unmanifested feelings), have an internal sense of touch, and many other peculiarities.

20. The eighth creation is of animals and birds. It is said to have twentyeight varieties. (They are) devoid of knowledge (of tomorrow etc.), full of ignorance (except the knowledge of gratifying their appetite). They know by scent only and are of minds incapable of retaining knowledge for long.

21. Oh extremely pious Vidura, the cloven-hoofed beasts are the cow, the goat, the buffalo. the black-antelope, the pig, the bison, the *ruru* (a kind of deer), the sheep, the camel.

22. Oh Vidura, the one (uncloven)-hoofed beasts are: the donkey, the horse, the mule, the *guara* (a cross of a horse and a female mule), the *śarabha* (a fictitious eight-legged animal who can kill lions) and the *camara* (from whose hair *chowries* are made). Please listen to beasts with five nails.

23. (They are) the dog, the jackal, the tiger, the cat,

678. *abuddhi*: Concentration or knowledge about Viṣṇu (a= Viṣṇu)—VJ.

679. *Hari-medhasaḥ* etc.—Alternatively: This creation is of Lord Hiraṇyagarbha (Brahmā) who is characterised by *rajas* and whose thoughts are concentrated on Hari (VD.)

the hare, the hedge-hog, the lion, the monkey, the elephant, the tortoise, the alligator, the shark and others.

24. The birds are : the heron, the vulture, the bat, the hawk, the *bhāsa* (a vulture, a cock), the *bhallūka* (a kind of owl or bear), the peacock, the swan, the crane (*baka*), the ruddy goose, the crow, the owl and others.

25. Oh Vidura, the nineth creation which takes its nutriment from above down the body, is of one type, viz. that of men. They have in them *rajo-guṇa* dominant, are full of activities and take pleasure in things leading to miseries.

26. Oh foremost among the saintly persons, these three creations are *vaikārika*. The creation of gods also, comes under the *vaikārika* category. But the creation of *Sanatkumāra* (Sanaka etc.) comes under both (*prākṛta-cum-vaikārika* category).

27-28. The creation of gods is of eight categories : Gods proper, Manes (*pitṛs*), asuras, gandharvas and apsarās (the divine musicians and dancing girls), Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, Siddhas and Cāraṇas, Bhūtas (goblins) Pretas and Piśācas; Vidyādharas, the Kinnaras (and Kimpuruṣa, a horse-faced tribe etc.). Oh Vidura, I have described to you these ten categories created by Brahmā.

29. After this I shall describe to you the dynasties, *manvantaras* (epochs of different Manus). In this way, at the beginning of every *kalpa*, the self-born Viṣṇu becomes the creator due to the dominance of *rajo-guṇa*. The Supreme Soul of unfailing will-power creates himself out of himself at will*.

30. As there are modifications of *guṇas* in the creation, they (the learned ones) do not expect a particular serial order, just as in a whirlpool in a river (no part of a whirlpool can be considered to be the first). This is due to the Māyā power of the Supreme Lord.

31. Oh Vidura ! Whatever gods, Asuras and others of this *kalpa*, have been described to you by name and form, had the same name and form in the last period of Manu.

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*These two verses are probably interpolations in the post-Śrīdhara period for they are neither recorded by the Bengal School of Vaiṣṇavism i.e. JG., VC., nor by the follcwers of Nimbārka i.e. SD. nor by VB., GD. etc.).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

(*The concept of time: manvantaras and life-spans of men and gods.*)

Maitreya said :

1. The ultimate irreducible particle of the parts of a gross effect (substance), which is ever separate (i.e. has not reached the stage of being an effect), and which is not combined with another in an aggregate, is called an atom (*paramāṇu*)[680]. It is from the aggregation of atoms that men get the illusion of whole substance.

2. When the idea of peculiarity or of differences is separated (not considered), the entire substance in its essence which remains unaltered (with no change of dimensions) is called *parama mahān* (maximum dimension)[681].

3. Oh Vidura, Time is also inferred as subtle, (medium), and the longest according as it pervades the atomic, medium, and the grossest (*parama mahān*) matter. It is God's power which itself remains unmanifest, but occupies and encompasses the manifested substance and is competent to manage creation etc. of the universe.

4. That much period of time which is required to occupy an atom is the atomic period. That which is required to enjoy the matter in its entirety, is called *parama mahān* (the largest general—required to cross the totality of twelve *Rāśis* or *Bhuvanakośa* i.e. a period of a year and a period up to two *parārdhas* by the recurrence of the years.

5-8* Two *paramāṇus* make one *aṇu*. Three *aṇus* make one *trasareṇu*. It is the smallest particle which is visible and is noticed to be going up in the ray of the Sun coming through a window. The time which is required to occupy by three

680. It may be noted that the Bh. P. and the Vedānta (vide *Brahma Sūtra* II. 2.12-17) do not subscribe to the atomic theory of the Vaiśeṣikas.

681. Having the duration of two *parārdhas*—JG.

*These verses contain the following measures of time :—

2 *paramāṇus* = 1 *aṇu*; 3 *aṇus* = 1 *trasareṇu*; 3 *trasareṇus* = 1 *truṭi*; 100 *truṭis* = 1 *vedha*; 3 *vedhas* = 1 *lava*; 3 *lavas* = 1 *nimiṣa*; 3 *nimiṣas* = 1 *kṣaṇa*; 5 *kṣaṇas* = 1 *kāṣṭhā*; 15 *kāṣṭhās* = 1 *laghu*; 15 *laghus* = 1 *nāḍikā*; 2 *nāḍikās* = 1 *muhūrta*; 6/7 *nāḍikās* = 1 *yāma* or *prahara*.

trasareṇus is called a *truṭi*. Hundred *truṭis* make up one *vedha*. Three *vedhas* is regarded as a *lava*. A *nimiṣa* is known to consist of three *lavas*. Three *nimiṣas* make up a *kṣaṇa*. Five *kṣaṇas* are said to form one *kāṣṭhā*. Fifteen *kāṣṭhās* make one *laghu*. Fifteen *laghus* are said to constitute one *nāḍikā* (or *ghaṭikā*). Two *nāḍikās* make one *muhūrta*. Six or seven *nāḍikās* make one *prahara* of men. It is also called *yāma*.

9. A copper vessel of six *palas* in weight and with sides sixteen *aṅgulas* in height, and with a capacity to contain a *prastha* of water, and with a hole (of the dimension) of a gold wire four *aṅgulas* in length and four māṣas (=1/3rd Tola) in weight—the time required to submerge (in water) such a vessel is called *nāḍikā* (*ghaṭikā*).

10. Oh respectful Vidura! Four and four *yāmas* make a day and a night of human beings. Fifteen days make one *pakṣa*. It is bright and dark.

11. The aggregate of two *pakṣas* makes one month which is a day and a night of the *pitṛs* (departed forefathers). Two months make a *ṛtu* (season). Six months make one *ayana*. It is northern (when the Sun apparently moves to the north) and the southern (when the Sun appears to move to the south of the equator).

12. The *ayanas* are called the day and the night of the *Svarga*. A year is made up of twelve months. One hundred years is said to be the maximum life of human beings.*

13. The ever-vigilant controlling god (the Sun) occupies the sphere consisting of the planets, the *nakṣatras* (e.g. Aśvinī, Bharaṇī and other constellations) and other stars and revolves round the world beginning with atomic division of time and ending with one year (the period required to cross the *bhuvana-kośa*).

14. Oh Vidura, the period of a year is thus called *saṁvatsara* (the Solar year), *parivatsara* (related to Jupiter) *Iḍāvatsara* (of 360 days—*savana*) *anuvatsara* (the lunar year) and *vatsara* (related to *nakṣatras*).

15.** Offer your worship to the God Sun who made the

*VR. adds that the maximum life of *Pitṛs* and gods is one hundred years according to their respective measures of time.

**VJ. takes this verse as applicable to god Viṣṇu: Perform your sacrifices to Hari the *antaryāmin*, of the five kinds of the year, etc.

five kinds of the year and who by his own power (in the form of *kāla*) urges the powers of things to develop into effects (gross forms) in different ways, and who is a part of the element called *tejas*. He runs through the sky for removing the delusion of men (as if by dissuading them from waste of life in pleasures) and extending the fruits of *guṇas* by performance of sacrifices.

Vidura said:

16. The maximum span of life of the *pitṛs* (manes), gods and men has been stated, (as hundred years according to the measure of time of these). Please tell me the state (life-span) of those learned ones who stay beyond the three worlds.

17. Verily, you the revered one know the course of Time which is capable of destroying everything. The wise ones can visualize the universe by their *yogic* vision.

Maitreya said:

18. It is said that the cycle of four *yugas*, viz. *kṛta*, *tretā*, *dvāpara* and *kali* along with their *sandhis* (transitional periods at the beginning of a *yuga*) and *aṁśas* (the transitional period at the end of a *yuga*), consist of twelve thousand years of gods.

19-20* The period of *yugas* respectively (of *kṛta* etc.) is four thousand, three thousand, two thousand and one thousand (divine) years. The *sandhyā* period at the beginning and the *aṁśa* period at the end (of each *yuga*) is respectively eight hundred, six hundred, four hundred and two hundred years (of gods). The learned ones designate the period between *sandhyā* and *aṁśa* as *yuga*, and the (special) laws of conduct (*dharma*) have been ordained with reference to the (particular) *yuga*.

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*The classification of the *Yugas* in terms of divine (gods') years is as follows:

	kṛta	*tretā*	*dvāpara*	*kali*	Total Divine years
sandhyā	400	300	200	100 =	1000
yuga	4000	3000	2000	1000 =	10,000
sandhyāṁśa	400	300	200	100 =	1000
	4800	3600	2400	1200 =	12,000

21. In the *kṛta* age, *dharma* accompanied men on (all his) four legs (viz. penance, purity, compassion and truth). With the increase of irreligion (*adharma*), religion became diminished by one leg, in each of the other *yugas*.

22. Oh Vidura, beyond the three worlds (from *mahar loka*) to *Brahma loka*, a day consists of one thousand cycles of four *yugas*. The night is also of the same duration when the Creator of the universe goes to sleep.

23. At the end of the night, the creation of the world starts and proceeds so long as it is god Brahma's day which covers the period of fourteen Manus.

24. Every Manu rules during his own period which is somewhat longer than seventyone *catur-yugas* (cycles of four yugas[682]) In the eras of Manus, kings in the lineage of the Manu are born in succession. Hermits, gods, king of gods and his attendants are born simultaneously.

25. This is Brahmā's daily creation whereby the three worlds are made to function and in which the birds, beasts, men, *pitṛs* and gods are born according to their *karmas*.

26. In the Manu-eras, the Supreme Lord retains his *sattvaguṇa* and protects the universe by incarnating as Manus and manifesting himself in other human forms.

27. At the end of (Brahmā's) day, assuming a bit of the *tamo-guṇa*, he restrains his prowess, and with everything else withdrawn in him due to the force of *kāla*, he keeps quiet.

28. When it is the nightfall without any moon or the sun (in existence), the three worlds *bhūḥ*, *bhuvaḥ*, *suvaḥ* lie concealed in him.

29. When the three worlds get consumed by the fire from the mouth of Saṅkarṣaṇa (Śeṣa) who is his power, Bhṛgu and others, being distressed by the heat go to *Jana-loka* from *Mahar-loka*.

30. In the meanwhile, due to *Pralaya* (world-end),

682. This line indicating the vagueness implied in 'longer than' (*sādhikā*) is repeated in other Purāṇas also (e.g. *Viṣṇu P.* 1.3.18). Baldev Upadhyaya on the strength of *Vāyu P.* (57.35) suggests that it should be emended as 'sandhikā' (vide *Purāṇa Vimarśa*, pp. 291-93). The Bh. P. seems to have adopted the reading from the *Viṣṇu P.* which is generally accepted as earlier than the *Bh. P.* vide *Purāṇa Vimarśa*, pp. 542-45.

oceans, with huge billows whipped up by extremely terrible and powerful, winds, overflow and inundate the three worlds.

31. On that water, on the bed of the serpent Śeṣa, lies Hari with his eyes closed in *yogic* sleep, while sages in the Janaloka sing his praise.

32. In due course of time, with such types of days and nights as described above, even the long span of life of hundred years of this (god Brahmā), comes to an end.

33. Half of the life (of god Brahmā) is called parārdha. The first parārdha (of his life) has passed. Now the other half is running.

34. At the beginning of the previous *parārdha*, there was the great *kalpa* called *Brahma kalpa*, as Brahmā was then born. They knew him as *Śabda-Brahma*.

35. At the end of that *kalpa*, there was another *kalpa* called *Padma kalpa*, as there sprouted up the world-lotus from the lake-like navel of Hari.

36. Oh Vidura, the present *kalpa* of the second *parārdha* is known as Varāha (pertaining to the boar), as Hari assumed the boar-form in this (*kalpa*).

37. The period called *dvi-parārdha* is regarded as (a negligible period like) a wink of the unmanifested, infinite beginningless Soul of the Universe.

38. This *kāla* beginning from *paramāṇu* (its lowest unit) upto the end *dvi-parārdha* (duration of Brahmadeva's life) can control those who have attachment to house etc. He has no power over the Almighty God, the *bhūman*.

39. This egg of the universe consisting of sixteen *vikāras*[683] (modifications) and eight *prakṛtis*[684] which is covered from outside by the (seven) sheaths of the earth etc., is fifty crores (of *yojanas*) in breadth.

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683. viz.. mind, ten organs of knowledge and action and five elements (*mahābhūtas*).

684. viz., *Prakṛti*. *mahat*. *ahaṅkāra* and five characteristics of elements (e.g. sound. touch etc.).

40-41. Each of these sheaths (covering the universe) is ten times greater (than its previous one). This universe appears as an atom when merged (in him). Crores of such universes lie in him. That is the highest essential form of Viṣṇu, the great *Puruṣa*. It is called the imperishable Brahman, the cause of all causes.

CHAPTER TWELVE

(Creation of Rudra, the mind-born Sons and of Manu and Śatarūpā)

Maitreya said :

1. Oh Vidura, the greatness of the Kāla-form of the Supreme Lord is thus described to you. Now know from me how *Vedagarbha* (god Brahmā) proceeded with the creation.

2. The creator, at first, created the varieties of ignorance (or *avidyā*) viz. *mahāmoha*, *moha*, *tāmisra*, *andha-tāmisra* and *moha*[685].

3. Seeing the sinful creation, Brahmā did not think highly of himself. With his mind purified by meditation on the Lord, he brought forth another creation.

4. The self-born god (Brahmā) then created the sages Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra who were not interested in actions (for *dharma*, *artha* or *kāma*) and lived in perpetual celibacy[686].

5. The self-born god spoke to them, "Oh sons, procreate children". But they being absolutely devoted to Vāsudeva and followers of the path of liberation, were not so inclined (to create).

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685. For details vide supra 3.10. 11 and onwards the *Sāṅkhya* influence is evident. This list is repeated in LP. 2.9.30 and 34-35. This is the tāmasa creation.

686. ŚR. adds: These Kumāras are not created in every *Kalpa* but only in the *Brāhma Kalpa*. This is the description of the *Brāhma Kalpa*. hence the mention of their creation.

6. He was thus disobeyed by his sons who refused to comply with his order. He tried to control his unbearable rage aroused (due to this defiance).

7. Though he tried to control the rage by his mental power, the rage was immediately born as a son of dark-blue complexion from the middle of the brows of Brahmā.

8. The illustrious god Bhava who was born before (other) gods verily cried out, "Oh creator, the father of the world, give me names and fix (some) places for me".

9. The lotus-born god (Brahmā), with a view to granting his request, spoke with sweet words, "Please do not cry, I shall give it to you.

10. Oh great god, as you cried like an excited child, people will call you by the name 'Rudra'.

11. Your places have been already arranged by me as follows : The mind, the sense-organs, the vital breath, the Sky, the Wind, the Fire, the Water, the Earth, the Sun, the Moon and the penance.

12. (The following are your names) : Manyu, Manu, Mahinasa, Mahān, Śiva, Ṛtudhvaja, Ugra-retas, Bhava, Kāla, Vāmadeva and Dhṛtavrata.

13. Oh Rudra, you will have the following wives, namely: Dhī, Vṛtti, Uśanā, Umā, Niyutsarpi, Ilā, Ambikā, Irāvatī, Sudhā, Dīkṣā, Rudrāṇī.

14. As you are a Prajāpati accept these names, places along with these wives, and procreate abundant progeny."

15. Being thus ordered by his father, Lord Nīla-lohita (Rudra) brought forth children who were like him in prowess, form,(complexion) and nature.

16. Seeing the innumerable hordes of Rudras created by (the original) Rudra, devouring the world on all side, god Brahmā got afraid.

17. (He said to Rudra) : "Oh great god, enough of the creation of all such beings who with their terrible eyes are burning all the directions along with me.

18. Perform penance which is conducive to the happiness of all beings. May you be blest. It is by penance that you (lit. Your honour) will create again this universe as it was before.

19. It is only by (performance of) penance that a man can easily attain to the Lord Adhokṣaja, the Supreme light, dwelling in the hearts of all beings."

Maitreya said:

20. Being thus ordered by the self-born god (Brahmā), (Rudra) circumambulated from left to right the Lord of Speech (Brahmā). Complying with his request, he bade goodbye to him and entered the forest for penance.

21. Then while he was musing over the problem of creation and became possessed of the power of the Lord (for creation), ten sons who became the progenitors of the population of the world, were born to him.

22.* (They were): Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Dakṣa and the tenth (son) was Nārada.*

23-24. Nārada was born from Brahmā's lap; Dakṣa from his thumb; Vasiṣṭha from his vital breath, Bhṛgu from the skin and Kratu from his hand; Pulaha was born from his navel, the sage Pulastya from his ears, Aṅgiras from his mouth, Atri from his eyes, and Marīci, was created from (Brahmā's) mind.

25. Dharma was born from his right breast wherein abides Nārāyaṇa himself. From his back (was born) *Adharma* which begets the Death, a terror to the world.

26. Desire (*Kāma*) was born in his heart; Anger (*krodha*) from his brow; Avarice (*Lobha*) from his lower lip; Speech was born from (his) mouth; the rivers from his penis and Nirṛti, the shelter of all sins, from his anus.

27. (The powerful sage) Kardama, the husband of Devahūti, was born from his shadow; this (whole) world was created from the mind and the body of the creator of the universe.

28. Oh Vidura, it is reported to us that self-born god became passionate and desired his own beautiful daughter, the goddess of Speech who, though herself above passions, captivated his mind.[687]

*For the symbolism of the ten mind-born sons as *Virāj* vide V.S. Agrawal—*MP.—A Study*, p. 38.

687. Cf. The 'marriage' of Brahmā and Śatarūpā in MP. and the explanation of this symbolism vide V.S. Agrawal—*MP.—A Study*, pp. 47-50.

29. His sons, the sages, of whom Marīci was the foremost, saw that their father had set his heart on unrighteousness. Out of familiar confidence, they pleaded with (lit. awakened) him.

30. "That you do not control your passion despite your capacity to do so, and that you are bent on approaching your daughter, has never been done by the ancestors nor will it be done by others after you in future.

31. Oh father of the world, this is not glorifying (creditable) even to the possessors of divine lustre (power). By following this (course of conduct) the people shall never attain any good."

32. (Finding Brahmā bent on the heinous act the sages prayed to God) "We bow to the glorious Lord who manifested this world that was within him. He alone is capable of protecting righteousness."

33. Then the father of the Prajāpatis, seeing his sons, the Prajāpatis speaking this in his presence, became ashamed and gave up his body.

34. The cardinal points accepted that terrible body. The wise people know it as mist or darkness. While he was meditating how he should create the well-planned worlds as before, the Vedas came out from the four mouths of the creator.

35. The duties of the four sacrificial priests[688] (*hotā, adhvaryu, udgātā, brahmā*) along with the *upavedas* and the disciplines of Logic etc., the extensive course of sacrificial sessions, the four legs of Dharma and the duties of the four *Āśramas* were also produced thence."

Vidura said :

36. "Oh sage (lit. one who regards penance as his wealth) you told that the Lord of the progenitors of the world produced Vedas etc. from his mouths. Please tell me by what particular (organ) he produced the specific things."

VJ. however maintains that *vāc* is 'the deity presiding over human speech' and not Sarasvatī who is the natural consort of Brahmā, the Veda incarnate.

688. These Priests are the experts in the Rg and other Vedas serially.

Maitreya said :

37. "From his mouths facing the east (the west etc.), he produced the Vedas—Ṛg, Yajus, Sāman and Atharvan and *Śastra* (simple recitation of *mantras* in praise of gods entrusted to *ṛtvij*), *ijyā* (oblations, worship etc. to be done by *adhvaryu*), *stutistoma* (singing of the *mantras* in praise of gods, the duty of *udgātā*) and *Prāyaścitta* (expiatory rites in case of some lapses in sacrifices to be performed by *brahmā*).

38. Again through the same faces, and in the same serial order, he produced *Āyurveda* (the science of medicine), *Dhanurveda* (science of Warfare), *Gandharva Veda* (the science of Music) and Sthāpatya Veda (the science of Architecture, Sculpture etc.).

39. The Omniscient Lord produced the fifth Veda, viz. Itihāsa and Purāṇas from all his mouths.

40. From his mouth facing the east (came forth the sacrificial acts viz.) *Ṣoḍaṣī* and *Uktha* (and serially from other mouths) *Purīṣī* and *Agniṣṭut*, *Āptoryāma* and *Atirātra*, *Vājapeya* along with Gosava.

41. He created the four feet of Dharma viz. *Vidyā* (knowledge and purity), *dāna* (donations), *tapas* (penance) and *satya* (Truth). He also produced the (four) *āśramas* (stages in life) along with their types of duties.

42. (*Brahmacarya āśrama*)—celibate stage—the 1st stage in life—is of four types viz.) *Sāvitra* (observance of celibacy and study of *Sāvitrī* for three nights from the *upanayana* (thread-bearing) ceremony), *Prājāpatya* (observance of celibacy for one year), *brāhma* (observance of celibacy till the completion of the study of Vedas) and *bṛhat* (celibacy throughout life). (The 2nd stage in life) The *gṛhastha āśrama*—the married stage—is of four kinds according to the way of maintenance of family[689]: *Vārtā* (earning livelihood by agriculture and such other non-prohibited vocations), *Sañcaya* (maintenance of money earned by performing sacrifices), *Śālīna* (to live on whatever one gets

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689. Vaikhānasa Gṛhya Sūtra classifies *gṛhasthas* as (1) *Vārtā vṛtti* (maintaining on agriculture, trade), (2) *Śālīna vṛtti* (stay in houses performing sacrifices etc.)., (3) *Yāyāvara* (performing *ṣaṭkarmas*) (4) *Ghora cārika*—corresponding to Śiloñccha. For details vide Kane—HDS, Vol. II. I. pp. 641-43.

without requesting or begging), *Śiloñccha*—(maintenance by gleaning grains, grain-gathering).

43. In (the third stage of life called) the *vānaprastha āśrama*, (there are four categories viz.) *Vaikhānasas* (who live upon food-grains which grow naturally without agricultural efforts), *Vālakhilyas* (who subsist on fresh food, giving away hoarded food), *Audumbaras* (who eat fruits etc. gathered from the direction to which they happen to look at first in the morning) and *Phenapa* (who live on fruits, leaves etc. automatically dropped from trees). In (the last stage of life) the *Saṁnyāsa āśrama*, (the four kinds are :) *Kuṭīcaka* (who chiefly abide by all the duties prescribed for the *āśrama*), *Bahvoda* (who perform the most essential duties of this *āśrama* but emphasize on the path of knowledge), *Haṁsa* (who concentrate on knowledge), *Niṣkriya* (who have realized the Soul).[690]

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690. VJ. and VD. differ: (i) *Vaikhānasas*—Those who subsist on roots. (ii) *Vālakhilyas*—Who eat everything. (iii) *Udumbaras*—Who live upon fruits. (iv) *Phena-pas*—Who subsist on the milk-foam falling out from the mouth of calves while sucking.

This classification is supported by *Bṛhat Parāśara Smṛti* XII. 158 for Vānaprasthas and XII. 164 for Saṁnyāsins.

Kinds of Saṁnyāsins :—

Kuṭīcaka : (i) The Ascetic who lives in his own house and is satisfied on whatever food is given to him—VJ.

(ii) The ascetic who due to weakness etc. does not wander from one holy place to another but stays at one holy place in a hut and lives upon begging after practising *japa* of 12000 Praṇavas—VD.

Bahvoda : (i) He who, in addition to his three baths per day, performs ablution in every new *tīrtha* he sees and has three *daṇḍas*—VJ.

(ii) Who wanders from one holy place to another not living beyond a prescribed period at each place (e.g. 1 night at a village, 3 nights in a city etc.)

Haṁsa : (i) Who carries one *daṇḍa* and the sacred thread—*Yajñopavīta*—VJ. (ii) Who is nude, beyond *dvandvas*, lost in deep meditation of Brahman—VD.

Niṣkriya or *Parama-haṁsa*—(i) Who has abandoned all acts, completely observing *ahiṁsā*.

(ii) One who is absorbed in the meditation of the Brahman, careless about his body etc. and has crossed the seven stages of knowledge (*Sapta-Jñāna-Bhūmikās*).

44. (So also were serially produced) the science of the knowledge of Soul and non-Soul[691], the three Vedas, the science of agriculture and the science of politics (leading to the attainment of *Mokṣa*, *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*) and also the *vyāhṛtis* (mystic words following *Om* or *praṇava*) viz. *bhūḥ*, *bhuvaḥ*, *suvaḥ* and *bhūr-bhuvaḥ-suvaḥ* (or *mahas*). From his heart came forth *Om*.

45-46. (The Vedic metres) *Uṣṇik*, *Gāyatrī*, *Triṣṭubh*, *Anuṣṭubh* and *Jagatī*, *Paṅkti* and *Bṛhatī* were produced respectively from the hair, skin, flesh, muscles and bones, marrow and *prāṇa* or vital airs of the all-pervading Prajāpati (Brahmā). His life (*jīva*) is said to consist of the occlusives or the consonants of five classes (e.g. velar, palatal etc.) from *k* to *m*, and his body, of vowels (a, i, u etc.)[692].

47. The sibilants (*ūṣma varṇas* like *ś*, *ṣ*, *s*) are called the sense organs of the Soul, i.e. Brahmā, and the semi-vowels (*y*, *r*, *l*, *v*) his strength. And the gamut of music (viz. Ṣaḍja, Ṛṣabha, Gandhāra, Madhyama, Pañcama, Dhaivata and Niṣāda) are created out of the sport of Prajāpati.

48*. Brahmā whose body is *śabda-brahman* is of both manifest (as *vaikharī*) and unmanifest (as *Omkāra*) forms. As unmanifest the Supreme Spirit clearly appears to him as the highest omnipresent Brahman. As a manifest form, it appears as Indra and other forms possessing different powers.

49-52. Then assuming another (body), he set his mind on creation (of the world). Finding the limited creation (of

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VR. and VC. follow ŚR. VD. claims his acceptance of ŚR's interpretation.

691. *ānvīkṣikī*—The Tantrism in consonance with the Vedas—VJ.

692. VJ. states: The occlusives from *k* to *m* were produced from his *jīva* and the vowels from his body.

*Though I have followed ŚR., this verse is differently interpreted. Thus VR. emphasizes the literary or *śabda* aspect of Brahmā, and explains the different *śaktis* as functions of words, such as *abhidhā*, *lakṣaṇā*. I may add one more interpretation.

God Brahmā is of the form of *śabda-brahma*. He is manifest as the spoken word (*Vaikharī*) and unmanifest as *Praṇava*. But the real Supreme Spirit that is beyond him appears to be all-pervading and possessed of various powers.

progeny) even by sages possessing great power, he again began to ponder, Oh Kaurava (Vidura).

"Oh ! It is really strange that although I am all the while engaged in creating (the world) the beings do not multiply. In this, the Fate must be obstructing."

Thus while Brahmā was doing his duties properly and thinking over the Providence, his body was split into two and it was called *Kāya*. And from the bifurcated forms of the body was produced a pair of a male and a female.

53. There the male part was the emperor Svāyambhuva Manu and that the female part was called Śatarūpā and was the queen of the great person.

54. Indeed, the subjects (created beings) began to multiply in their relationship as husband and wife. He brought forth five children from Śatarūpā.

55. Oh Vidura, (They were) Priyavrata, Uttānapāda and three daughters, Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti.

56. He gave Ākūti (in marriage) to Ruci, the middle-daughter (Devahūti) to Kardama and Prasūti to Dakṣa. From these the world was filled (with population).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(*The Boar* (*Varāha*) *Incarnation*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh king, hearing the holiest discourse of the sage, Vidura (a descendant of Kuru) who cherished high respects for narratives of Hari, again asked (Maitreya).

Vidura said :

2. The emperor Svāyambhuva was verily the favourite son of god Brahmā. Oh sage, what did he do after obtaining a loving wife ?

3. Oh foremost among the good, narrate to me, who am full of faith, the life of the king-sage, the first ruler of the world, because he also resorted to Vāsudeva (Viṣvaksena).

4*. (The act of) listening to the virtuous deeds of those who cherish in their hearts the lotus-like feet of Mukunda, is eulogised by the wise, as the main fruit (result) of men's study of the *śāstras* with long efforts.

5. The sage (Maitreya) who was thus urged to narrate the episodes of the Lord had his hair standing on ends (due to intense devotion), and narrated to Vidura who was modest and was (as if) a pillow to the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa[693] (lit. the thousand-headed god) requested him (Maitreya) thus.

Maitreya said :

6. When Svāyambhuva Manu was born along with his wife, he folded his hands and bowing to Brahmā (Vedagarbha) he said :

7. "You are the sole progenitor and nourisher and protector of all beings. But how (in what way) are we, your creatures, to render you service ?

8. Oh praiseworthy one, I bow to you. Tell me what action, out of those within our capacity, I should do whereby my fame will spread everywhere (here) and lead to Heaven hereafter."

Brahmā said :

9. "Oh child, I am pleased with you. Oh king, blessed be you both. You have offered yourself to me with a guileless (sincere) heart for guidance.

10. Oh warrior, this much worship should be rendered by children to their father that they should abide by his order respectfully, to the best of their capacity without jealousy or negligence.

11. Have from her children who are like you in qualities. Protect the earth according to law. Worship the Puruṣa (the Supreme Man) with sacrifices.

12. Oh king, the highest service (rendered) to me will

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* VB. Even though the virtuous deeds of the Lord are heard with great exertions, they are not properly fixed in the heart and hence do not bear fruit. They are properly fixed by listening to the deeds of those who are his devotees. Hence the propriety of listening to Manu's life.

693. As Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to rest his feet on Vidura's laps—ŚR.

be the protection of the subjects. Lord Hṛṣīkeśa (Viṣṇu) will be ever pleased with you for your being the protector of the subjects.

13. Fruitless are the efforts of those with whom Lord Kṛṣṇa (Janārdana) whose form is sacrifice, is not pleased; for, thereby, the Soul (ātman) itself is disrespected."

Manu said :

14. "Oh destroyer of sins, I shall abide by the order of your lordship. But fix up a place for me and for my progeny here.

15. The earth which is the place for all beings is submerged in the great ocean. Oh god, make some efforts to lift up this goddess (earth) (from the ocean)"[694].

Maitreya said:

16. Seeing that the earth is submerged that way in waters, god Brahmā pondered over for a long time, "How can I lift her (the earth) up?[695]

17. While I was engaged in creation, the earth was engulfed by waters and it sank down to Rasātala. What can we, who are entrusted with the duty of creation, do now here? Let the Lord from whose heart I came into existence, do it for me."

18. Oh sinless one, while he was reflecting thus, a thumb-size small boar suddenly dropped down from his nostril.

19. Oh Vidura (of Bharata clan), while he (Brahmā) was looking on, a great miracle took place: The small boar in the sky shot up to the size of an elephant in a moment.

20. Along with Brāhmaṇas with Marīci as their chief, with Kumāras (Sanaka, Sanandana etc.) and with Manu, he saw the boar form and began to think in various ways.

21. "Is it the transcendental Being appearing in the form of a boar ? What a miracle that it should come out of my nose!

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694. JG. This indicates that this is the introduction to the Varāha incarnation at the beginning of the present *Kalpa*.

695. ŚR. explains : At the beginning of creation Brahmā drank up the ocean and restored the earth to its place. He did not understand how suddenly it was immersed in water again.

22. It appeared like the tip of a thumb and in a moment it became as big as a great boulder. Can this be the Divine Sacrifice (i.e. Lord Viṣṇu) himself who is trying my mind to exhaustion (by concealing his real form)?"

23. While Brahmā was deeply thinking over it along with his sons, the glorious Supreme Sacrifice-Man (Yajña-Puruṣa) who was like a mountain thundered forth.

24. The all-pervading Hari thrilled with rapture, god Brahmā and the excellent Brahmins, by his roar which reverberated the directions.

25. Having heard the grief-removing roar of the (Being who had assumed the) Boar form by his Māyā, the sages who were residents of the same Tapas and Satya lokas (worlds) praised him with the holy trinity (of the Vedas).

26. Knowing that it is the Veda extolling his attributes that is chanted by the great (god Brahmā and the sages), he whose personality is described in the Vedas[696] again roared and for the prosperity of gods, rushed into the water like a big sporting elephant.

27. He moved through the sky with his tail held aloft. With his shaking mane and kicking hoofs he dispersed the clouds. His body was hard with tough hide bristled with sharp, erect hair. The Lord, the saviour of the earth, appeared brilliant with his white tusk and shining eyes.

28. Though he was sacrifice itself in person, He assumed the form of a boar and was scenting the track of the earth. Though his tusks were sharp, he gently looked at the Brāhmaṇas who were praising him and dashed into water.

29. The roaring ocean whose side was shattered by the velocity of the falling of his body which was like a mountain of adamantine peaks, spread out his arms in the form of swelling surges and as if out of affliction, yelled out, 'Oh Lord of Sacrifices, protect me'.

30. Then cutting down the unfathomable waters to the bottom with his sharp arrow-like hoofs, the Lord who was sacrifice incarnate (lit. who had three joints in the form of *savanas* or sacrificial acts), saw the earth in *rasātala* where at the time

696. *Veda-vitāna-mūrtiḥ*— (i) One whose body is sacrifice (VR.)
(ii) Whose form was entire Veda itself (VC.)

of Deluge (*Pralaya*) he desired to sleep, placing the earth along with the beings, in his stomach.

31-32. He appeared extremely resplendent when he rose up pulling out by his tusks the submerged earth from the *rasātala*. Even there (in the sea), he whose intensified rage was like the Sudarśana *Cakra*[697], saw a demon (Daitya) of irresistible prowess attacking him with a mace and (thus) obstructing him. He killed him easily as a lion kills an elephant. With his cheeks red with the (mudlike) clotted blood of the demon, he appeared like a big elephant who had turned up (red chalk from) the earth.

33.* Oh Vidura, (sages and gods) of whom Brahmā was the leader recognised the Lord (Varāha) of *tamāla* like blue complexion, who was sportively lifting up the earth by the tip of his tusks like an elephant. They folded their hands and prayed him with words like Vedic *sūktas*.

Sages said:

34. "Victory to you, Oh unconquerable Lord! Oh creator of sacrifices![698] We bow to you who are shaking your body composed of three Vedas. We salute to you who have assumed this boar form (to lift up the earth), in the pores of whose hair sacrifices lie hidden.

35.** Oh Lord, the sacrificial form of your body is really very difficult to look at by the sinful people. The Vedic

697. 'Whose rage was intensified by Sudarśana'—VB.
VB. explains : When the mace and weapons of Viṣṇu proved ineffective to kill the demon, the Sudarśana disc had to remind Viṣṇu of the misdeeds of the demon and intensified his anger to finish with the demon.

* VC. and VD. quoting *Bhāgavatāmṛta kārikā* maintain that Maitreya has mixed up two Boar incarnations—the white one in Svāyambhuva Age and the blue one in the Cākṣuṣa *Manvantara*.

698. *yajña-bhāvana* : (i) Who is invoked by sacrifices—ŚR. (ii) The creator or cause of all sacrifices—VD., VR, VC. VB. (iii) Who manifests himself by sacrifices—RR. (iv) Who is worshipped as Yajña with its different parts—VR. (v) Who is propitiated by sacrifices—GD.

** The conception of Yajña-Varāha was formulated first in Va P. 6.16.23. It was adopted later by MP. 248.67-73, VP. 1.4.32-33, BRP. 213.33.7, PP. Sṛṣṭi-kāṇḍa 16.55.61, *Hari-Vaṁśa* P. 1.41.29-33. The concept was so popular that in addition to literary reference in *Viṣṇu Smṛti*

metres are found in your skin, the *kuśa* grass in your hair, the sacred clarified butter in your eyes, and the fourfold duties of the sacrificial priests in your feet.

36. Oh Lord, *sruk* is in your mouth, *sruvas* are in your nostrils, *Iḍā* in your stomach, and *camasas* in your ears; *prāśitra* (the vessel for Brahmā's share) in your mouth, *grahas* (a kind of cup for *soma*) in your throat. Agnihotra in your chewing.

37. Your frequency of incarnation is the *iṣṭi* (sacrificial act) called *dīkṣā*. The three *iṣṭis* called *upasads* form your neck. *Prāyaṇīya* (*iṣṭi* after *dīkṣā*) and *udayanīya* (*iṣṭi* after completion of sacrifice) are your two tusks. The *Pravargya* Mahāvīra* ceremony preliminary to *Soma* sacrifice) is your tongue. The two fires *sabhya* and *āvasathya* form your head. You are the sacrifice. The arrangement of bricks for sacrifice is your vital breath.

38. Your semen is the *soma* juice. The three *savanas* (morning, noon and evening) form your seat. The seven sacrifices (*Agni-Ṣṭoma, Atyagniṣṭoma, Ukthya, Ṣoḍaśī, Vājapeya, Atirātra* and *Āptoryāma*) are your *dhātus* (constituents of the body). All kinds of *satras* (sacrificial sessions) are the joints of your body. You are both *kratus* (sacrifices in which *soma* juice was extracted) and *yajñas* (sacrifices without the extraction of *soma* juice). *Iṣṭis* in sacrifices are your tendons.

39. We bow again and again to you who are all the *mantras*, deities, sacrificial materials, sacrificial acts and the performance of all acts. We repeatedly salute to you who are knowledge realised by nonattachment, devotion and self-control, and who are the preceptor of that knowledge.

40. Oh Supreme Lord, the support of the earth, the earth along with the mountains which you have borne upon the tip of your tusk, appears beautiful like a lotus plant with leaves resting on the tusk of a big elephant.

1.3-9, *Viṣṇudharmottara* 1.2.3-8 we have Yajña-Varāha images (e.g. that at Vihāra in N. Gujarat). The two aspects of this concept viz.(1) its significance as the symbol of Vedic cosmogony and (ii) the correspondence between the elements of sacrifices and the parts of Varāha's body are discussed by V.S. Agrawala *MP—A Study*, pp.313ff.

* Apte's PSD 668. *Mahāvīra* is a sacrificial vessel. When it is red hot, ghee and milk is to be put in it(VD). This is performed before every *upasad* (ŚR).

41. This your boar form consisting of three Vedas, with the sphere of the earth supported by your tusk, appears shining like a great enchantingly beautiful *Kula Parvata*[699] with a cloud resting on its peak.

42. Establish firmly your consort, this earth, the mother of the world of the movables and immovables, for the residence of the people; for you are the father or the Protector. We offer our salutations to her along with you. You have deposited your vital power in her as the Fire is dormant in *araṇi*— (a piece of Śami wood used for creating sacrificial fire by friction with another piece).

43. Oh Supreme ruler, who else can aspire or determine to lift up the earth which sank down to the nethermost region (*rasātala*) ? In your case, this is not a miracle as you have created this extremely wonderful world by your Māyā power.

44. Oh Almighty, we, the residents of the Jana, Tapas and Satya regions have been thoroughly purified by the sanctifying drops of water sprayed from the ends of your bristle like hair while you shake your body which is composed of the Vedas.

45. He who aspires to reach to the end of (i.e. to know thoroughly) all your deeds which are endless, must really have lost his senses. The whole universe is deluded by the association of the attributes of your *yoga māyā*. Oh Supreme Lord, bless (us) with happiness."

Maitreya said:

46. While the Protector (Varāha) was thus praised by the sages, the knowers of Brahman, he stabilised the waters by his hoofs and placed the earth on them.

47. The Supreme Lord Hari, the Viṣvaksena and the protector of the world, placed on waters the earth which he easily lifted up from *rasātala* and disappeared (lit. departed).

48. Janārdana (Hari) will be immediately pleased in his heart on him who will thus devotedly hear or make others hear this extremely auspicious and enchanting tale of Hari

699. *Kulācala* : A class of seven mountains which are supposed to exist in each division of the continent. Their names are : Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣa-Parvata, Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

whose miraculous deeds are worth describing and knowledge about whom destroys all miseries.

49. What is there difficult to be achieved when the Lord of all blessings is pleased ? Enough with those (pleasures) of insignificant value. The Supreme Lord, the Dweller in the hearts of all, of his own accord, confers *summum bonum* on those who are devoted to him without any ulterior motive.

50. Out of the stories of yore, the nectar-like narratives of the Lord put an end to *Saṁsāra*. Having drunk these through the ears (comparable to the cavity of folded hands) what person who has understood the essential purpose of life, can get satiated (with them). (If such there be), he must be other than a human being.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(*Diti's Conception*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Having listened to the story of Hari in his Boar-incarnation (for the purpose of the lift-up of the earth) as narrated by Maitreya, Vidura who had taken the vow (of hearing the episodes of Hari) was not much satisfied. Folding up his hands (in bowing), he asked again.

Vidura said:

2. "Oh great sage, we have heard it reported that the first *daitya* (demon) Hiraṇyākṣa was killed by the same Hari who (in the boar-form) was the embodiment of sacrifice (*Yajña*).

3. Oh Brahman, for what purpose was there a confrontation between the demon-king (Hiraṇyākṣa) and him (Hari) who was lifting the earth up with the tip of his tusk."

Maitreya said:

4. Oh warrior (Vidura), yours is a good query, as the story about Hari's incarnation that you ask, cuts asunder the noose of death in the case of mortal beings.

5. By (hearing) which (story) as sung by the sage (Nārada), the male child of Uttānapāda (Dhruva) set his foot on the head of the god of Death and ascended to the place of Hari.

6. Even in this case (of the fight with Hiraṇyākṣa) I have heard this account related in ancient times by Brahmadeva, the god of gods, to the gods who enquired him (about it).

7-8. Oh Vidura, Diti, the daughter of Dakṣa, was desirous of a child and with her heart overcome with passion on one evening, desired (the company of) her husband Kaśyapa, the son of Marīci, who was seated in meditation in his fire-worship hall after offering oblations of milk to the Supreme Man, the protector of sacrifices, in the evening.

Diti said:

9. "Oh learned, this god of love with a bow in his hand torments me, a poor thing, for your sake just as an elephant attacking a plantain tree crushes it.

10. May you be prosperous ! Please confer your favour on me who am burning at the (sight of the) prosperity of my co-wives who are blest with children.

11. The fame of women who are greatly respected by husbands, spreads over the world, and of those to whom the husband like you, is really born as a son.

12. Formerly our father, venerable Dakṣa, who was affectionate to us his daughters, asked us separately, "Oh daughters, whom do you select as your husband ?"

13. Having understood the inclination of us, his daughters, he, the progenitor of the race, gave you thirteen daughters who liked your nature.

14. Oh lotus-eyed auspicious sage, now satisfy my desire. Oh plentiful one, an entreaty of the distressed to the great ones is never fruitless."

15. Oh valiant one, Kaśyapa replied in consolatory words

to her who, being over-whelmed with passion, has become pitiable and was persuading him with many arguments (words).

16. "Oh timid one, here I am ready to comply with whatever you desire. Who would not fulfil the desire of her who helps accomplishment of the three *puruṣārthas* (goals) in life?

17. Just as the people cross the sea in ships, a married person giving shelter to persons of other *āśramas*, crosses the sea of misery.

18. Oh proud lady, they (the learned ones) call her (the wife) as the equal partner (lit. half the part) of the man who aspires after happiness. After entrusting the responsibility of his work to her, man can move about free from the fever of anxiety.

19. Depending on whom (the wife), we easily overcome the enemies in the form of senses which are difficult to be conquered by men of other (non-*gṛhastha*) āśramas, just as the lord of a fort (subdues) the enemies (due to his fortified position).

20. Oh mistress of the house, it is not possible for us to become so completely (obliging) like you, even (if we try) throughout our life (and in the next birth as well). Nor others who appreciate (your) virtues (can do so).

21. I shall, however, try to comply with your request (desire) for offspring. But please wait for a *muhūrta* so that they (the people) will not reproach me.

22. This is the most terrible of times when everything looks awful, as at this time goblins, the followers of Rudra wander about.

23. Oh pious lady it is in the evening that Lord Śiva, the creator of beings and the king of ghosts, moves about riding his bull and surrounded by his goblin-attendants.

24. Your brother-in-law[700] god Rudra whose shining mass of hair (on head) became scattered and tawny by the dust raised by the whirl-wind in *śmaśāna* (the crematory ground) and whose pure gold-like body is smeared with ashes, witnesses (everything) with his three eyes (viz. the Sun, the Moon and the fire.) Hence there is no secrecy anywhere.

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700. Kaśyapa's wife Diti and Śiva's wife Satī were the daughters of Dakṣa. Hence Kaśyapa and Śiva were brothers-in-law, and Śiva was also Diti's brother-in-law.

25. In this world there is no one who is his relative or non-relative. Nobody is specially respectable or censurable to him. By performance of various vows, we desire to have the (prosperity and greatness of) Māyā which he has enjoyed and spurned (lit. kicked).

26. Thoughtful people who wish to tear off the veil of Māyā[701] praise his life which is spotless or unattached (to sensual pleasures). He has none equal or superior to him. He is the ultimate goal of the saintly people; yet he himself followed the vow of *piśāca* type of life.[702]

27. The unfortunate sinners decorate with garments, garlands, ornaments and pigments their body, (which is nothing but) the food of dogs, as if it (the body) were their Soul. They do not understand the motive behind his (Rudra's) behaviour and laugh at him who is absorbed in (the meditation of) the Soul[703].

28. God Brahmā and others obey the limits (laws) set by him. He is the cause of this universe. Māyā is his obedient servant. His behaviour is like a Piśāca. Oh (how) incomprehensible are the ways of the Almighty[704].

Maitreya said :

29. Though she was thus admonished by the husband, she whose senses were thoroughly overwhelmed with passion, caught hold of the garment of the Brāhmaṇa Sage like a shameless prostitute.

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701. *avidyā paṭala* : nescience, the film or coating over the eye (of knowledge)—VJ., VD.

702. Those who have realized the Brahman behave like an innocent child (bāla), a mad person (*unmatta*) or like a goblin *piśāca*. God Śiva adopted the third type of life. Or 'lives in the company of goblins (*piśācas*)' —VD. Vj's interpretation, "Under the order of Hari who has neither equal nor superior, Rudra followed the *piśāca* type of life" is far-fetched as we have to supply words : *yaś ca Hariḥ .....tasya Harer ājñayā*, to the text of this verse.

703. VC. construes differently : without understanding the purpose of Rudra who is absorbed in Hari, that the garments etc. are to be offered to Lord Hari and hence I do not enjoy them.

704. VJ. interprets the verse as the glorification of Hari and not Rudra. Thus Rudra's behaviour as *piśāca* is in obedience to Hari's command. Incomprehensible are the ways of Hari the Perfect Being who makes gods like Rudra, the objects of worship by the world, obey him.

30. Knowing his wife's importunity to that prohibited act, he then bowed down to the dictates (of the providence) and sat down with her in a secluded place.

31. He then took bath, controlled his breath and meditating silently over the pure, eternal Light, repeated internally the Gāyatrī (or the syllable Om).

32. Oh Vidura, even Diti, feeling ashamed of that sinful act, approached the Brāhmaṇa-Sage and with her face cast down, addressed him.

Diti said :

33. 'Oh Brahman ! May not the Lord of goblins (*bhūtas*) kill the child in my womb. I have committed a fault against Rudra, the Lord of *bhūtas* (beings).

34. Obeisance to the great god Śiva who is the remover of miseries (Rudra), who is irresistible, giver of blessings (to those who cherish desire and the highest bliss to the desireless devotees). He, though weaponless, takes up arms against the wicked, and is anger incarnate (at the time of destruction or *pralaya*).

35. May the Lord of Satī, my sister's husband, the great god with abundance of grace, be gracious unto us women who are treated as worthy of compassion even by ruthless hunters.

Maitreya said :

36. Prajāpati (Kaśyapa) who has completed his evening rituals spoke to his wife who was trembling (greatly with fear) and who was desirous of securing the good of her progeny both here and hereafter.

Kaśyapa said :

37-38. On account of your impure mind, inauspiciousness of the (evening) time, disobedience to my order and complete disrespect for gods (attending Śiva), Oh evil woman, you will beget two wicked sons the worst ever born from wombs. Oh wrathful woman, they will frequently make the worlds and the protectors of the worlds, cry out (by their atrocious acts).

39-40. When the poor and innocent beings will be massacred and women are seized per force and the great souled ones are incensed, the venerable Lord of the universe, the

creator of the world, will be enraged. He will come down as an incarnation and will kill them as Indra (the wielder of the Vajra) destroyed the mountains.

Diti said :

41. Oh Lord, I desire that both of my sons should meet death directly at the hands of the glorious Lord whose noble arms appear splendid by the disc (*sudarśana*). May not they be a victim of Brāhmaṇa wrath.

42. Not even the denizens of hell show favour to a person burnt by Brahma-daṇḍa (curse of a Brāhmaṇa) and the tormentor of beings, in whatever class of creatures he be born.

Kaśyapa said :

43-44. On account of the sorrow and repentance for your misdeed, and your present consideration of what is proper and improper, and due to your great respect to Lord Viṣṇu and regard for Śiva and myself one son out of your son's son will be respected by saintly persons. They will sing of his pure fame which would be comparable to the glory of the venerable Lord.

45. In order to emulate his pious nature, good persons will purify their hearts (by imbibing virtues) like non-enmity (friendliness to all) and others, just as they purify gold of inferior carat by purificatory processes.

46. By his intellect (or devotion) not directed to anyone else except the Lord, the venerable self-perceiving Lord by whose grace this universe becomes propitious, and who is the indweller of the universe, will be pleased with him.

47. Verily, he would be the greatest devotee of unlimited vision and of great prowess and the greatest of the great. For, by his deep devotion, he will establish Lord Viṣṇu in his heart, purified by devotion, and give up the ego about his body etc.

48. He will be devoid of desire for worldly pleasures, of good nature, a mine of excellent qualities, delighted at the prosperity of others and pained at the sufferings of the afflicted. With no enemy in the world, he will relieve the sorrows of the world, just as the Moon removes the summer heat.

49. Your grandson will see both in his mind and outside before him, Hari of excellent virtues, of lotus-like eyes,

who assumes the form according to the desire of his votaries, and who is a grace to his consort Lakṣmī and his face adorned with refulgent ear-rings."

Maitreya said :

50. Hearing that her grandson would be a votary of the Lord, Diti was greatly delighted. Knowing that both of her sons would meet death at the hands of Kṛṣṇa, her heart was elated.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(Sanaka and Others curse Jaya and Vijaya)

Maitreya said :

1. Being afraid of the destruction of her sons by Hari[705] Diti bore (in her womb) the luster (semen) of Prajāpati Kaśyapa for a hundred years—the lustre that subdued the lustre of others.

2. When by the power of the foetus, the world became void of light (due to the diminished light of the Sun etc.) and the gods in charge of protection of quarters were devoid of their power, they reported to Brahmā (the creator of the universe, the trouble due to) the spread of darkness in all directions.

Gods said :

3. Oh Lord, you know this darkness whereby we have been deeply agitated, because there is nothing unmanifested to you whose path (range of knowledge) is unaffected by Time.

4. Oh God of gods, the creator of the world, the crest-jewel of the protectors of the world, you know the mind of beings both superior and inferior to us.[706]

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705 *Surārdanāt*: (i) The distress that would be caused to gods by her (prospective) sons—ŚR.

(ii) Being anxious lest Indra and gods should harm her sons—VR.

706. *pareṣām* etc. : Beings of the past and the future—VR., VD.

5*. We salute to you whose power is his special knowledge and who has assumed the body (as Brahmā) through Māyā and accepted *rajas* as a special attribute. We bow to you, the cause of the manifest-world (whose cause—the Supreme Soul—is unmanifested).

6-7. There is no defeat from anyone to those whose *yoga* is quite perfect (ripe) and who have conquered their breath, sense-organs and the mind and have been favoured by your grace and who, with unswerving devotion meditate upon you, the highest (God), the creator of all beings, whose form is composed of the causal relation, i.e. of cause and effect, and in whom the world is woven.

8. We bow to you the chief controller (or the chief vital breath) to whom all beings offer worship. Just as cows are bound down by cords, they (people) are restricted by his (your) word (i.e. Vedic injunctions).

9. Oh mighty one you who are of this nature, bring about good to us whose (routine) performance of activities is stopped due to darkness. You should look with extreme mercy upon us who are distressed.

10. Oh god, this is the semen of Kāśyapa which is deposited in Diti's womb as embryo which grows enveloping all directions in darkness, like fire consuming fuel.

Maitreya said :

11. Oh long-armed Vidura, the venerable son of the Supreme Soul (Brahmā) who was the object of the words of entreaty by gods, laughed loudly and replied to gods in sweet words.

Brahmā said :

12. Sanaka and others, my mind-born sons before your creation are free from all worldly desires and they wander over the worlds through the sky.

* We pay obeisance to you whose knowledge is uninterrupted, who know the whole of this universe by Māyā (the power of intelligence bestowed as a favour on you by Nārāyaṇa) and who have assumed *rajo-guṇa* (the attribute *rajas*) by Nārāyaṇa's command (and still it does not come in the way of your knowledge), who are the cause of the manifest (universe) but whose cause, viz., the Brahman is unmanifest)—VJ.

13. Once upon a time, they went to Vaikuṇṭha, the region of Lord Viṣṇu of pure Soul, Vaikuṇṭha which is respected by all.

14. All persons who dwell there have the form like Viṣṇu. They propitiate Hari by the righteous path without any ulterior motive to accomplish.

15. There dwells the venerable First Puruṣa who can be known only through word (i.e. Vedānta). He assumes pure Sāttvic form. The foremost one showers his grace on us, his devotees, to make us happy.

16. There is a park called the Final Beatitude which by its wish-yielding trees and by its beautiful blossoms of flowers etc. throughout all seasons, shines like veritable Mokṣa (Final Liberation) itself.

17. Where (in the Vaikuṇṭha region) devotees of Viṣṇu along with their beautiful wives in the aerial cars, disregard the fragrant wind even though their minds are distracted by the fragrance of the blossoming, honey-dripping flowers of creepers in the spring near water and sing of the deeds of the Lord which purify the sins of the world.

18. There the loud confusing cries of birds like pigeons, cuckoos, cranes, *cakravāka*, (the ruddy goose), *cātakas*, swans, parrots, *tittiris* and peacocks stop for a while when the chief black-bee (in Viṣṇu's *vanamālā*) hums loudly as if singing the story of Hari.[707]

19. There when the fragrance of Tulasī is appreciated by Viṣṇu by wearing (as an ornament) the garland of Tulasī, even flowering plants like the Mandara, the Kunda, the Kurava, the night-lotus, the Arṇa, the Punnāga, the Nāga-kesara, the Bakula, the lotus and the Pārijāta, in their goodness of heart, paid respects to the penance of Tulasī.

20. It (the Vaikuṇṭha) is crowded with aerial cars (made) of (jewels like) *Vaidūrya* (*Lapis lazuli*), emerald (and of) gold which can be seen only by those that bow to Hari's feet. Here, damsels of big hips and beautifully smiling faces cannot,

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707. VD. explains that the chief bee's humming which sounds like 'Hari, Hari' is regarded as 'Hari Kathā'. This verse emphasizes that even birds in Vaikuṇṭha-Park are also Viṣṇu's devotees.

with their beguiling smiles and other allurements, excite passion in those devotees whose minds are fixed on Kṛṣṇa.

21. The goddess of Wealth (Lakṣmī) of beautiful form, for whose favour others are striving, stays (permanently) in Hari's residence giving up her noxious quality (of fickleness). With her lotuslike feet jingling with anklets and arms freely dangling with a lotus in hand in a sportive manner, she (i.e. her reflection) in the crystal walls chased with gold, appears as if dusting (the house with lotus).

22. Oh gods, where (in Vaikuṇṭha), in her own garden, the goddess Lakṣmī attended upon by her maid-servants, was worshipping the Lord with Tulasī petals, saw her face with beautiful locks of hair and prominent nose reflected in the ponds of pure nectarlike waters and with sloping bank (*ghāṭs*) of corals, felt that it was kissed by her Supreme Lord.

23. To which (Vaikuṇṭha) do not reach those who listen to the mind-spoiling evil stories pertaining to topics other than the deeds of creation etc. of Hari, the destroyer of sins. Alas ! These stories (on subjects concerning *Artha* and *Kāma*) when heard by unfortunate people, deprive (the hearers) of all good merits and throw them in dark hells from which there is no relief.

24. Birth in the human species is aspired after even by us (as) it is possible to gain the knowledge (i.e. realization of Brahman or the Truth along with the performance of Dharma, in it. Those who (having thus got birth as a man) do not propitiate the venerable Lord, are alas, deluded by your Māyā of very wide expanse.

25. There (to Vaikuṇṭha, above our region) go these (men) who by the service of the greatest among gods, have kept off Yama, the god of death, (or who are above the discipline of *Yama, Niyama* etc.)[708] and who being of enviable character are (spiritually) above us. While mutually discussing about the supremely glorious Lord, their mind, being overwhelmed with intense love and devotion, the hair stand on end on their bodies and tears flow from their eyes.

26. The sages were greatly overjoyed when, by their power of eightfold Yoga, they reached Vaikuṇṭha which they

708. v.l. *dūre'ham*—who have subdued their ego. (VD.).

had not seen before, and which, being presided over by the Lord of the universe, was adorable to all the worlds, and which was shining with the lustre of various heavenly cars of great gods.

27. Having crossed the six enclosures without being prevented or attracted by the wonderful sights thereof, the sages saw, at the seventh, a pair of gods of the same age, each armed with a mace gorgeously dressed and wearing extremely valuable armlets, ear-rings and diadems.[709]

28. Each of them wore around his neck and between their four bluish arms, a garland of forest-flowers (*Vanamālā*) about which swarmed the intoxicated bees, and whose face with best brows, wide nostrils and red eyes, appeared excited (angry).

29. While these two were looking on, the sages entered without asking for permission, the (seventh) gate as (they did) through the (previous) gates the panels of which were made of diamonds chased with gold. They go everywhere without any obstruction as they are free from fear due to their equality of outlook to all (or due to their sight being fixed on the Soul or the Lord).

30. The two (gods) whose nature was contrary to that of the Lord, looked at those four nude boy-sages who, despite their age, looked five years old and had realized the real nature of the Soul. Laughing (disrespectfully) at their prowess, they prevented (the sages) both by their cane (and command) even though the sages should not have been treated so.

31. When the most venerable sages were disallowed by Hari's door-keepers, while the gods were looking on, they (sages) whose eyes were suddenly overwhelmed with some anger due to their disappointment of seeing their most beloved God, spoke (as follows):

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709. This poetic description is an amalgamation of all earlier *pada* concepts of the RV. 1.12.20; 10.90.3 and those of Brāhmaṇa and Upaniṣadic concepts regarding the 'highest place'. For the evolution of this Vaikuṇṭha concept see B.Bhattacharya—*Philosophy of Bh. P.*, Vol.1, pp. 154-164.

The sages said:

32. "What a partial nature of you both who dwell here among persons who attain to this region by rendering the highest service to God and who possess the same qualities (e.g. impartiality) as of the Lord! Is there any suspicious character here resembling you in crookedness of mind (and hence worth apprehending) by you, when the Supreme Man is so very tranquil and free from all hostilities.

33.* For learned men do not see any difference here in the Lord (Viṣṇu) in whose belly lies the whole (universe). They see the (individual) Soul in the Supreme Soul like the space (in a pot) in (the bigger space of) the sky. You possess the characteristics of gods.[710] What (cause) has arisen which makes you suspect such a stomach-tearing fear to Hari ?

34. So we consider what can be done for the great welfare of you two stupid servants of the Supreme Lord of Vaikuṇṭha for this impropriety of making differences and discriminations even here. You go from this place (Vaikuṇṭha) to those sinful worlds where the three enemies (Lust, Anger and Avarice) dominate."

35. Having understood the terrible (implication of their) utterance and realizing the impossibility of protection from the Brāhmaṇa's punishment with the help of missiles, the two servants of Hari immediately prostrated themselves before them touching their feet as (they knew that even) Hari entertains great awe for them (Brāhmaṇas).

36. "May the punishment inflicted upon us, sinners, by your Venerable Selves be implemented. It will absolve us completely of our violence of even God's order. But we pray by the slight repentance awakened in us by your favour, may not the delusion erasing the memory of the Lord affect us who may go down to lower births for this offence."

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* VR. explains : The Lord contains the whole universe in his belly and difference regarding credentials of anyone entering it does not exist. Have you checked the universe from entry into the Lord's stomach? The *yogins* see the Individual Soul in (i.e. inseparably dependent on) the Supreme Soul as the space (*ākāśa*) in a pot (*ghaṭa*) is inseparably connected with the limitless space (or the sky).

710. *sura-liṅginoḥ*—You are really *daityas*, though your outward appearance is like gods.

37. At that time, knowing the offence given to the saints this way by his servants, Lord Padmanābha (Viṣṇu), the delight of the noble ones, along with Lakṣmī went there on foot which are sought after by Paramahaṁsas and great sages.

38. They saw him who was the ultimate object—the Brahman—to be realized in meditation, coming within the range of their sight. His men (attendants) promptly brought to him the usual articles (e.g. the umbrella, Chowries, at the time of going). From the pearl-fringes of his moonlike white umbrella were dripping drops of water as they (the hanging pearl-laces) were gently moving in the enjoyable breeze caused by the two *Chowries* (*cāmaras*) which were beautiful like swans.

39. (They saw him) whose extremely beautiful face was showing grace to all (the sages and the door-keepers); who is the home of (all) desirable qualities; who was (as if) touching the interior of hearts by his affectionate glances and who with the resplendent Lakṣmī on his blue broad chest was heightening the beauty of his abode (Vaikuṇṭha) situated above the heavens like a crest-jewel.

40. (They saw him) wearing a shining girdle round the yellow garment covering his big hips, and with his Vanamālā (hovered round) by humming black-bees, and who wore beautiful bracelets on his wrists, and who rested one hand on Garuḍa's shoulder and who was sportively waving a lotus with another hand.

41. (They saw him) whose face was beautiful due to his prominent nose, and cheeks suitable to grace the ear-rings shaped like *Makaras*, surpassing the lightning in brilliance; whose diadem was set with jewels and who was wearing round his neck the Kaustubha jewel and an attractive and precious necklace hanging between his big arms.

42. His devotees, with their intelligence, judged that the pride of Lakṣmī about her being possessed of the highest beauty was subdued in the presence of the Lord. Having seen the Supreme Lord assuming bodily form for me, Śiva and you (Sanatkumāras), they bowed to him with their heads but their eyes were never satisfied by gazing at him.

43. When they breathed, the air fragrant with the Tul-

asī and the filaments of the lotus of the feet of the lotus-eyed Lord entered through their nostrils, and caused excitement in the minds and bodies of the sages who have experienced the permanent—everlasting—bliss (of Brahman).

44. Seeing his face charming like the interior of a blue lotus and his *Kunda*-flower-like smile on his very beautiful lips, they felt that their desires were fulfilled. Again, when they saw his pair of feet with ruby-like nails, they meditated upon him.

45. They eulogised Viṣṇu who is the object of meditation for men who seek liberation by the Yoga-process in this world, and who showed the most venerable *Puruṣa*-form giving delight to the eyes and who is possessed of his inherent eight siddhis which are not accessible to others.

Kumāras said :

46. Oh Infinite One, you, though present in hearts of the sinners (non-devotees), are unmanifested to them, but not so to us. But it is just today that you are visible to our eyes. You entered our hearts by the way of the ears when your mystery was explained to us by our father who is born of you.

47. Oh venerable Lord, we recognize you to be that Supreme Paramātman who every moment generate (inspire) love in these devotees by means of the attribute Sattva—Paramātman whom passionless sages, whose knot of I-ness (ahaṁkāra) is severed, know in their hearts by intense Bhakti-*yoga* (and who are) understood by them through your grace.

48. Oh Lord ! Those blessed ones who have resorted to your feet and have tasted the flavour of episodes about you whose glory is highly praiseworthy and purifying, do not count (attach much value to) Mokṣa, your maximum grace. Will they attach any value to other attainments (such as Indra-hood) which are affected with terror at the bent of your brows?

49. May we at will be born even in hells by our sins, if our hearts sincerely rejoice at your feet like black bees (in lotus), and if our words, like Tulasī, get their charm (beauty) from your feet, and if our ears (passage in the ear) is filled with (the description) of your (host of innumerable) attributes.

50. Oh Lord of immense glory ! Our eyes have to our best satisfaction obtained the bliss of looking at this form which

you manifested. You who are never visible to persons with uncontrolled senses have appeared to us this way. Oh glorious Lord, we pay obeisance to you (who are of this nature.)

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(The Fall of Jaya and Vijaya)

Brahmā said

1. While the sages who were by nature Bhakti-yogis were singing his eulogy, the All-powerful Lord whose abode was in Vaikuṇṭha, received them cheerfully and spoke as follows :

The Lord said :

2-3. Oh sages, as these two servants of mine, Jaya and Vijaya, disregarding me, have gravely insulted you and slighted gods, I have approved of the punishment meted out to them by you who perform penance for me.

4. I, therefore, apologize to you today, for Brāhmaṇa is my highest deity. I regard that the offence given to you by my servants is as good as done by me.

5. When a servant has committed an offence, the world takes the name of the master. That blame spoils the reputation of the master as white leprosy dispigments the skin.

6. I am that Vaikuṇṭha by hearing whose nectarlike, pure glory, the world down to Cāṇḍāla is instantly sanctified. I who have obtained such excellent purifying reputation from honourable persons like you, would sever even my own arms if they be of a hostile nature to you.

7. By serving whom (Brāhmaṇas) I have got even the dust on my lotus-like feet so sanctifying as to purge the whole world of all impurities and have got such a good nature established in me that the goddess Lakṣmī, for the favour of whose passing glance others (i.e. gods like Brahmā etc.) observe rules (of penance), does not leave me even though I am not attached to her.

8. I do not enjoy with that much relish the sacrificial oblations offered by a performer of sacrifice as I do the ghee-dripping food through the mouth of a Brāhmaṇa who has offered all the fruits of his actions to me and who eats every morsel of that food with satisfaction.

9*. Who will not tolerate the Brāhmaṇas the dust of whose holy feet I bear on my crowns (in all my incarnations) though I am endowed with the power of the infinite and unrestrained *yoga-māyā* and though the water used for washing my feet in worship instantly sanctifies the world including god Śiva (who bears the Moon as an ornament on the forehead).

10. Brāhmaṇas, milk-yielding cows and protection-less beings are my own person (body). Those who look upon them as different from me, get themselves torn with rage by the bills of vulture-like servants of Yama who is appointed for dispensation of punishment—servants whose anger is like serpents.

11. I am won over by them who, looking upon even harsh-speaking Brāhmaṇas as *me* (Hari) address and honour them with a joyous heart, and with their lotus-like faces beaming over (lit. sprinkled) with nectar-like (sweet) smiles, praise them in affectionate terms like a (loving) son unto (his angry) father (or an affectionate father to his excited son) or as I have done (to Bhṛgu or to you).

12. It will be a favour to me if these two servants who did not understand the intention of their Lord (*me*) should again return to my presence after immediately undergoing the lower stage for insulting you. May the banishement of the servants terminate before long.[711]

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*VC. construes differently : 'It is due to my bearing the dust of the holy feet of Brāhmaṇas that I became possessed of the excellence of the Yoga-māyā, etc.

711. *Yat . . . vivāsaḥ* : (i) May their special residence with me (as master and servant) be restored soon—ŚR., VC.

(ii) VR. : It is my grace due to which these servants, undergoing the punishment for their misdemeanour will return to me within a short period.

(iii) Had it not been my grace, they would never escape the Asura-yoni due to Brahmanical curse. Their early return after completion of their term in Asura-life is due to my favour. The word *hi* denotes the consent of Sanaka and other sages for this way out of the curse.

Brahmā said :

13. At that time, the mind of those sages which was over-whelmed with (the poisonous snake bite in the from of) rage was not satisfied even though they tasted (i.e. heard the sweetness of) the Lord's attractive and brilliant speech composed of a stream of Mantras—speech similar to river Sarasvatī which is lovely, heavenly, suitable to the assembly of sages.

14. Giving ear with close attention to the true but beautiful speech which was brief yet difficult to comprehend due to its weighty import, unfathomable intention and deep significance, they did not understand what he wished to do, despite their consideration.

15. The highly delighted Brāhmaṇas with hair standing on their ends (on their skin) folded their hands and addressed to him who had manifested the highest glory of his supreme authority by his *yoga-māyā*.

The sages said :

16. Oh god, we do not understand your implication when you, the Supreme Lord say (to us), 'You have done me a fovour! (lit. favour has been done to me by you)'.

17. It is reported that to you, the protector of Brāhmaṇas, Brāhmaṇas are the supreme deity. But you, the supreme Lord, are both the soul and the God unto the Brāhmaṇas who are adorable to gods.

18. You are the source of eternal Dharma. It is protected ed by your forms. You are regarded as the highest fruit (of Dharma and hence) deserve to be kept secret (—a fruit not perishable like the attainment of heaven) and you are changeless and imperishable.

19. How is it conceivable that Your honour is to be favoured by others—Your Honour by whose grace the *Yogins* become unattached (to the world) and easily transgress (the *saṁsāra*—cycle of birth and) death.

20* The Goddess Lakṣmī, the dust on whose feet is applied to their heads by others desirous of attaining different *Puruṣārthas*, appears to crave for the place of the black-bee chief whose dwelling is in fresh Tulasī garland offered (in

*This refers to supra III, 16.7.

worship) to your feet by the blessed ones. Hence verily she serves you every now and then.

21. You who are highly attached to your great devotees, do not show much regard to goddess Lakṣmī who waits upon you by her pious acts of worship (which nobody else can perform. You are the receptacle of all excellences[711]a. Such as you are, are you purified by the dust on the road sanctified by the feet of the Brāhmaṇas and by the mark of Śrī Vatsa ? Do these add to your adornments ?

22. Oh Triyuga![712] It is really for the sake of Brāhmaṇas and gods that you, the Supreme Lord, Dharma incarnate, have protected this world of movables and immovables by your three feet (viz. *Tapas*—penance, *Śauca*—purity, and *Dayā*—mercy). By means of Sattva, your body which favours us with blessings,[713] you have done away with the attributes *rajas* and *tamas* which obstruct Dharma.

23. Oh God, if you do not protect by sweet words and proper honour, the race of the best of Brāhmaṇas who deserve specially your protection, then your own auspicious path (of Vedas) will be lost. For people will regard that behaviour of the most excellent (person like you) as the standard (to follow).

24. That (loss of Vedic path) is not at all desired by you. You are an ocean of the attribute of Sattva. You who have destroyed your adversaries by your powers, desire to achieve the good of the world. You are the ruler of the three worlds and protector of the universe. By such bowing (to the Brāhmaṇas) your splendour does not diminish. It is for the guidance of the world.

25. Oh Supreme Lord, we shall sincerely approve of

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711 a. You are absolutely pure as you are the receptacle of all attributes worth possessing. Do the dust on streets traversed by Brāhmaṇas and the Śrī Vatsa mark (left by the kick of Bhṛgu) sanctify you ? Or do you regard them as ornaments?—ŚR.

712. *tri-yuga*—(i) He who manifests himself as *avatāra* in three-*yuga* period.

(ii) One who possesses six excellences viz., knowledge, power etc. —the characteristics of *bhagavān*—ŚR., VR., VC., etc.

713. *varadayā*—By your body (*avatāra*) called Kapila—VJ.

whatever punishment or respectful treatment your honour will mete out to both of these. Or you may inflict suitable punishment on us who have pronounced the curse on those innocent door-keepers.

The Lord said :

26. "Oh Brāhmaṇas, please note that this curse of yours was ordained by me. These two will immediately take birth as non-heavenly beings (Daityas). Having developed their *yoga* by concentration intensified by wrath, both these will soon return to me."

Brahmā said:

27-28. "Then the sages, having seen Viṣṇu, the receptacle of delight to the eyes, and his abode, the self-illuminating Vaikuṇṭha, circumambulated the Lord, bowed down to him. Taking leave of him, they returned, full of joy, praising the glory of Viṣṇu.

29. Lord Viṣṇu said to his servants, "You go (now). Do not be afraid. May you be happy. Though I am competent to do so, I do not wish to counteract the power of Brāhmaṇas, as it is my will.

30. Formerly this has been ordained by enraged Laksmī whom you prevented at the door from entering as I was then absorbed in Yogic sleep.

31. Within a short period of time, you will return to my presence after undergoing the curse of Brahmanical insult by means of your concentration in me due to anger."

32. Having ordered the door-keepers thus, Lord Viṣṇu entered into his abode which appeared beautiful by a row of heavenly cars and which was endowed with splendour excelling all[714].

33. Those two prominent gods (Jaya and Vijaya) whose glory and pride deserted them due to the irrevocable Brahmanical curse, fell down from Vaikuṇṭha (Hari's abode).

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714. Which surpassed everything else in beauty as it was meant for goddess Lakṣmī—VB.

Or, He entered his mansion along with Lakṣmī who excelled all—VR.

34. Oh children (Gods), while they were thus falling down from the region of Vaikuṇṭha, there was a loud cry expressing grief (Alas! Alas!) from great persons in heavenly cars.

35. And those very prominent attendants of Hari have now entered the powerful lustre (semen) of Kāśyapa deposited in the womb of Diti.

36. It is by the lustre of the twin-Asuras that your glory has been eclipsed. And Lord Viṣṇu himself wills it.

37. The Lord (Viṣṇu), the supreme ruler of the three worlds, the First Being, the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, whose *Yoga-māyā* cannot be transgressed by masters of Yoga, will do what is good to us. Of what use (effect) is our thought (brooding) in that matter ?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(*The Birth of Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu—Hiraṇyākṣa's Victories*)

Maitreya said:

1. Having heard the cause as explained by the Self-born god (Brahmā), all the gods, with their fear dispelled, returned to Svarga.

2. On account of her husband's prediction, Diti was apprehensive of the troubles (to be caused) by her progeny[715]. At the end of hundred years she gave birth to male-twins.

3. At the time of their birth, there were many evil portents boding terrible calamities to the world, appearing in the heavens, on the earth, and in the sky.

4. The earth, along with mountains, quaked violently everywhere. All the directions were ablaze. Meteors and thunders showered down. Comets foreboding distress appeared (in the sky).

715. *apatya-pariśaṅkinī*—Afraid of harm to her children by Hari—VJ.

5. An extremely biting stormy wind frequently roaring (through the sky) blew with its army of whirlwinds, uprooting big trees, and raising its banner of dust (aloft).

6. When stars (and luminaries) in the sky disappeared, being covered by dark clouds roaring with laughter in the form of lightnings, not a single spot could be seen, due to surging darkness.

7. The ocean with its tidal waves and its interior agitated (by acquatic animals), roared as if depressed in spirits. Rivers as well as wells and tanks with lotuses withering there-in, were perturbed.

8. There were frequent misty halos round the Sun and the Moon eclipsed by Rāhu. There were roars of thunders without clouds—deep sound like rattling of chariots came out from the mountain caves.

9. In villages female jackals vomited terrible fire from their mouths, and howled out ominously, along with cries of he-jackals and hooting of owls.

10. Here and there dogs gave out different types of barking sounds with their neck raised, as if in singing or crying.

11. Oh Vidura, herds of maddened donkeys ran about kicking the surface of the earth with their hard hoofs and brayings vehemently.

12. Birds being terrified by the donkeys, screamed out and flew out of their nests. Beasts which were in the jungle and in their pens, excreted dung and urine.

13. Cows were frightened and blood issued from their udders. The clouds showered pus. The idols of gods shed tears. Trees were uprooted though there was no wind.

14. Evil planets (like the Mars) crossed and passed over auspicious planets, and the constellations or stars, and reverting in a crooked course, they fought with each other.

15. Seeing such other terrible omens, people, with the exception of Brahmā's sons (like Sanat Kumāra), being ignorant of the real implication of these portents, were terrified, and thought that the (time of the) destruction of the universe had come.

16. Those two primitive Daityas, with their bodies hard

as rock, grew up fast like big mountains, exhibiting their inborn prowess.

17. They stood touching the heavens with the crest of their gold crowns, embracing all the directions by their arms adorned with brilliant armlets, shaking the earth at every step, surpassing the Sun's lustre by the brilliance of the girdle round their waist.

18. The Prajāpati (Kāśyapa) gave them names. Of the twins who was first born of his body was known as Hiraṇyakaśipu and people call (the other) Hiraṇyākṣa, whom she (Diti) gave birth first*.

19. Hiraṇyakaśipu had no fear of death by the boon of Brahmā. He became arrogant. He subdued by the power of his arms, the worlds along with their protectors.

20. He loved his younger brother Hiraṇyākṣa who wished to please him (Hiraṇyakaśipu). Spoiling for fight every day, he took a mace in his hand, and went to heaven seeking war.

21-22. When gods saw him advancing with irresistible speed, making the tinkling sound of his gold anklets, and wearing the Vaijayantī garland[716], shouldering his big mace, proudly confident of his physical and mental powers, and of the boons (conferred by Brahmā), unconfrontable and undeterred, they concealed themselves like serpents afraid of Garuḍa.

23. When the king of Daityas saw that Indra along with all the gods had verily hid himself at the sight of his terrible might, and was not excited[717], he roared loudly.

24. Returning thence (from Svarga) and with a desire to sport, (Hiraṇyākṣa) of immense might, dived into the unfathomable, terribly roaring ocean, like an intoxicated elephant.

25. When he entered the ocean, the soldiers of Varuṇa, viz. all the acquatic animals, lost their morale. Though they

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* When twins are born, the first child that is born is regarded as the younger, for the elder child gets a position behind it in the womb. This concept underlies the above verse.

716. *Vaijayantī*—(i) A long necklace or garland of eight kinds of pearls—VD.

(ii) A four-fold garland of flowers—VJ.

717. v.l. *klībān*—the effeminate Indra and the gods etc.

were not (physically) struck down (by him), they got terrified, and overwhelmed by his splendour, they ran away to a long distance.

26. Oh child, for many years he (Hiraṇyākṣa) of monstrous strength, wandered through the ocean often beating down with his mace of black iron[718], huge waves which were frequently swelled by his heavy breath. (Finally) he arrived at Vibhāvarī, the capital of Varuṇa.

27. Seeing there Varuṇa, the protector of the Asura region, and the lord of acquatic animals, he smiled, and ridiculing him with a bow like a mean person, he spoke, 'Your imperial majesty, be pleased to give me a fight'.

28. 'Oh Lord, you are the protector of the world, a great sovereign of wide reputation. You are the subduer of the valour of warriors who consider themselves haughty and valiant. You have formerly performed the Rājasūya sacrifice after conquering all the Daityas and Dānavas in the world.'

29. The glorious lord of waters who was thus bitterly derided by the enemy who was puffed up with excessive arrogance, controlled, by force of his reason, his anger which was thus provoked. He spoke out, 'Oh (valiant warrior), we have now grown tranquil.

30. Oh leader of Asuras, I do not see any other person except the Primeval Man who can satisfy in fight a pastmaster in the science of war like you. Go to him whom high-minded warriors like you eulogize.

31. He takes incarnations for putting down wicked persons like you, and for favouring the good, with his grace. You approach that warrior. You will (then) be rid of your pride and will lie (slain) in the bed of warriors (battlefield) surrounded by dogs."

718. Or the mace which was firmly tied down with the rope of *mūrvā* grass—ŚR.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(Hiraṇyākṣa's Fight with Varāha)

Maitreya said:

1. Having thus heard the speech of the Lord of Waters (Varuṇa), the haughty and ferocious (Hiraṇyāksa) just ignored it. Having learnt from Nārada the arrival of Hari, Oh Vidura, he hurriedly rushed into Rasātala.[719]

2. He saw there Hari (conqueror of all) who was holding the earth, and was lifting it up with the tip of his tusks, and surpassing his (Hiraṇyākṣa's) splendour by his reddish eyes. He laughed out saying, "Oh this is an amphibious beast."[720]

3. He spoke to him, "Come here, Oh fool; leave the earth. This has been given to us, the dwellers of Rasātala by the creator of the universe (otherwise it would not have come down to us). Oh you meanest of gods who have assumed the form of a boar, you cannot get away with the earth safely in my presence.[721]

4. Are you employed by our enemies for destroying us? You kill Asuras by Māyā and thus conquer them by fraudulent means. Oh dunce, I shall wipe out the sorrows of my friends by killing you, whose strength lies in *yoga-māyā*, but have little personal bravery.[722]

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719. *saṁviviśe*—dived forth for Rasātala with his eyes closed —VJ.

720. ŚR. states that this apparently provocative speech is the praise of Nārāyaṇa as Hiraṇyākṣa was his attendant in his previous birth. Hence *Vana . . . . mṛgaḥ*. He is the Nārāyaṇa who sleeps on waters, and who is sought after by Yogis or who hunts after the wicked for killing—ŚR.

721. Eulogistic interpretation : Oh omniscient one (*ajña*) to whom all gods are inferior, while I am witnessing you setting me at naught, carry away the earth. There is no doubt that you will acquire our prosperous kingdom. But as a favour to us, kindly leave it. You have assumed this boar form as a pastime (*līlā*)—ŚR., VR.

722. Eulogistic interpretation : (i) For the sake of Liberation, you are resorted to by our halfbrothers (gods and sages). By your Māyā—power you kill the Asuras and thus kill them from afar (yourself standing aloof). You are the maintainer of the ignorant. You are so powerful by your *yoga-māyā* that the prowess of others is insignificant before you. I shall establish you in my heart (like a *Yogin*) and put an end to the miseries of my friends.—ŚR.

5. When you lie dead with your head shattered by the mace (*gadā*) hurled by my arms, the gods and sages who worship you with offerings, being uprooted, will be no more.[723]

6. Though afflicted by the Tomara—(a javelin) like piercing (sharp) words of the enemy, he put up with that (mental) torment,[724] when he found that the earth on the tip of his tusk was frightened, and he came out of water like a big he-elephant along with the she-elephant when it is attacked by a crocodile.

7. Just as a crocodile pursues an elephant getting out of water, the Demon with hair of gold, of terrible tusks and of thundering voice, followed him who was rising out of water and roared, "Is there anything reproachful to the shameless wicked ?"[725]

8. He (Varāha) placed the earth on the water within the range of perception, and infused in it his power of supporting (mountains etc.). Despite the watching of the enemy (Hiraṇyākṣa), he was praised by Brahmā and was showered over with flowers by gods.[726]

(ii) Are you resorted to by our enemies, viz. Sanaka etc. and gods for Mokṣa (as one attains Mokṣa by worshipping the Lord in this world) ? No. They cannot, as they are inimical to us, your devotees. I am not your enemy. That you kill Asuras is just to deceive the people. As a matter of fact you give them *sāyujya Mukti*, for Asura means Yogin. You kill only the sensual ones. You indirectly vanquish the Asuras. I shall establish you in my heart—you who give knowledge to the ignorant. And by concentrating on you, I along with my family will get liberated—VB.

723. When you will be standing at ease with your head unhurt even by the mace struck by our arms, your new devotees who will worship you with offerings and your old devotees, viz. gods and sages, will not be without roots, i.e. will stay firmly established—ŚR.

724. (i) Seeing the torment caused to Brahmā and others who put a superficial interpretation on the speech of Hiraṇyākṣa—ŚR.

(ii) He tolerated the apparent hatred in the sharp words piercing like a Tomara (a javelin) as he appreciated Hiraṇyākṣa's inner devotion. —VJ.

725. (i) Out of compassion for the frightened earth some flight is not reproachful.—ŚR.

(ii) Fie on us (wicked ones) who pursue the Varāha who lifts the earth for the good of the world. What shameful act would shamelessly selfish persons like me not do ?—ŚR.

726. v.l. *viśvasṛjāmprasūnaiḥ*—(i) He was praised by gods and sons of Brahmā—ŚR. (ii) He was eulogised by gods who were the flower-like progeny of Brahmā—VD.

9. He (the Varāha), feigning extreme wrathfulness, and with a (derisive) laughter, spoke to him (the demon) who was pursuing him with a big mace, and had put on gold ornaments and a wonderful armour of gold, and was constantly wounding him to the quick with harsh words.

The Lord said :

10. Oh Hiraṇyākṣa, it is true that we are wild beasts in the jungle. I am in search of domestic lions (dogs) like you. Oh evil fellow, warriors do not care for the bragging of yours who are bound down by the cords (noose) of death.

11*. Here we are, the usurpers of the deposit of the denizens of Rasātala. We are shameless and are made to run away by your mace. (Though unable), we have to take a stand with great difficulty on the battlefield, as stay we must. Where can we go after provoking enmity with the powerful ?

12. You are verily the chief of the leaders of foot-soldiers. Quickly and without hesitation try to defeat us. Wipe out the tears of your relatives by defeating us. He who does not fulfill his vow is not fit for society.

Maitreya said :

13. He who was thus censured and ridiculed by the Lord in anger, grew extremely angry like a big serpent forced to play.

14. Being enraged, breathing heavily and with senses agitating in wrath, the Daitya rushing vehemently at Hari, struck him with his mace.

15. Just as a Yogin evades the god of death, the Lord, moving aside, parried the blow of the mace aimed at his chest by the enemy.

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* VR. takes these statements as interrogatives implying negative replies : We take away the earth on which you place your foot (i.e. is your support). But is it the property of the dwellers of Rasātala ? (No, it is not their personal property). Are we the shameless who are put to flight by you with a mace ? (No. We shall make you flee). etc.

VB. interprets differently : We take away the deposit (the earth), as masters do not steal it away like thieves. Those who fly away without putting up a fight and simply boast are shameless. But a person with a sense of shame will not fight with a servant (like you in previous birth) | etc.

16. Being enraged, Hari rushed at him who had taken his mace again and was brandishing it, constantly biting his lower lip in anger.

17. Oh gentle Vidura, the Lord then struck the enemy on his right brow with his mace. But he, a pastmaster in mace fight, returned the blow.

18. In this way, the extremely enraged Hari and Hiraṇyākṣa began to strike each other with their heavy maces for defeating the other.

19. When the combatants competed with each other, exchanging heavy blows with their massive maces, and their rage went ablazing at the smell of the blood flowing from their bodies, and began to move in wonderful ways with an ambition for victory, their fight appeared like that of two powerful bulls fighting for a cow, on the earth.

20. Oh Vidura, Brahmā surrounded by sages arrived there to see the fight of the combatants aspiring for the earth-combat of the Daitya (Hiraṇyākṣa) and the great (Supreme) Soul who by his Māyā assumed the boar form, the limbs of which are sacrifices.

21. Seeing that the Daitya who had possessed valour and pride and had lost all fear, offered resistance, and was of irresistible prowess, Lord Brahmā, the leader of thousands of sages, spoke to the Primitive Boar, Nārāyaṇa.

Brahmā said :

22-23. Oh God, this is (the demon) who does wrong, inspires fear and does evil to gods, Brāhmaṇas, *Kāmadhenus* (wish-yielding cows), and innocent beings who resort to your feet. This Asura has obtained boons from me. He is in search of a competent fighter but has found none. He roams over the world troubling the people.

24. Oh God, do not play with him as a child does with an enraged serpent—him who is master of *Māyā*, haughty, uncontrolled and the wicked-most.

25. Oh Acyuta, so long as this terrible (Hiraṇyākṣa) does not grow terrible and unconquerable by resorting to his (Āsurī) Māyā at his favourable time, kill him.

26. Oh Lord, this most terrible even-tide (evening-time)

which is destructive of the world, is approaching. Oh the Soul of all, bring victory to gods before that time.

27. Now this auspicious periód, called *Abhijit*, which lasts for two *muhūrtas* has arrived. At least for the good of your friends, the gods, quickly finish with this unconquerable Daitya.

28. Fortunately this (Hiraṇyākṣa), of his own accord has come to meet death ordained for him. Heroically kill him in the battle, and place (establish) the people in happiness.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

(*Varāha kills Hiraṇyākṣa*)

Maitreya said:

1. Having heard Brahmadeva's sincere and nectarlike speech, and having laughed (at Brahmā's naivete to advise astrologically favourable moment to the Lord himself whose form is time, he accepted his (prayer) with a side-glance implying affection.

2. Then that Ādi-Varāha who was born from Brahmā's nostrils, jumped at the enemy who was fearlessly moving in front of him, and struck the Asura on his chin by his mace.

3. A miracle happened. That (Lord's) mace struck down by his (Asura's) mace fell down rolling from the Lord's hand and the Asura's valour appeared splendid.

4. Then although he (the Asura) got an opportunity, he did not strike the Lord who was weaponless. He respected the prescribed code of conduct, in the battle enraging Hari.

5. When there was a loud uproar at that snatching away of the mace, the All-pervading Lord appreciated the (Asura's) righteous conduct, and remembered (mentally commissioned) his *Sudarśana*-disc (*cakra*).

6. 'May you be prosperous', 'kill him'. Such were the various shouts (utterances) all around in the sky from the celestial beings who were ignorant of his prowess, when he with

his eager Sudarśana was attacked in close quarters by his chief attendant (now born as) the vile son of Diti.

7. Observing the lotus-eyed Lord standing before him with the Sudarśana-disc (ready for discharge) in his hand, he (the Asura) with his senses throbbing with rage, and breathing heavily, bit his lip in rage.

8. He (the Asura) of fearful tusks, stared at him with glaring eyes as if to burn him down, and springing upon him, assaulted him with his mace, shouting, 'You are killed'.

9. Oh pious Vidura! while the enemy was just looking agape, the Lord, as the sacrifice in the Boar form, easily kicked with his left foot the mace which came with the velocity of a stormy wind.

10. And (the Varāha) said, "Take up the weapon. As you wish to conquer, try (again)". When addressed thus, he (the Asura) struck again, and roared lustily.

11. Seeing the mace coming towards him, the Lord stood firm and easily caught hold of the weapon like Garuḍa catching a female serpent.

12. When his personal valour failed, the great Asura, being humiliated, and splendourless, did not wish to take the mace (though) offered by Hari.

13. He took up a trident spear, eager to envelop (eat up) everything like a flaming fire, and aimed it at the chest of Viṣṇu who had assumed the form of sacrifice like the use of black magic against a pious Brāhmaṇa.

14. Just as Indra cut down the feather thrown out by Garuḍa[727], he (Varāha), with his disc of sharp edge cut asunder the trident, forcibly hurled by the great Daitya warrior—the trident of extreme refulgence which shone through the sky (as it darted towards Hari).

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727. The comparison is between the shining Triśūla darting through the sky and the refulgent feather of Garuḍa falling through the sky illuminating it on its way down. This refers to the incident when Garuḍa was carrying away Amṛta (nectar), Indra came in the way and hurled his *Vajra* (thunderbolt) at him. To respect the bones of the sage Dadhīca of which Vajra was made, Garuḍa dropped a feather and told Indra that he was not affected by the impact of Vajra but he dropped the feather out of respect for sage Dadhīca—MBH.I-33. 18-23.

15. When his trident was shattered to pieces by Hari's disc (*Sudarśana-cakra*), the Asura got extremely enraged. Shouting lustily he confronted Hari and dealt a punch with his hard fist on his broad magnificent[728] chest and disappeared.

16. Oh Vidura, Lord Ādi-Varāha who was thus struck, did not move even slightly like an elephant struck by a garland.

17. Then he created and used different forms of his black magic against Hari, the Lord of *Yoga Māyā*. Seeing it (Asura's *māyā*) all creatures got panicky and thought that the end of the world (*pralaya*) was imminent.

18. Terrible stormy winds began to blow and spread darkness of dust. Volleys of stones as if discharged from slings, fell from all quarters.

19. The sky, being covered with clouds accompanied by lightning-flashes and thundering and pouring frequently pus, hair, blood, excretion, urine and bones, seemed devoid of luminaries.

20. Oh sinless Vidura, the mountains appeared to shower various weapons[729] and naked female Rākṣasas with their hair let loose, appeared with spears.

21. Very harsh and murderous cries (such as 'cut down, break down, etc.) were shouted out by a host of blood-thirsty Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, foot-soldiers, (riders on) horses, chariots and elephants.

22. Lord (Varāha) of three feet[730] discharged his favourite missile Sudarśana destroying the Asura type of black magic manifested (there).

23. Simultaneously there was a sudden trembling in the heart of Diti who remembered her husband's words and blood oozed out of her breast.

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728. *vibhūtimat*—the abode of Lakṣmī (VR.)

729. VC. takes this as qualifying Rākṣasa women—'Naked Rākṣasa women discharging various kinds of weapon',

730. This is the incarnation of *Yajña-Varāha* or Boar which was sacrifice incarnate. The three *savanas* are regarded as the three feet of *Yajña*. Hence this attribute is applied to Viṣṇu as Varāha.—ŚR., VB.

VJ. states : 'Amṛta, Kṣema and Abhaya' are the three feet of Lord. In Puruṣasūkta Puruṣa is *tripād*.

24. When his magical forces were totally destroyed, he again approached Keśava (Viṣṇu), and tried angrily to crush him in the clasp of his arms, but found him outside his clasp.

25. While he was dealing blows with his adamant-like (hard) fists to Viṣṇu, he hit the Asura at the root of his ear by his hand (i.e. foreleg) as Indra, Lord of Maruts, did to Vṛtra.

26. By the casual blow of the conqueror of the universe (Viṣṇu), the Asura fell like a giant tree uprooted by a stormy wind. His body was rolling about. His eye-balls fell out. His arms, feet and hair lay shattered.

27. Brahmā and others (sages) who came there saw the Asura of terrific tusks and lips bitten, lying on the ground, but with undiminished lustre. They exclaimed in praise, 'Oh who could attain to such (type of) death !'

28. This wicked Daitya kicked by Viṣṇu's fore-leg, gave up his body while looking at the face of Viṣṇu on whom the *yogins* meditate by *samādhi-yoga* in solitude with a desire to get liberation from this *Liṅga-śarīra*,[731] enveloping the Soul.

29. These two Viṣṇu's attendants who have come down to evil births due to a curse, will again be reinstated to their (former) status, after some births in this world.

Gods said :

30. "Oh Lord, we bow to you again and again. You who are the cause of extension of Yajña[732] assumed the form of pure *Sattva* attribute for the maintenance (and protection) of the world. It is a matter of joy that this Daitya who was a scourge (lit. afflictor) of the world is killed. We are quite happy in the devotion of your feet."

Maitreya said :

31. In this way, having killed Hiraṇyākṣa of irresistible valour, Hari, the Primitive Boar, being praised by Brahmā

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731. In Vedānta philosophy this subtle body is regarded as the indestructible original of the gross or visible body. ASD 816.

732. *yajña-tantave* : (i) the source or promoter of *yajña* (sacrifice) —VR., VC,

(ii) who are yourself the institution of *yajña* (incarnate)—VB.

and other gods, retired to his region (Vaikuṇṭha) of uninterrupted bliss.

32. Oh good friend, Hiraṇyākṣa of great valour was disposed of (killed) like a toy in a big battle. This exploit of Hari who assumed the boar incarnation has been narrated to yuo by me as described to me by my teacher.

Sūta said:

33. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka), on hearing this episode of the Lord from Maitreya, Vidura, the great devotee of the Lord was highly delighted.

34. How much more shall we be delighted to hear the deeds of Lord Viṣṇu when we feel such a joy at hearing the deeds of the pious persons of sanctifying reputation and highly glorious fame?

35. He (Viṣṇu) instantaneously rescued from danger the big elephant which being caught by a crocodile, meditated of his lotuslike feet while the she-elephants (his companions) were trumpeting.

36. What grateful person will not serve him who is easily propitiated by straightforward persons completely depending on him but difficult for propitiation to the wicked.

37. Oh Brāhmaṇas, a person becomes free from the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa, if he (the sinner) hears, sings or takes delight in the episode of his miraculous action of killing Hiraṇyākṣa—a sport of Hari who assumed the boar form for the purpose (of lifting up the earth).

38. This (episode of Hari) is highly meritorious, extremely sanctifying, conferring wealth, fame, longevity, blessings; in battles it protects life and organs of senses and inspires heroic spirit. The listeners of this ultimately attain to Nārāyaṇa as the final resort.

CHAPTER TWENTY

(*Various Creations of Brahmā*)

Śaunaka said:

1. Oh son of Sūta Romaharṣaṇa, having established himself on the earth, what did Svāyambhuva Manu do to create openings (ways) for the creation of beings of later birth (as they were absorbed within God)?

2. The great devotee (of Kṛṣṇa) viz., Vidura, was absolutely devoted to Kṛṣṇa.[733] He abandoned his elder brother (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) along with his sons, as he was wicked to Kṛṣṇa.

3. Vidura who was born of Dvaipāyana, was in no way inferior to him in greatness. He was devoted to Kṛṣṇa with all his heart.[734] He was also attached to the devotees (of the Lord).

4. Vidura cleansed his sins by resorting to sacred places. What did he ask of Maitreya who was the foremost one among the knowers of the truth after approaching him while he was sitting at Kuśāvarta ?

5. Oh Sūta, while they were conversing, sacred stories relating to the lotuslike feet of Hari, must have issued—stories which were sanctifying like the waters of the Gaṅgā which resorts to his lotuslike feet.

6. Please extol to us the deeds (of Hari) which are sublime and worth describing. God may bless you. But what man of taste will feel satiated while drinking the nectar in the form of Hari's *līlās*?

7. Ugraśravas who was thus asked by the sages dwelling in the Naimiṣa forest fixed his mind on the Lord and spoke to them, 'Please hear'.

Sūta said:

8. Having heard the lifting up of the earth from the *Rasātala* by Hari assuming the body of a boar through his Māyā,

733. *aikāntikaḥ suhṛt* : One who is convinced about Hari being the only supreme being.—VJ.

734. *sarvātmanā* : (i) Thinking him to be his every relation such as father, mother etc.—VR.

and Hari's *līlā* of easily slaying Hiraṇyākṣa, Vidura felt rejoiced and asked the sage (Maitreya).

Vidura said:

9. Oh Brāhmaṇa, God Brahmā knows the course of the unmanifested Lord.[735] What did the Lord of Prajāpatis begin to do for the creation of beings after procreating Prajāpatis (progenitors like Marīci etc.)?

10. How did Brāhmaṇas like Marīci and Svāyambhuva Manu create this world at the behest of Brahmā?

11. Did they create this world with their wives? Or did they do so independently (without wives?) Or was this world produced jointly by them all?

Maitreya said:

12. The principle called *Mahat* was evolved out of *Prakṛti* composed of three *guṇas* (viz. *Sattva, Rajas and Tamas*) which got agitated by (the will of) the unperturbable Lord due to the incomprehensible destiny (*adṛṣṭa*) of *jīvas*, by the will power of the Supreme Being (the controller of *Prakṛti*) and through the force of unwinking (ever alert) Time.[736]

13. *Ahaṁkāra* (*bhūtādi*) was created out of *Mahat* which was predominently full of *rajas*. It (*ahaṁkāra*) was of three forms (namely *Vaikārika, Rājasa* and *Tāmasa*) and it was urged by *adṛṣṭa* (destiny of *jīvas*). It (*ahaṁkāra*) created the groups of five each : of subtle elements (*tanmātrās*), five gross elements

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735. *avyakta-mārga-vit* : ŚR. takes it to qualify Maitreya and interprets: "who knows the reality which is not within the range of our senses."

736. As usual, commentators impose their views of creation on this verse. For example, VJ. : Due to the impelling of Lord Viṣṇu who lay on his bed along with Lakṣmī, on the waters of the deluvian ocean, there was disturbance in the balance of *guṇas* leading to the creation of Mahat and its presiding deity Brahmā. This agitation in *gunas* was due to God who gave effect to the destiny (*adṛṣṭa*) of *jīvas* and the Time of creation.

VB. states that *Mahat* did not evolve out of *Prakṛti*, but was due to the disturbance in the attributes of Brahman. The three attributes of Brahman are : (1) *Daiva* (Lord's will, or desire to create), (2) *Para* i.e. *Puruṣa* or *akṣara*. This is *Rājasa*; (3) *Kāla* (the ever alert Time. This is Tāmasa). *Daiva* or Lord's will being indescribable is called incomprehensible. The agitation of the three attributes (*g uṇas*) o the Lord led to the evolution of *Mahat*.

such as the sky etc., five conative organs of senses and five cognitive organs of senses and their presiding deities.

14. The above things as separate ones were unable to create this *Brahmāṇḍa* of five *bhūtas*. When they came together by the inscrutable power of the Lord, they created the golden Egg.

15. That Egg being devoid of *Ātman* or Intelligent Being to preside over it, lay for one thousand years in the waters of the ocean. (At the end of that period) *Īśvara* (the controlling Almighty) entered into it.

16. From his navel sprouted forth a lotus with the great splendour of one thousand sons. It was the abode of all living beings. Therein was manifested God Brahmā.

17. God Brahmā who was guided by the Supreme Being who was lying on the ocean, created the well-arranged universe as before, with its own arrangement of names and forms.

18. Out of his ignorance or *Tamoguṇa*, Brahmā created *avidyā* of five forms, viz., *tāmisra*, *andha-tāmisra*, *tamas*, *moha*, and *mahātamas*.[737]

19. Not being pleased with his body which was composed of *tamas*, he cast it off. *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas* accepted that body which was in the form of night and which was the cause of hunger and thirst.

20. Being overcome with hunger and thirst, they ran at him to eat him up. Being afflicted with hunger and thirst they cried out, "Don't protect him, devour him".

21. God Brahmā being frightened, requested them, "Oh don't devour me, protect me. You *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas* are born of me".

22. Shining with brilliant light he chiefly produced these deities who playing with the light, i.e. day time, thus shed by him, claimed the day as theirs.

23. God Brahmā created sexually over-passionate Asuras from the lower part of his body. Out of lust, they approached him for copulation.

24. Thereupon god Brahmā laughed. But when he was pursued by the shameless Asuras, he got enraged, afraid and fled away in great haste.

737. For these *avidyās* vide supra III.10,17; III.12.2.

25. He approached Hari who removes the distress of the afflicted and confers boons on them, and who with a view to bestowing his grace, manifests himself to his devotees in the form desired by them.

26. (Brahmā prayed) : 'Oh Supreme Soul, protect me. It is at your command that I created (these) beings. Oh Lord, these wicked beings fall upon me to satiate their lust.

27. You are the only one who can certainly remove the distress of the afflicted persons. You are the only one who can give trouble to those who do not resort to your feet'.

28. (Hari) who vividly reads the minds of others understood Brahmā's pitiable condition and told him, "Give up your terrible body". Being thus commanded, Brahmā abandoned it.[738]

29*-31. Oh Vidura, all the Asuras thought (the evening to be a woman) and were foolishly infatuated of her—a woman whose lotuslike feet were jingling with anklets, whose eyes were overcome with intoxication, whose loins (middle) were covered with shining silken *sāri* (fixed up) with a girdle of small tinkling bells, whose big high breasts closely brushing each other left no space on her bosom (i.e. completely occupied it), whose nose was shapely, rows of teeth beautiful, smiles fascinating and glances sportive. The mass of hair (on whose head) were dark blue. She (as it were) concealed herself (from their glances) out of shyness.

32. (The Asuras appreciated in wonder) : "Oh what a beautiful form! What boldness! What a fascinating prime of youth! Without a touch of passion she moves amongst us who are full of lust."

33. Entertaining different ideas about the Evening in the form of a young woman, the wicked-minded Asuras, out of lust, asked her courteously:

738. ŚR. explains that all such references to abandon the body mean eschewing the particular state of mind and assumption of body implies assumption of a particular state of mind.

*ŚR. and VR. state that the body thus given up by Brahmā became the evening time when sexual passions are normally aroused. This explanation introduces the following description of the evening as a beautiful lady.

34. "Oh lady of beautiful thighs, who are you ? Whose daughter are you? Oh beautiful girl, what is your object here? Why do you torment us, the unfortunate ones by exhibiting the invaluable commodity of your beauty ?

35. You may be anybody. But we have the good fortune of having a look at you. You agitate the hearts of the onlookers by your play with the ball.

36. Oh beautiful lady, while you are frequently beating down the falling ball with the palm of your hand, your lotus-like feet are not steady at any place. Your middle (waist) being afraid of the heavy burden of your big breasts, feels fatigued. Your clear eyes appear serene[739] and the braided hair beautiful."

37. In this way, the dull-witted Asuras, thinking the evening time to be a woman as it appeared to them as such, and attracted their hearts, accepted her.

38. With a laugh of deep erotic significance god Brahmā created the tribes called Gandharvas (heavenly musicians) and Apsarās (celestial damsels) by his self-appreciating personal charm.

39. He verily gave up that splendid lovable body of moonlight which Gandharvas headed by Viśvāvasu accepted with joy.

40. Creating ghosts and goblins out of his lassitude, he closed his eyes when he saw their nudity and dishevelled hair.

41. They took over god Brahmā's body called 'yawning'[740] which was abandoned by him. By that body is created that complete sluggishness of senses called 'sleep' among living beings. They (goblins) possess the impure beings in that stage (of relaxation). It is called madness (*unmāda*).

42. Feeling himself possessing procreative power, venerable Brahmā created the class of celestial beings called Sādhyas and *Pitṛs* (manes) while he kept himself invisible.

43. *Pitṛs* took possession of the body from which they were created and on account of that, experts in *Karma-path* give to Sādhyas and manes (the offerings called *havya* and *kavya* due to them).

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739. v.l. *acala*—steady.

740. The bodies of bhūtas are fourfold : (1) Tandrā (lassitude), (2) Jṛmbhā (yawning), (3) Nidrā (sleep), (4) Unmāda (madness) ŚR.

44. By his power of remaining invisible, he created Siddhas and Vidyādharas (demigods) and passed on to them his miraculous body called *antardhāna* (disappearance).

45. Decorating his body (with sandle-paste, flowers etc.) and appreciating his reflection (in the mirror) Brahmā created from his image Kinnaras and Kiṁpuruṣas.

46. They accepted the form (characterised by Narcissism) abandoned by Brahmā. Hence they get together with their wives at dawn and sing in praise of his deeds.

47. Lying with the extremities of his body fully extended and full of deep anxiety at the insufficient growth of the creation, he angrily cast off that body (which became characterised by anger, extension etc.).

48. Oh Vidura, the hair dropped from that body became serpents. From the body which was moving here and there were born cruel cobras with big hoods and broad necks.

49. When the self-born god (Brahmā) felt that he had achieved his purpose, he created from his mind Manus, progenitors of prolific population on the world.

50. The self-possessed Brahmā gave up his body in human form to the Manus. Seeing the Manus, Beings who were previously created highly praised the Lord of Prajās (Brahmā).

51. "Oh creator of the world, what you have done is verily well-done. In this (Manu-creation) all the religious courses are well-established. (Herein) all of us eat food together."

52. The sage Brahmā who possesses (the power of) penance, knowledge, devotion, Yoga along with the power of profound meditation and perfect control over sense-organs, created the sage-world (*ṛṣi-sarga*) so dear to him.

53. To each one of the sages, god Brahmā gave a portion of his body characterised by complete meditation, *yoga*, miraculous powers, penance, knowledge and non-attachment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST

(Kardama's Penance—Viṣṇu's Boon)

Vidura said :

1. Oh venerable sage, (I pray you) to please describe to me the greatly respected dynasty of Svāyambhuva Manu in which descendants multiplied in marital relations.

2. Svāyambhuva Manu had two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, who protected the earth consisting of seven insular-continents[741] according to religion.

3. He had a daughter well known as Devahūti. Oh sinless one, you told that she was the wife of Prajāpati Kardama.

4. Please tell me who am desirous of hearing, how many children had the great Yogī Kardama got from her who possessed *śama*, *dama* and other qualities of Yoga.

5. How did respectable Ruci or Dakṣa, the sons of God Brahmā get the daughters of Manu as wives (Ruci marrying Ākūti and Dakṣa marrying Prasūti) and procreated children, Oh Brahmaṇa ?

Maitreya said :

6. When the venerable sage Kardama was commanded by God Brahmā to create beings, he performed penance for ten thousand years on the bank of the Sarasvatī.

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741. According to Purāṇic geography the earth consists of seven insular continents, viz., Jambū, Plakṣa, Śālmali, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka and Puṣkara (N.L. De—*GDAMI* p. 178). V.S. Agrawala and D.C. Sircar point out that the Purāṇic concept of seven concentric island-continents is a later development. The original concept was of *caturdvīpā Vasumatī*, i.e. the earth was like a lotus with Mt. Meru as its *Karṇikā* (pericarp) and the following island-continents as its petals in the four directions of Meru : (1) Kuru or Uttara Kuru in the north, (2) Jambū or Bhārata in the south, (3) Bhadrāśva in the east and (4) Ketumāla in the west. These have been tentatively identified with (1) northern portion of Asia, north of the Altai mountain, (2) India, (3) China and east Asia and (4) the valley of the Oxus and west Asia. Ancient Buddhist texts support the concept of *caturdvīpā Vasumatī*. —For details see V.S. Agrawala—*MP—A Study*, pp.184-188. Sircar—SGAMI, pp. 17-26. Baldeva Upadhyaya *Purāṇa Vimarsha*, pp.317-330.

7. Then Kardama with great devotion, intense meditation and worship[742], rendered service to Hari who gives boons to those who resort to him.

8. Then the lotus-eyed God Viṣṇu became pleased with him. Oh Vidura, in the Kṛta age, he manifested himself in an auspicious form, though he is known (to the world) by the verbal description in the Vedas[743].

9-11. In the sky, he saw the Lord who was free from all impurities and was resplendent like the Sun. He wore a garland of white lotuses that blossom by day and night. His lotus-like face was beautiful with smooth blue-black locks of hair. He was clad in pure silk garment. The Lord wore a crown and ear-rings and held in his hands a conch, a disc, a mace and a white lotus for sport. His captivating smiles and looks delighted the heart. His lotus-like feet were placed on the shoulders of Garuḍa. He had Lakṣmī (Śrī-Vatsa) on his bosom and the Kaustubha gem round His neck.

12. Overjoyed at the fulfilment of his desired object, Kardama prostrated himself on the ground. He, who was intensely devoted by nature, folded his hands and praised the Lord (in the following words).

The sage said :

13. Oh praiseworthy Lord, what a joy it is ! Real usefulness of our eyes has been achieved today by visualising you whose entire personality consists of perfectly pure *Sattva*[744]—a sight coveted by Yogins who have been developing their Yoga through many progressively pious births.

14. Your lotus-like feet are like a boat to cross the ocean of *Saṁsāra*. But those whose intelligence is deadened by your

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742. *kriyā-yoga*—(i) Following the prescribed religious duties according to his *varṇa* and *āśrama* without selfish motive. —VR.

(ii) Service of the Lord who manifests himself while in meditation. —VB.

(iii) Acts of worship prescribed in the Vedas and the Tantras.—VJ.

743. *śābdaṁ braahma*— (i) Form known only from the description in the five Upaniṣads and possessing all excellences—VR. (ii) Full of all excellent attributes to be known from Vedic texts.—VJ. (iii) Manifesting form full of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*—VC.

744. *sattva-rāśiḥ*—Reservoir of all that is good and powerful—ŚR.

Māyā, resort to them for petty pleasures which are available even in hell. But, Oh Lord, you fulfil even those trivial desires.

15. I am of such a nature (as described above). I wish to marry a girl similar to me in disposition and useful like a cow to a householder's life (in yielding three objectives in life, namely, *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*). With this unbecoming motive, I approached your feet which are like a wish-yielding tree and which are the source of all (four *puruṣārthas*).

16. Oh Supreme Lord, this world[745] is overwhelmed with desire. It is really bound down by the cord in the form of words (Vedic injunctions) expressed by you[746], the lord of *Prajās*. Oh embodiment of pure[747] Dharma, I am verily a follower of the world. I carry offerings to you (i.e. abide by your order of performing the prescribed *kārmic* duties for repaying the three traditional debts (*ṛṇa*) of man for which wife is essential)—you are the soul of Time.

17. Having abandoned worldly men and their followers like beasts[748], (your devotees) resort to the umbrella in the form of your feet. They forget the conditions, i.e. the needs of their bodies (such as hunger, thirst, etc.) in the discussion of Your attributes—a discussion which is intoxicating like wine (making them forget their worldly ties) and sweet like nectar.

18. Your wheel of Time which is based on three supports and which attracts and affects the world and has terrific speed, does not erode the life of your devotee while it moves on—This wheel of Time rotates round the axis of eternal Brahman. It has thirteen spokes (twelve months plus one additional i.e. *adhika* month). It has three hundred and sixty joints (number

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745. *loka*—Marīci and others—VC.

746. *te*—(i) It is at your behest that Marīci and others procreate. It is not their fault—VC.

(ii) Your son Brahmā, the creator—VB.

747. *śukla*—(i) One who destroys the misery of *Saṁsāra* and bestows higher bliss—VJ.

(ii) This adjective suggests that there will not be any misery from *Saṁsāra*—VB.

748. VC. regards that both the learned ones in śāstras and their followers, being devoid of devotion (*bhakti*) are like beasts. Hence no sin in committed in abandoning them.

of days in the year). It has six tyres (i.e. seasons), innumerable blades (such as small units of time like *kṣaṇa*, *nimiṣa* etc.), three supports, namely, three periods of four months—*caturmāsa* each.

19. Oh Lord, you are only one, i.e. there is none other except you. With the desire of creating the world and by the powers such as *Sattva* etc., assumed by you through your Yoga-Māyā, you create, protect and destroy this world like a spider (doing with his web).

20. Oh Supreme Lord, although you extend (offer) by means of your Māyā, worldly pleasures in the form of objects of senses to us, your devotees, this is not really your desired object. Still, let it be offered out of your grace towards us; for you have manifested yourself as a person decorated with resplendent Tulasī (and hence have Time-Space limitation) through Māyā. (This manifestation will lead to worldly pleasures here and Liberation hereafter)[749].

21. I bow to you again and again. By your Supreme knowledge, you are free from the experience of the fruit of *Karmas*. You manage the working of the universe by your Māyā. Hence your lotus-like feet are worthy of being bowed (by devotees, whether they cherish desire or not). You shower desired objects upon a devotee who is motivated (even) by trivial desires.

The sage said :

22. Being thus praised sincerely, Lord Viṣṇu, the God with a lotus in His navel, who appeared lustrous (in his seat)

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749. Most of the commentators follow ŚR. A few different interpretations are noted below :

(i) Oh Lord, by your Māyā you create *ahaṁkāra*, subtle elements and their special characteristics. Or you create ego whereby we cease to aspire after your place (*pada*). But I feel that despite my nonliking for your place, you will bless me with it out of your grace. As you have manifested yourself in your miraculous person with Tulasī garland, I believe it is for the grace of attaining your place. — VR.

(ii) Oh Lord, you have adopted the Brahmāṇḍa or Bhūtasūkṣma by your own will (Māyā) without being impelled by any one else. But this is not your essential form described in the *Upaniṣads*. The Lord is visualised by me as decorated with Tulasī garland, ear-rings etc. This is for showing grace to the devotees.—VJ.

above the wings of Garuḍa and whose eyebrows moved gracefully by his gracious looks and his affectionate smile, spoke to Kardama in nectarlike sweet words.

The Lord said :

23. Having known your intention, I have already arranged for that very object for which I have been properly worshipped by you, with self-imposed religious observations.

24. Oh Kardama (Lord of *Prajās*) ! My worship performed by persons with their minds concentrated in me is never futile. In case of persons like you, it is not all fruitless.

25. Manu, king of kings, the son of Prajāpati (Brahmā) is well known for his prosperity and righteous conduct. He lives in Brahmāvarta, but rules the whole earth surrounded by seven oceans*.

26. The sage-king who is well-versed in Dharma will come here day after tomorrow, along with Queen Śatarūpā with the object of seeing you.

27. Oh Kardama, he will offer to you as a worthy bridegroom his daughter of dark eyes, of proper age, character and qualities and of marriageable age.

28. Oh Brāhmaṇa, that princess, of herself, will willingly resort to you (as your wife) in this place where you have spent years in meditation occupied with the desire of having a suitable wife.

29. From you, she will give birth to nine children (lit. she will ninetimes give birth to your semen borne by her) and sages will soon beget children from your daughters.

30. Having carried out properly my command (for pro-

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* *Saptārṇava* —N.C. De identifies the seven oceans surrounding the earth as follows : (1) Lavaṇa (—the Indian ocean surrounding India—Jambū-dvīpa), (2) Kṣīra (Kṣīra is a hyper Sanskritisation of 'Shirwan', i.e. the Caspian sea to the north of *Śāka dvīpa*), (3) *Surā* (Sanskritisation of the sea of Sarain, i.e. the Caspian sea forming the Southern or South-eastern boundary of *Kuśadvīpa*), (4) Ghṛta—the Erythraean sea or the Persian gulf, (5) Ikṣu—another name of the river Oxus—the big river taken as a sea, (6) Dadhi—a Sanskritisation of Dahae—the Scythic tribe living on the shore of the sea of Aral. Name of the people transferred to the sea, (7) Svādu—Sanskritisation of *Tchadun*, a river in Mongolia flowing through *Plakṣa-dvīpa*.—N.L. De—*GDAMI*, p. 179.

creation) you, of pure mind, will offer upto me all the fruits of your action and finally attain unto me.

31. Having conferred mercy (on the needy, in the householder's stage of life) and having offered protection from fear (as a *saṁnyāsin*—recluse) and being self-controlled, you will realize yourself and the world in me and myself in yourself.

32. Oh great sage, a portion of mine will be born of you as a son from your wife Devahūti. I shall compose a treatise of ultimate truths (the *Sāṁkhya Śāstra*).

Maitreya said :

33. Having addressed thus, the Lord who manifests himself to senses which are turned inwards, then departed from Bindusaras surrounded by Sarasvatī.

34. While Kardama was looking on, he (Viṣṇu) who had been praised by all prominent Siddhas and was sought after by (all) Siddhas[750] went away, hearing the collection of *Stoma* hymns sung in Sāma notes, as a result of (the flutterings of) Garuḍa's wings.

35. On the departure of the pure lustrous God Viṣṇu, the venerable sage Kardama stayed at Bindusaras waiting for the time (of Manu's arrival).

36. Manu got into his chariot decorated with plates of gold. Along with his wife and daughter he drove over the world.

37. Oh good archer Vidura, on the day which was appointed by Lord Viṣṇu, he arrived at the hermitage of the sage who had completed the vow of celibacy.

38-39. The piace where drops of tears fell from the eyes of the Supreme Lord who was overcome with compassion for Kardama who sought him so intensely, that is verily the Bindusara[751] surrounded by the Sarasvatī whose waters are sanctifying, pure, sweet as nectar and resorted to by multitudes of great sages.

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750. *Siddha-mārga*—Alternatively : the path to Vaikuṇṭha—ŚR. RR. doubts whether *Siddha* means *Vaikuṇṭha*. VR., VB. derive it : Path that is self-established. SD. : The path of knowledge and devotion that has been established.

751. N.L. De identifies this near Sitpur (Siddhapura in Gujrat) about 64 miles to the north-west of Ahmedabad—*GDAMI*, pp. 38 and 158.

40. It is surrounded by holy trees and mass of creepers. It is inhabited by sacred animals and sweetly singing birds. It is beautified by a charming forest rich in fruits and flowers of all seasons.

41. It is vocal with warbling of crowds of joyous birds; is roamed about by (intoxicated) black-bees. It is full of noise by the dancing (and crying) of proud peacocks and the cooing of the joyful cuckoos.

42. It is beautified with trees such as Kadamba, Campaka, Aśoka, Karañja, Bakula, Asana, Kunda, Mandāra, Kuṭaja and young Mango trees.

43. It is resounded with the sweet notes (warblings) of waterbirds like Karaṇḍava, Plava, swans, Kurara, waterfowls, cranes, ruddy-goose and Cakras.

44. It is visited by deer, boars, wild dogs, elephants, monkeys called *Gopucchas* and other species and musk deer.

45. The ancient king entered the sacred place along with his daughter. He saw the sage sitting after completion of the worship of fire.

46. The sage appeared brilliant as his body had undergone austere penance, but was not ostensibly emaciated (weak) on account of the affectionate glances of the Lord at him and due to hearing the nectarlike lunar rays in the form of Viṣṇu's words.

47. The sage was tall. His eyes were wide like the petals of a lotus. He had matted hair. He wore bark-garments. He appeared untidy like an unpolished precious stone.

48. Thereupon, the sage, being pleased with the king, who had approached his hermitage paid obeisance to him, greeted him with courteous benedictions and gave him befitting reception.

49. The sage, remembering Lord Viṣṇu's command spoke these pleasant words in soft and pleasant tones to the king who had accepted the reception, and took his seat modestly.

50. "Your Majesty, you are the protective power of Hari. Your tour is really for the protection of the righteous and the destruction of the wicked.

51. I bow down to you who are (the representative) of Pure Lord Viṣṇu. At appropriate time and place, you discharge the functions of the Sun, the Moon, the Fire, Indra, Vāyu, Yama, Dharma and Varuṇa.

52-54. When you who wield your fierce bow of terrific twang, frightening the enemies, do not go about in your victorious chariot, decked with precious stones making the whole earth quake by the trampling (march) of your army and when (if) you do not move about like the Sun leading a massive army, all the limits, i.e. rules and regulations pertaining to *Varṇas* and *Āśramas* which are laid down by Lord Viṣṇu, will be violated by the villains.

55. When you sleep (are slack), unrighteousness will be spread by men who are given to pleasures and are uncontrolled (by principles), and this world will be at the mercy of the miscreants and will meet destruction.

56. Oh Warrior, may I however ask you why you have come here? We shall sincerely be happy to comply with your wishes."

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

(Marriage of Kardama and Devahūti)

Maitreya said :

1. The emperor (Manu) whose all excellent attributes and deeds were thus eulogised, spoke rather bashfully (due to his modesty at hearing his own praise or the fear of the rejection of the marriage proposal) to the sage full of quietism (and dissociation with worldly acts).

*Manu said** :

2. With a desire to preserve himself, Brahmā who is the Veda incarnate, created from his mouth you Brāhmaṇas who

* Verses 2 and 3 are the echo of the *Puruṣa-sūkta*. *

are full of *tapas*, learning, yoga and are free from lust.[752]

3. The thousand-legged God (Brahmā) created us from his thousand arms for their (Brāhmaṇas') protection. It is said that Brāhmaṇas form his heart and Kṣatriyas his body (limbs).

4. Hence Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas protect each other. The immutable, disinterested God who is the Soul (*antaryāmin*) of all[753] thus protects all.

5. All my doubts have been resolved by your very sight as Your worship himself has explained to me, out of favour, the duty (*dharma*) of one who desires to protect (the world).

6. It is my good luck that I could see your revered self who are difficult to be met by those who have not controlled their minds. I am happy that I could touch the holy dust of your honour's feet with my head.

7. It is a great fortune that I have been advised (taught) by you. A great favour has been done to me. Your sweet words have been luckily received by my open ears (i.e. I could eagerly hear etc).

8. Oh sage, your worship should kindly listen to the request of a distressed person like me whose mind is tormented by affection for his own daughter.

9. This daughter of mine is the sister of Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. She desires to marry a husband who is suitable to her in age, character, excellences and other attributes.

10. When this (daughter) had heard from Nārada Your honour's excellent character, learning, beauty, youth and qualities, she has firmly decided to marry you.

11. Oh eminent Brāhmaṇa, therefore accept this (daughter) who has been respectfully offered by me. She is in all respects suitable to you in carrying out sacrificial and other duties as a householder.

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752. *Tapo-vidyā. . . yuktān* : (i) Possessed *karma upāsanā* (devotion) and *jñāna* (knowledge)—VR. (ii) Full of *tapas*, knowledge of *śāstras* and devotion (*bhakti*)—VJ.

753. *sadasadātmakaḥ* : (i) Whose nature is of causal relation, lit. who is of the form of cause and effect—VR.

(ii) Who is comprised of cause and effect.

12. It is not commendable even for a person who has given up attachment, to reject a desired object when it offers itself. What need be said in the case of a person who is attached to worldly objects?

13. A person who, having disrespected an offer (of a desired object) begs the same of a miser, gets (finds) his widespread fame diminished and his self-respect ruined by disrespect (from others).

14. Oh learned one, I have heard that you are ready to get yourself married. As you are to terminate your period of celebacy, you please accept (my daughter) offered to you.

The Sage said :

15. I definitely wish to marry. Your daughter is also not proposed to any other person. This first (or important) union in marriage of ours is suitable.

16. Oh King, may the desire (of procreation) expressed in the *mantras* of Vedic marriage-ceremony be fulfilled by my marriage with your daughter. Who will not feel respect for your daughter who surpasses ornaments by her complexion?

17. (Who would not like to marry your daughter) on seeing whom playing (with a ball) on the terrace of your palace and looking with a perturbed glance at the ball and her feet beautified by tinkling anklets, (Gandharva) Viśvāvasu got his mind bewildered by infatuation (made love for her) and fell down from his aerial car.

18. When Manu's daughter and Uttānapāda's sister who is the ornament of beautiful women, and who cannot be even seen by persons who have not served the feet of Laksmī, approaches with a request for marriage, what wise man will not give his consent?

19. Hence I will accept this pious (daughter of yours) on condition of staying with her till she bears a child to me. Thereafter I shall think more of the duties as taught by Visṇu (such as *śama, dama*) essential for attaining knowledge and which are characterised by *ahiṁsā*.

20. That infinite Eternal Lord, the Lord of all Prajāpatis is the highest authority to me—the Lord from whom was

evolved this wonderful diversified universe, in whom it is sustained and in whom it will get dissolved.

Maitreya said :

21. Oh Vidura (wielder of a terrible bow), having spoken this much, the sage became silent quietly meditating over Lord Viṣṇu from whose navel has sprouted forth a lotus. But the heart of Devahūti was captivated by his smiling face (or he enticed Devahūti's heart by his smiling countenance).

22. Having learnt the firm resolution of the queen and his daughter, he was overjoyed and gave in marriage to the sage who was endowed with excellent qualities, his daughter who was equal to him.

23. Empress Śatarūpā, out of affection bestowed upon the couple very costly marriage gifts such as ornaments, garments and articles of household use.

24. The King felt free from anxiety at the marriage of his daughter with a suitable bridegroom. He whose heart was greatly agitated by sorrow (due to the prospective departure of his daughter) took her in his arms.

25. Being unable to bear separation from her, he constantly shed tears. Calling her 'Oh dear, Oh child', he drenched the hair of his daughter with his tears.

26. He took leave of the eminent sage. Being permitted by him, he got into the chariot with his wife and set out to his capital along with his retinue.

27. (On way) he saw the beautiful hermitages of tranquil-minded sages on both the beautiful banks of the sacred river Sarasvatī.

28. Hearing that the king was returning, his subjects from Brahmāvarta became delighted, and came forward to greet him by songs, eulogies and playing on musical instruments.

29. (The place) where the hair of the Yajña Varāha fell while he shook his body, there arose the town called Barhiṣmatī endowed with all kinds of riches and prosperity.

30. Those hair became the ever-green *kuśa* and *kāsa* with which the sages defeated the trouble-makers of sacrifices and performed sacrifice, (worshipped Yajña-Viṣṇu).

31. Having spread out a layer (= seat) of Kuśa and Kāśa grass, revered Manu performed sacrifice for Viṣṇu (*Yajñapuruṣa*) and the earth as his place of residence from him.

32. The king went into (his capital) Barhiṣmatī wherein he lived. Therein he entered his palace which (is free from) the three types of afflictions (viz. *ādhibhautika, ādhyātmika, ādhidaivika*).

33. With his wife and along with his subjects, he enjoyed pleasures without conflicting other *puruṣārthas* (viz.*dharma, artha* and *mokṣa*). His glorious fame was being sung by heavenly musicians along with their wives. Every day, at dawn, he heard the stories of Hari with a devoted heart

34. Pleasures could not swerve the sage Svāyambhuva Manu (from the path of *dharma*) to the slightest degree as he was a past-master in *yoga-māyā* (and hence could create his desired objects), and was intensely devoted to Viṣṇu.

35. As he was (always busy in) listening to, meditating over, composing and describing the stories of Viṣṇu, (even) the small units of time during the period allotted to him (called Manvantara) were not spent unfruitfully.

36. In this way, he passed his prescribed period (called *Manvantara*) consisting of seventy-one Yugas. He overpowered (counteracted) the influence of three *gatis* (viz. weals or woes of the *ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaivika* types), by his devotion to Vāsudeva.

37. Oh Vidura, how can afflictions of a physical and psychological nature or sufferings due to heavenly or human cause affect one who has resorted to Hari?

38. He was always obliging to all beings. When consulted by the sages, he explained to them the various auspicious paths of duties prescribed for men belonging to all Varṇas (classes of people) and Āśramas (stages in life.).

39. This wonderful life of the ancient (first) praiseworthy king Manu has been described to you. Now listen to the great fortune of his daughter (Devahūti).

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

(Married Life of Kardama and Devahūti)

1. When the parents of Devahūti departed, the pious lady who was expert in reading the inward thoughts of her husband, always attended upon him affectionately as the goddess Pārvatī did for Śiva, the Lord of the world.

2-3. Having given up passion, fraud, hatred, avarice, objectionable behaviour and pride, she who was very alert and was always ready (to serve Kardama), gave satisfaction to her brilliant husband by her confidence (in him), her physical and mental purity, respectfulness, self-control, service, sincere affection and sweet speech.

4-5. The eminent divine sage was verily overwhelmed with affection (favour) for that daughter of Manu and spoke in words choked with intense love to Devahūti—Devahūti who was devoutly attached to him and was expecting great blessings from her husband whom she considered more powerful than destiny (or a deity). She was greatly emaciated and weak by rigid observance of the vow (of serving her husband) for a long period.

Kardama said :

6. "Oh daughter of Manu, I am today highly pleased by your respectful, excellent service and intense devotion. To every being possessing a body, one's own person is extremely dear and worthy of being cared for. You, however, have not spared it (your body) as you wasted it over for me (in my service).

7. Just have a look at the blessings of the Almighty Lord secured by me who have been thoroughly devoted to my path of righteousness—blessings secured by the dint of my penance, meditation, Vidyā, and concentration of mind. These blessings which transcend fear and sorrow, have been achieved by you by your service to me. I give you the divine insight.

8. Of what merit are other pleasures, the desires (expectations) about which are foiled by the (slightest frowning) bend of the eyebrow of Lord Viṣṇu of immense powers ? You have achieved your object. Enjoy the rich heavenly pleasures

which accrue to you by your observance of the path of virtue —pleasures unattainable even to kings who covet for them."[754]

9. Realising that Kardama who spoke thus was proficient in all yoga-māyā and Vidyās, the lady (Devahūti) became free from anxieties. With her face beaming with smiles and slightly bashful looks, she spoke in words faltering with love and modesty.

Devahūti said:

10. "Oh eminent Brāhmaṇa, I am happy to know that all this (described by you) is within your powers—you who are the master of the unfailing powers of Yoga-māyā, my lord. (I request) that there should be at least one contact with your person which has been promised by you, oh Lord. To beget a child from a great husband (like you) is a blessing to virtuous women.

11. Oh Lord, for that purpose (be pleased to) arrange for the necessary materials as per prescription (in the *Kāma-Śāstra*). My body which has been tormented by (sexual) passion provoked by you and which has been emaciated with excessive desire for sexual enjoyment, will thereby become fit for it. Therefore think of a suitable mansion."

Maitreya said :

12. Kardama resorted to meditation for fulfilling the desired object of his beloved. He created an aerial mansion capable of going as per the occupant's will, oh Vidura.

13. It was a heavenly structure yielding all desired objects, decked with all (nine kinds of) costly jewels. (In it) all kinds of riches and prosperity were ever-increasing. It was beautified by columns of precious stones.

14. (It was) furnished with heavenly articles (like furniture and utensils). It was pleasant in all seasons. It was decorated with various kinds of silken buntings and flags.

15. (It was beautified) with garlands of flowers of varie-

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754. *nṛpa-vikriyābhiḥ*: (i) Men with the perverted notions of themselves being kings.—ŚR.

(ii) By kings who perform Aśvamedha and other sacrifices specially prescribed for them—VD.

gated colours with swarms of sweetly humming bees hovering around them, and with fine cotton and silken clothes.

16. (It appeared beautiful as) it was furnished with separate beds, cots, fans and seats in each of the storeys constructed one above the other.

17. It appeared very attractive on account of the various works of art arranged and exhibited at different places and with its emerald floors and daises of coral.

18. It shone with its doors of red coral, thresholds and panels of diamonds. On its tops of blue sapphires were set gold pitchers.

19. The excellent rubies set in its walls of diamonds appeared like eyes of the aerial car. It was also furnished with wonderful canopies of variegated colours and costly arches of gold.

20. At various places it was filled with the warbling and cooing of swans and pigeons which mistook artificial birds as real ones like themselves and flew to them.

21. It was provided with play-grounds, sleeping apartments, places for enjoyment, quadrangles and outer yards constructed for enjoyment at will, so much so that it appeared wonderful to (Kardama) its maker.

22. Kardama who knew the inner thoughts of all beings spoke of his own accord to Devahūti who was not much pleased at heart to look at that type of mansion.

23. "Oh timid lady, take bath in this pool of water and get in this heavenly mansion. This sacred pool which is created by Viṣṇu, blesses men with all desired boons (objects)."

24-25. In compliance of the order of her husband the lotus-eyed lady who wore a dirty garment and had the hair on head tangled and her body covered with dust and discoloured breasts, entered the sacred waters of the pool in the Sarasvatī (wherein lived auspicious acquatic animals).

26. (When she took a plunge) under the waters of the pool she saw in a house a thousand maids, all of youthful age and fragrant like lotus.

27. Seeing her, those girls at once stood up and respectfully folding their hands said, "We are your servants. Please order us what we should do for you."

28. With costly materials necessary for bath, the respectful damsels made her take bath and gave her two new clean silken garments to wear.

29. (They gave her) very valuable brilliant ornaments according to her liking; they served her food of all excellent qualities and nectar-like (sweet and) stimulant drink.

30. In the mirror she saw herself wearing a garland of flowers, dressed in fine garments, her body very clean and decorated with auspicious marks and greatly respected by the girl attendants.

31. (She saw herself) bathed and washed from head (to foot), beautified with all kinds of ornaments, wearing gold pendants round her necks and gold bangles (on her hands) and with tinkling gold ornaments.

32. (She put on) gold girdle studded with many jewels around her hips, and with very costly necklace of pearls and was decorated with auspicious (marks and designs drawn in) saffron etc.

33. Devahūti whose face looked very beautiful by her excellent rows of teeth, well-shaped eyebrows, with her beautiful affectionate side glances of eyes which rivalled with lotus (in beauty) and with her dark blue hair (dangling on her forehead).

34. When she remembered her beloved husband, the foremost among the sages, she found herself there with a thousand girls where Prajāpati Kardama was sitting.

35. Seeing that she was in front of her husband and surrounded by thousand maids, and seeing the power of his Yoga, she was confused with wonder (doubted what it all meant).

36-37. Oh Vidura, the sage in whom love for Devahūti was aroused made her ascend in the aerial car (*Vimāna*)—Devahūti who washed herself clean in the bath and became resplendent as a new person and appeared in her original pre-marriage beauty with her attractive breasts covered (and hence concealed from view)[755].

38. In that aerial mansion, he whose greatness (or freedom) was not diminished and who was loved by his wife and whose person was attended upon by Vidyādhara damsels,

755. v.l.—stanam—adj. qualifying *rūpam* : 'beauty of the charming breasts which were covered etc.

shone like the extremely beautiful moon surrounded by stars and with full blown night lotuses around him in the sky[756].

39. With that aerial car, Kardama who was praised by Siddhas and was accompanied by a bevy of jewel-like (extremely beautiful) damsels, enjoyed like Kubera for a long time in the valleys of mount Meru, the foremost amongst the *Kulaparvatas*[757] which are the places of enjoyment for the eight protectors of the world (*lokapāla*). The valleys of mount Meru were enjoyable on account of gentle breeze, a friend of the god of Love. They were full of the echoes of the cataracts of the heavenly river.

40. He enjoyed himself with his beautiful wife in celestial gardens like Vaiśrambhaka, Surasana, Nandana, Puṣpabhadraka, Caitrarathya and in the Mānasa lake.

41. With his spacious, resplendant aerial car which could move anywhere according to the occupants' will, he travelled freely all over worlds like a wind, surpassing other gods.

42. What is difficult to attain for men of boundless mental powers who have resorted to the sacred feet of Hari who destroys the calamity of Saṁsāra.

43. Having shown to his wife the sphere of the earth full of wonders on account of all the arrangement of continents etc. the great *Yogin* returned to his hermitage.

44. Dividing himself into nine[758], the sage enjoyed the beautiful daughter of Manu who was eager for sexual happiness. He enjoyed with her for a number of years as if it was but a short period.

45. In the aerial car, lying with her beautiful husband on the excellent bed which increased her love and pleasure, she was not aware of the time passed.

46. A hundred years rolled away like a moment while the

756. ŚR. brings out full comparison as follows: Sage Kardama = the full moon; Spacious aerial mansion = the sky; beautiful maids around him the stars; fully bloomed night-lotus = the lotus-like eyes of the maids.

utkaca...gaṇavān—surrounded by a bevy of maids of beautiful hair : who gave pleasure—VB. VJ. gives a more erotic explanation.

757. Principal mountains viz., Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra—ASD 364.

758. Intending to beget nine children.—VR.

couple who were passionately eager for sexual pleasure were thus enjoying themselves by the force of their Yogic powers.

47. Due to his intense love (for her) he regarded her as his half. He who could read inner wishes of all (and hence knew her desire to have many children) was competent to satisfy them. The sage who realised his own Self[759], divided himself into nine parts and deposited his semen in her.

48. Hence Devahūti gave birth to female children immediately on the same day. All of them were beautiful in all their limbs in every respect and they gave out the fragrance of red lotus.

49-50. At that time the beautiful[760] virtuous wife anticipated that her husband was about to renounce the householder's life (and to become a Saṁnyāsin). Though she was overcome with fear and pain, she smiled outwardly. She was scratching the ground with her foot beautiful with gem-like nails. With her head hung down (in modesty) she spoke soft winning words, controlling frequently her tears.

Devahūti said:

51. Your worship has fulfilled every promise that you gave to me. You however should give me protection[761] (against fear from misery of Saṁsāra) as I have resorted to you.

52. Oh Brāḥmaṇa, your daughters will themselves have to find out suitable husbands. When you proceed to the forest as a recluse, there should be someone (a son) to relieve me of my sorrow[762].

53. Oh Lord, I have given up (every thought about) the supreme self. It is enough that I have spent this much time (life) in satisfying the cravings of my senses.

759. VC. and VD. explain that due to his knowledge of the Supreme Self, Kardama was not so much attached to Devahūti as she was to him so intensely. Consequently Devahūti's contribution was the greater at the time of conception. This resulted in the birth of all female children.

760. *uśatī*—Desirous of having a son (VJ., VD.).

761. *abhayam*—(i) a son to protect me (VJ.).

(ii) Forgiveness for the request I am making again (JG.).

762. *viśokāya*—To advise and guide me in real knowledge as begetting daughters does not amount to repaying the debt of forefathers, stay till a son is born—ŚR.

54. I who am attached to the objects of senses, have associated myself with you (for that satisfaction) without realizing your higher (and real) Self. However let this association lead to my protection (i. e. liberation from Saṁsāra).

55. The Association with the wicked formed through ignorance is the cause of the *Saṁsāra*. That very association if formed with the good ones, leads to non-attachment to *Saṁsāra*.

56. A person whose action does not contribute to the righteous path (*dharma*) or to non-attachment or to the service (worship) of the sacred feet of Hari, is meant as good as dead though physically alive.

57. As a matter of fact, I am completely deceived by the Māyā of the Lord, for, though I have (by marriage) obtained you who can give me liberation, I did not cherish any desire for it (liberation).

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

(*Kapila-Incarnation*)

Maitreya said:

1. When the praiseworthy daughter of Manu spoke despondently, the merciful sage, remembering the words of Viṣṇu (of white complexion) addressed her thus:

The sage said:

2. Oh blameless princess, do not thus torment yourself (and me as well). The imperishable and immutable[763] Lord will soon enter your womb.

3. You have been observing vows. God bless you. Be devoted to the Lord with faith, self-control (*dama*), *niyama*

763. *akṣara*—(i) Immutable. Hence unrelated to the chromosomes of the parents—VJ.

(ii) Knowledge incarnate; the Inner Controller—*antaryāmin*—VB.

(iii) Not assuming ordinary body (due to its independence of the semen etc. of the parents)—VD.

(observance of the ten prescribed restraints), penance and charitable donation of wealth.

4. Viṣṇu, so propitiated by you will be born to you as a son and spread my fame. He will instruct you about Brahman[764] and thus He will cut the knot (of *ahaṁkāra*) in your heart.

Maitreya said:

5. With great respect Devahūti trusted the advice of the Lord of Prajās (Kardama). She devoted herself to the immovable, unchangeable Supreme Soul, the preceptor[765] (of the Vedas).

6. After a lapse of long period, Lord Viṣṇu (Madhusūdana) was born of her by Kardama's seed just as the fire does in a piece of wood.

7. At that time, showering clouds appeared. Gods sounded the heavenly musical instruments in the sky. The celestial singers (Gandharvas) began to sing and the heavenly damsels (*apsarās*) danced in joy.

8. Heavenly flowers showered by gods (who move through the sky fell (on the earth). All directions became clear, waters translucent and minds tranquil.

9. God Brahmā accompanied by Marīci and other sages came to the hermitage of Kardama surrounded by the Sarasvatī.

10. God Brahmā who has inborn perfect knowledge knew that the Supreme Lord had taken birth through his Sattva attribute for the promulgation of the true knowledge of the Principles (*Sāṁkhya Śāstra*), Oh Vidura (destroyer of enemies)!

11. With a pure heart, Brahmā expressed his respects for what he intended to do (viz. propagation of *Sāṁkhya Śāstra*). With his spirits (senses) ebullient with joy, he spoke to Kardama (and Devahūti) as follows :

Brahmā said :

12. Oh child, you have sincerely offered me worship in

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764. *Brahma-bhāvanaḥ*—The creator of God Brahmā—VJ.

765. *guru*—(i) One who dispels ignorance (VR., SD.).
(ii) Propounder of knowledge about Brahman (VJ.)

obeying respectfully my words. (In this way) you honour others.

13. This much service should be rendered by children to their father, viz. the words of the father should respectfully and willingly be complied with.

14. Oh courteous child, these beautiful daughters of yours will multiply manifold and increase the creation of the world with their progeny.

15. Today, therefore, you give your daughters to the chief sages with proper regard to their tastes and character.

16. Oh sage, I know that the First Puruṣa (i.e. Viṣṇu) has incarnated through his Māyā and assumed the person (body) called Kapila who is a treasure (of blessings) to all beings.

17-18. Oh daughter of Manu, this (Puruṣa) of golden locks of hair, of lotuslike eyes and of lotuslike feet marked with lotuses has entered your womb, for uprooting all *karmas* by means of the *śāstric* knowledge, Direct Perception or knowledge (*vijñāna*) and *yoga*. This enemy (killer) of Kaiṭabha will cut the knot of Nescience and doubt, and wander over the earth.

19. He is the chief of the category of Siddhas (who have obtained Perfect Knowledge). He will be deeply respected by the Masters of the Sāṁkhya Śāstra.[766] He will be known as Kapila in the world. He will increase your fame.

Maitreya said :

20. Cheering up the couple (Kardama-Devahūti) Brahmā, the creator of the world, with four Kumāras (Sanaka etc.) and Nārada mounted his swan-vehicle and went back to Satyaloka, the uppermost region above Svarga, the third world.

21. Oh Vidura, when god Brahmā departed, Kardama as per Brahmā's instruction gave, as per Vedic rituals, his daughters to the procreators of the universe.

22. He gave (in marriage) Kalā to Marīci, Anasūyā to Atri, Śraddhā to Aṅgirasas and married Havirbhū to Pulastya.

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766. On the strength of *Padma P.* VJ., JG., VC., RR and VD record that Kapila the founder of the atheistic Sāṁkhya is different from this eacher of the Theistic Sāṁkhya.

23. He gave Yuktā to Pulaha, the virtuous Kriyā to Kratu, Khyāti to Bhṛgu and Arundhatī to Vasiṣṭha.

24. To Atharvan he gave Śānti who is the presiding deity of a Yajña (lit. who extends Yajña in the world). He satisfied the prominent Brāhmaṇas who were thus married and their wives as well.

25. Oh Vidura, then the sages, after the completion of marriages, took their leave of him (Kardama). They set out with great joy to their respective hermitages.

26. Having learnt that Viṣṇu, the great God, had taken incarnation, Kardama approached him while alone (privately), bowed to him and spoke :

27. "Oh ! It is really after a very long time that gods are kindly disposed here to souls who are being roasted in the hell (-like Saṁsāra) by their own sins.

28. Ascetics (who have renounced the world) try to visualize the Lord's feet, in secluded places, by following correct course of concentration in the *Bhakti-yoga* (path of devotion) which has been properly developed by them through many (previous) births.

29. That Supreme Lord who supports the cause of his devotees, is born today in the house of lowly (rustic) persons (like us), disregarding the humiliation therein.

30. You have taken incarnation in my house for the purpose of proving true to your word, as well as for propagating the knowledg of the Sāṁkhya doctrine. (Thus) you increase the veneration for your devotees.

31.* Oh Lord, although you are devoid of forms[767], whatever forms (e.g. four-armed god, etc.) are liked by your devotees, are the proper forms for you.

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* Oh Lord, you are devoid of ordinary or vulgar forms. Your superhuman forms (e.g. that of four-armed god etc.) are proper for you. (But) whatever form (e.g. that of a human being) is liked by your devotees is (also) liked by you.—ŚR.

767. *arūpiṇaḥ*—(i) Devoid of vulgar forms—ŚR.

(ii) Having no form of god or man (etc.) which one gets due to *karmas*—VR. GD.

(iii) The forms liked by your devotees are not your real forms. All your forms are due to Māyā. This is what ŚR. means by *Prākṛtarūpa-rahitaḥ*,—VC

32. I take shelter in you whose foot-stool is always worthy of paying obeisance by the learned ones who wish to perceive the Truth directly (as) you are perfect in the divine faculties (of omnipotence, omnipresence etc.), non-attachment, glory, knowledge, prowess (or strength) and majesty (or splendour).

33. I resort to Kapila[768] who is the Supreme God. All the powers are within his control. He is in the form of Prakṛti, Puruṣa (who presides over Prakṛti), Mahat, Kāla (Time—the agitator), Ahaṁkāra[769] (of three types as per three *guṇas*), the protector of the world. By his power of intelligence, he has absorbed the whole of the universe within himself. He is omniscient (*mūla Brahma* : a witness to the evolution and devolution of all principles like Prakṛti etc.).

34. You are the Lord of all creation. Hence I would like to ask something of you today. By you (being born as a son to me) I have repaid all the three debts (pertaining to gods, sages and forefathers). All of my desires have been really satisfied. Having taken to the path of *Saṁnyāsa* (recluse) I shall now wander meditating on you in my heart, free from all sorrow.

The Lord said :

35. Oh Sage, whatever I state about Vedic and worldly *karmas*[770] is authoritative to the world. It is for validating what I told (promised) to you that I am born (as your son).

36. In this world, this incarnation of mine is for the exposition of the true knowledge of principles (like Prakṛti, Puruṣa etc.) leading to self-realization to those who seek liberation from the *Liṅga śarīra* (subtle body).

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768. One who protects *ka* (Brahmā) and *pi* (Pinakin—Śiva). Hence Viṣṇu—VJ.

769. *tri-vṛt*—(i) One who is covered (described) by three Vedas —VJ.

(ii) Of the form of *jīva* in whom development of three *guṇas* takes place—VR.

770. *Satya-laukika* : (i) Path leading to *dharma, artha* and *kāma* and *mokṣa*—VD.

(ii) Brahman and the means of realizing it—VR.

(iii) Means leading to Liberation (*mukti*) and enjoyment (*bhukti*)—SD.

37. This subtle course of realization of the Soul (*ātman*) is lost for a long period. Please note that it is for the reinstitution of that path that I have assumed this body.

38. You have my permission. You may go at will. Dedicate all *karmas* to me. Having thereby conquered Death (i.e. *saṁsāra*) which is difficult to achieve, you resort to me for Liberation (*Mokṣa*) ;

39. By your mind realize within yourself Me, the Supreme Soul, the self-illuminating Light within the (cave of) hearts of all beings. (Thereby) being free from sorrow you will attain to Liberation.

40. I shall enunciate to my mother this spiritual lore which annihilates all *karmas*. She will thereby transgress *Saṁsāra* (cause of fear) and attain to the Highest bliss.

Maitreya said :

41. Prajāpati Kardama who was thus addressed by Kapila, was pleased. He circumambulated Kapila and went to the forest.

42. The Sage took the vow (e.g. *ahiṁsā* etc.) of the recluse's way of life. He took resort only in the Supreme Soul. Free from attachment and renouncing fire-worship and home, he wandered all over the world.

43-45. He concentrated his mind on the Brahman which is different from cause and effect, which (though) devoid of attributes—(*guṇas*)—manifests the three *guṇas* and which is experienced only by complete unswerving devotion. Kardama became free from *ahaṁkāra* (ego), attachment. He transcended the pairs of opposites (e.g. pleasure-pain; heat-cold). He looked upon all equally and concentrated himself on self-realization only. His mental capacities turned inward (to Brahman) and became calm (and serene). Full of wisdom, he was (quiet) like a calm ocean unperturbed by waves. With highest devotion to Lord Vāsudeva, the Omniscient, the inner controller (*antaryāmin*) of all beings, he realized his Supreme Soul and became free from bondage (of ignorance).

46. He saw his Supreme Soul abiding in all beings and realized all beings within God and within his own Self (Ātman) as well.

47. He became free from desires and hatred (likes and dislikes). He looked upon all as equals. With highest devotion to the Lord, he attained Liberation (place where all *bhāgavatas* reach).

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

(Dialogue between Kapila and Devahūti : Importance of the Bhakti-yoga)

Śaunaka said :

1. Kapila, the expounder of the *Tattvas*[771] (fundamental principles) i.e. of *Sāṅkhya Śāstra* is himself devoid of birth.[772] But for the exposition of the true nature of the Self (*ātman*) to men, he directly manifested himself of his own accord through his own Māyā.[773]

2. I have heard many times about the Lord[774] (Kapila). But really my senses are not fully satisfied by hearing his glory. Kapila is the seniormost (best) among all persons and the greatest among the *Yogins*.

3. I am full of faith (in him). Narrate to me the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord who, though of absolutely in-

771. *tattva-saṅkhyāta*—(i) Expounder of the correct knowledge of *avyakta* and other *tattvas*—VJ.
(ii) Exponent of the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy —VC., GD.

772. *ajaḥ*—(i) Devoid of birth as a result of previous *karmas* —VR., GD.
(ii) Śrī Nārāyaṇa himself and not an *āveśa*—VJ.
(iii) Whose *līlā* of taking birth is superhuman—not the ordinary one—VC.

773. *ātma-māyayā*—(i) Out of his compassion for devotees—VD.
(ii) Of his own free will—VJ., GD.
(iii) By his incomprehensible power called Māyā—VC.
(iv) By his power of creating everything —VB.

774. *Śruta-devasya*—also is taken to qualify Kapila and means 'Whose glory is described in the Vedas'—VB.
'Who becomes manifest in the heart of the audience by listening to Śāstras'—SD.

dependent mind, assumes body through his own Māyā power for (the fulfilment of) the wishes of his devotees.

Sūta said :

4. (Just as you now ask me), venerable Maitreya, the friend of Dvaipāyana was also urged (by Vidura) to explain the Science of Soul. Being pleased, he expounded this (doctrine) to Vidura.

Maitreya said :

5. When his father (Kardama) left for the forest, (they say that) praiseworthy Lord Kapila stayed in the Bindusaras with a desire to do good to his mother.

6. Devahūti who remembered the words of the creator (Brahmā), spoke the following words to her son who was sitting quietly (actionless), and who guided through, to the end of the Path of Knowledge (or *Sāṅkhya Śāstra*).

Devahūti said :

7. Oh All-pervading Lord, I am extremely disgusted with the thirst for enjoying the objects of wicked senses. By catering to the (urge of the) senses, I find myself lost in the darkness of ignorance.

8. Today, at the end of many births, and by your grace, I have secured you as a good vision (insight) which leads to the end of this blinding darkness of ignorance which is very difficult to cross.

9. Your Honour is verily the first glorious Lord, the controller of all human beings. Just like the rising Sun (enabling people to see) you are an eye to the world which is blinded with the darkness of ignorance.

10. Hence, Oh Lord, you should dispel my delusion—the delusion viz. strong attachment to my body and my belongings (as 'me and mine') which has been created by you (in us).

11. With a desire to know (the real nature) of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, I have come for shelter to you who are worth resorting to for protection. I bow to you who are like an axe (to cut

down and put an end) to the tree of Saṁsāra of your devotees and are the greatest among the knowers of true *dharma*.[775]

Maitreya said :

12. Having heard his mother's laudable (lit. non-objectionable) desire which would create in men liking for the Liberation (*mokṣa*),[776] Kapila was rejoiced at heart. He who was the ultimate goal [777] of self-controlled saintly people[778] spoke with his face beautified by gentle smile[779].

The Lord said :

13. The *yoga*, which leads to the realization of the Self[780] (*ātman*), is for men the path to Liberation (*mokṣa*). Herein is the complete cessation of pain as well as pleasure.

14. Oh sinless one, I shall explain to you the *Yoga* complete in all respects[781] which in ancient times, I expounded to sages desirous of hearing.

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775. *saddharma* : (i) *nivṛtti dharma*—VR.
(ii) *Śama* and other *brahma-dharmas*—VB.
(iii) The way to *Mokṣa*—GD.
(iv) Path of Bhakti—VC.

776. *apa-varga-vardhanam*—VC. and VD. treat this as a pun and explain : That which eliminates the three *puruṣārthas*.

777. *gati*—The means of Liberation (*mokṣa*)—VR.
The fruit ; the ultimate result—GD.

778. *ātmavatāṁ satāṁ*—The saintly persons who mediate on the Soul. —GD.
Those who realised Lord Kṛṣṇa. Self-control is their external index—VB.
The devotees to whom the Self (*ātmā*) i.e. Kapila is the object of worship—VC.

779. VC., VD. state : Kapila smiled because he was amused at the anxiety and fear of his (God's) mother of Saṁsāra. He, however, wants to explain the *Sāṅkhya-Śāstra* to her for the sake of others.
JG. : "Mokṣa is for other people. I shall give her the highest bliss of *Bhakta-hood*".

780. *ādhyātmikaḥ* : (i) Pertaining to unswerving devotion to the Self (*ātman*)—ŚR., VC. (ii) Leading to the knowledge of the real *ātman* as distinguished from Prakṛti—VR. (iii) The path of unswerving (fixed) concentration on the Supreme Soul. (iv) Yogas are of three types—(i) *ādhidaivika* useful in the realization of the Lord. (ii) *ādhyātmika* leading to the realization of the Supreme Soul—(iii) *ādhibhautika*—leading to the attainment of *siddhis*—VB.

781. *sarvāṅga-naipuṇam*—efficacious by *Śama*, *dama* and other complementary observances—VR.

15. The mind is certainly regarded as (the cause of) bondage and liberation of the Soul[782]. When attached to the objects of senses, it causes bondage. But when attached to the Supreme Man, it leads to liberation.

16. When the mind is cleansed of impurities like lust, avarice etc. born of *ahaṁkāra* (ego) about one's self and one's belongings, it becomes pure, free from (non-responsive to) pleasure and pain, and is perfectly tranquil and in balanced state.

17-18. Then the man with his mind filled with knowledge, non-attachment (to the world) and devotion, realizes[783] his Self (*ātman*) to be absolute, distinct from and beyond *Prakṛti*, immutable, self-luminous, atomic, indivisible, passive (non-participant) and (finds) *Prakṛti* to be powerless[784].

19. In order to attain Brahman, for Yogins, there is no other auspicious way comparable to devotion directed to the Lord who is the Soul of all (as *sarvāntaryāmin*).

20. The wise know that attachment (to objects of senses) is the unbreakable chain that fetters down the Soul (*ātman*) in the *Saṁsāra*. But that very attachment, if applied to the good (saintly persons) is the open gate-way to Liberation (*Mokṣa*).

21. The Saints (i.e. those who follow the path described in *Śāstras*) are forbearing (tolerant), compassionate, friendly to all beings. They have no enemies[785]. They are quiet[786], good[787] and regard good character as their ornament[788].

22. With their hearts fixed on me only, they practise

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782. Cf. *mana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ kāraṇaṁ bandha-mokṣayoḥ*/ Maitrī 6.34 VP.

783. VJ. : Then the man (or *jīva*) realizes his Self to be the *bimba* of Hari.

784. *hatamojasam*—Prakṛti which has lost its binding power.

785. *ajāta-śatravaḥ*—VJ. dissolves this as *aja+ata+śatravaḥ* and explains : Who are the enemies of passions like *kāma, lobha* (avarice) etc.

786. *śāntaḥ* : (i) possessed of *śama, dama*—VR. JG.
(ii) steadfastly devoted to Nārāyaṇa—VJ.

787. *Sādhavaḥ*—(i) Who help others in achieving their objects—VR.
(ii) straightforward—VC.

788. *sādhubhūṣaṇāḥ* : (i) To whom devotion to God is an ornament —VJ, (ii) Though themselves saintly, they regard other saints highly (like ornaments)—JG. (iii) To whom *Sādhus* are dear as ornaments —VC. (iv) Who regard *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* and other marks as ornaments—SD.

firm devotion to me. For my sake, they have abandoned all other activities and their friends and relatives.

23. Taking refuge in me, they listen and narrate sweet stories (about me). As their minds are fixed on me, various kinds of troubles do not affect them*.

24. Oh pious Lady, there are the saints who have dissociated themselves from all attachments. Hence association with such deserves to be sought by you. (You should associate yourself with them) as they remove the evil of attachment (to worldly objects).

25. In association with saints, there are (discussions about my) stories which give proper and complete knowledge about my power and which are pleasant to the ears and the heart. By serving (listening to) them, there will soon develop intense faith in, love for and devotion to Hari—which is the path that leads to Liberation.

26. Due to devotion generated by contemplation of my sportive work (viz. the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe), a man gets disgusted with the pleasures of senses and to the objects seen (in this world) and to those reported (available in the world beyond)[789]. Being alert, and by practising Yoga, he tries to control his mind by easy and straight courses of *bhakti* Yoga.

27. By not enjoying the *guṇas* of Prakṛti[790] and by his knowledge reinforced by *Vairāgya* (non-attachment) and by Yoga and devotion concentrated on me, he attains to me, who reside in all beings, in this very human body[791].

Devahūti said :

28. What type of devotion is proper for you ? Of what

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* VB. enumerates sixteen characteristics of the saints. Of these three are *bhautika* (pertaining to *bhūtas*), four *ādhyātmikas* and seven *ādhidaivikas*. The comm. being very lengthy is not summarised here.

789. *dṛṣṭa-śrutāt* : Seen by persons of higher (spiritual) status and heard by those belonging to the lower status—VJ.

790. *guṇānām asevayā*—Not enjoying articles of food (drink &c) prohibited by Śāstras and polluted or desecrated by the outcastes. This emphasizes proper discrimination in enjoyment—VR.

791. VR. strongly objects to the concept of 'Liberation—while alive'. *Jīvan-mukti*—This means while in meditation, a man visualizes or experiences Brahman.

description is it ? So that thereby I can quickly and easily attain to your place namely Liberation (*Mokṣa*).

29. Oh embodiment of Liberation (*nirvāṇa*)[792], what is the nature of the *yoga* spoken of by you as reaching the Supreme Lord directly like a shaft (hitting its target) ? How many parts (*aṅgas* or auxiliaries) has it whereby one gets the comprehension of the reality.

30. Oh Hari ! As I am a woman of slow understanding, please explain this to me so that I shall easily understand this difficult *yoga* by your favour.

Maitreya said :

31. Having thus understood the object of his mother, Kapila felt affection for her from whom he was born (lit. got a body for manifesting himself). He explained to her the enumeration of *tattvas* or Fundamental Principles which they call *Sāṁkhya śāstra* and also the extensive course of Bhakti-yoga (Path of devotion).

The Lord said :

32-33. In the case of man whose mind is one, i.e. unswerving the natural, effortless, abiding disposition (devotion) of the presiding deities of the cognitive sense organs (lit. sense organs which cognise objects) and of the conative senses (which perform the acts prescribed in the Vedas) to Hari, the embodiment of Sattva is Bhakti. This unselfish (free from worldly desires) devotion to the Venerable Lord is superior to Liberation (*Mokṣa*) as it makes the vesture or sheath of the *Liṅga Śarīra* (subtle body) dissolve just as the fire in the stomach digests the food that is swallowed (eaten).

34. Some do not desire to get one-ness with myself (i.e. Sāyujya Mukti).[793] They are delighted in serving (worshipping) my feet and are happily engaged in activities for my

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792. *nirvāṇātman*— (i) unexcelled bliss incarnate—VR., GD. (ii) Embodiment of highest joy.—VJ. VC. and SD. read : *nirvāṇārthaḥ*—The cause or means of Liberation.

793. *ekātmatām* : (i) The state of being similar in attributes like me—VR.
(ii) Liberation which I confer on them—VJ.
(iii) One-ness with Brahman—VC.

sake[794]. With deep interest and affection, the devotees of the Supreme Lord enjoy in describing to one another my exploits.

35. Oh mother, these saints see my splendid heavenly forms with beautiful kindly face and reddish eyes—forms which bestow blessings on them. They speak with them in affectionate terms.

36. Even though the devotees do not covet for it, Bhakti takes to the subtle state (Mokṣa)[795] the devotees, with their minds enchanted by and with their sense organs attached to those beautiful limbs of mine; my dignified movements, smiles, glances and sweet speeches.

37. After (the disappearance of Avidyā) they do not aspire after the magnificent enjoyments and prosperity (in Satyaloka and other places) of mine, the Lord of Māya. Nor do they wish for the eight super-human powers (*siddhis*) which naturally flow form Bhakti. Nor do they long for the auspicious wealth of the Supreme Lord in Vaikuṇṭha. But they do enjoy it in my region, the Vaikuṇṭha.

38. Oh Mother of perfectly serene mind, in Vaikuṇṭha, my devotees are never ruined. My weapon, the Winkless Time, does not affect them as I am their beloved Soul, (and am like) a son, friend, preceptor, relative and their beloved God.

39-40. I take them beyond Death (i.e. *saṁsāra*)—those who abandon this world as well as the next and their Self which wanders in both these worlds along with their *Liṅga Śarīra* (subtle body) and who give up their wealth, cattle, houses and such other belongings and resort with devotion to me who am Omnipresent (or have faces on all sides).

41. The terrible fear (of *Saṁsāra*) cannot be removed by anyone else except me, the Supreme Lord, the controller of Prakṛti and Puruṣa and the in-dwelling Soul of all beings.

794. *madīhāḥ*—They entertain a strong desire to enjoy my beauty, sweetness etc.—VG.

795. *aṇvīṁ gatim*—Commentators express their differences of opinion about this final stage called Mokṣa as per the tenets of their schools. Thus with VR. it is 'The subtle path called *archir-mārga* leading to Mukti. It is subtle as it is traversed by few'. With VJ. it is *sāyujya-lakṣaṇā mukti* wherein the *jīva* has similarity in attributes with God. To JG. and VG. it is subtle as it is beyond Prakṛti and hence difficult to grasp and giving "attendantship" (*pārṣadatva*) of God. To GD., it is the very resplendent subtle body of the residents of Vaikuṇṭha.

42. It is through my fear that the wind blows, the Sun shines, Indra showers rain, the fire burns and the Death does its duty.

43. By means of Bhakti-yoga strengthened by knowledge and renunciation, *yogins* resort to my feet, the (seat of) Mokṣa for eternal blessings.

44. If mind is firmly set on me by intense Bhakti-yoga, it becomes quiescent and steady. This is the only way for attaining the highest bliss in this world.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

(Kapila's description of Creation (Sāṁkhya Cosmology) *

The Lord said:

1. Now I shall explain to you separately the characteristics of the fundamental principles. By knowing these, man is liberated from the ties (*guṇas*) of *Prakṛti*.

2. I shall explain to you that knowledge which, as the wise say, cuts the knot of *ahaṁkāra* (egoism) in the heart, and

*Although the Sāṁkhya theory is described previously (vide supra II.5, III.5, III.7 and implied in I.1.1) this chapter and the next give a more systematic exposition of the same. This account differs materially from the classical Sāṁkhya which is tacitly atheistic in its earliest available text ĪSK. (Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṁkhya-Kārikās*) and expressly so in later works like Sāṁkhya aphorisms attributed to Kapila. As Dasgupta points out, the theistic Sāṁkhya in the Bh. P. is 'quite different and distinct' from 'the theistic Sāṁkhya of Patañjali and Vyāsa-bhāṣya.' (*Hist. of Ind. Philo.* IV. 36). Most of the *Purāṇas* of the Viṣṇu group and some of the important Pañcarātra *āgamas* (e.g. the *Ahirbudhnya-Saṁhitā*) follow the Sāṁkhya theory as expounded in the Bh. P. If the table of contents of the *Ṣaṣṭi-tantra* as given in the *Ahirbudhnya-Saṁhitā* be that of the original work (as Dasgupta believes), the Sāṁkhya system might be originally theistic. But all discussions regarding the problem of the authorship and contents of the *Ṣaṣṭitantra* are mere speculations and inconclusive, despite the contributions of great scholars like Schrader, Keith, Garbe, Dasgupta and others. Hence the emphasis on ĪSK—the earliest representative of classical Sāṁkhya here.

leads man to self-realization, and ultimately to the summum bonum (*Mokṣa*).

3.* *Puruṣa* is the beginningless (eternal) Soul. (He is) attributeless, distinct from and superior to *Prakṛti*. He manifests (himself) inside and is self-luminous. The universe, thereby, becomes illuminated.

4. This all-pervading Lord, of his own free will, has accepted the subtle, divine Prakṛti constituted of three *guṇas* as a part of his *līlā* (sport).

5. He was here immediately infatuated[796] with *Prakṛti*

*(i) VR. explains : *Puruṣa* is *jīva*. As he illuminates himself as well as other things, he is regarded as self luminous. But unlike *jaḍa* (non-sentient) lamp, his light (knowledge) is useful for himself in becoming conscious of himself and others. He is distinct from *Prakṛti* i.e. its products like the body, sense-organs, mind, vital breaths etc. Hence he is free from *Sattva* and other *guṇas* of Prakṛti. He has pervaded all the universe by entering into gross and subtle bodies from god Brahmā to a blade of grass.

(ii) VJ. states: The Supreme Soul is eternal (lit. is beginningless and endless). He is not caused (created) by anything. He is *Puruṣa*—i.e. the bestower of perfect bliss. Or he is within all but unrelated to *guṇas*. He is beyond Prakṛti. He lives in the lotus called *Abhi-mukha*. He is illuminated by his own light. He has pervaded the world of movables and immovables.

(iii) SD. interprets: He is beginningless, i.e. He existed before the creation and is the cause of everything else He enters all and controls them and confers on the *jīvas* the fruits of their *Karmas*. He is the shelter and controller of *Prakṛti*. He is devoid of *guṇas* and governs the sentient and non-sentient universe. Being self-luminous he has pervaded all the universe.

(iv) VB. construes it differently: He being devoid of attributes (*guṇas*) and being their cause, is himself uncreated by anyone. He is distinct from and unrelated to *Prakṛti*. He is the self-knower and self-luminous and is thus distinct from *ahaṁkāra*. Thus he is Ātman --free from body, *guṇas*. Prakṛti and Kāla. His self-luminosity is his extra-ordinariness (*alaukikatvam*).

(v) ŚR. tells us that the adj. *praty ag-dhāmā* refutes the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness and the adjectives *-nirguṇa* and *svayaṁ-jyoti* refute the Mīmāṁsaka and Prabhākara's views about the nature of the Soul.

796. *mumuhe*: (i) identified himself with Prakṛti—VR.

(ii) VJ. credits Hari for deluding the *jīvas* by his will or Prakṛti which obscures the knowledge of *jīva*.

(iii) *Jīva* forgot his own real nature by the *vṛtti* of *Prakṛti* known as *avidyā*. *Jīva* had this knowledge before the creation (during the Deluge) but forgot it after creation.

which covers (obscures) knowledge and which creates various wonderful beings similar in attributes (*guṇas*).

6. In this way, due to his wrongly presumed identification with Prakṛti, Puruṣa regards the authorship of *karmas* (as vested) in him when (actually) the *karmas* are being done by the *guṇas* of Prakṛti.

7. Though the Lord is (really) actionless, an unconcerned witness and blissful by nature, it involves him in *saṁsāra* (cycle of births and deaths), bondage and reduces him to a stage of dependence.

8. They (wise people) know that Prakṛti is the cause of the effect (i.e. the body assumed by Puruṣa in an embodied state), means (organs of senses) and the doership (the presiding deities of sense-organs). In reality, Puruṣa is distinct and beyond —superior to—Prakṛti; (but) he is the cause of all pleasures and pains as the experiencer, due to his identification with Prakṛti.[797]

Devahūti said:

9. Oh best among men, please tell me the characteristics of Prakṛti as well as of Puruṣa. They are the cause of this universe, which consists of both gross and subtle products.

The Lord said:

10*. They (the knowers) call that as *Prakṛti* which is *Pradhāna*—(the chief, ultimate first principle). It consists of

797. Cf.

kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate/
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhānām bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate/ BG. 13.20.

VJ. explains the 2nd half: They know that it is Viṣṇu who is superior to Prakṛti, is the cause of Jīva's experience of pleasure and pain. VC. endorses the same.

*According to ĪSK this *mūla-Prakṛti* is *avyakta* (3) and *Pradhāna* (11, 57 etc.). It appears that the original doctrine of eight-fold Prakṛti (probably related to levels of yogic awareness, vide *Kaṭha*. 3.10-11) was represented later as 'vertical' evolution with *Prakṛti* as the first Principle. The characteristics of the *Prakṛti* are enumerated in ĪSK as follows:

Hetumad anityam avyāpi sakriyam anekam āśritam liṅgam/
Sāvayavaṁ paratantraṁ vyaktaṁ viparītam avyaktam // 10//

'Avyakta is the opposite of *vyakta* which is caused, finite, non-perva-

three *guṇas* (*Sattva, rajas* and *tamas*). It is (by itself) unmanifest and eternal. It is of the nature of both cause and effect. It is, by itself, undifferentiated and without any specialities, but it is the basis of (and hence possesses) specialities or attributes.

11. The learned know Brahman as comprising of the effects of Pradhāna—a collection of twentyfour principles, viz. five *tanmātrās* (subtle potentials of elements), five elements (*mahā-bhūtas*), four[798] internal organs, viz. *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra* and *citta*) and ten (sense-organs consisting of five cognitive and five conative organs).

12. There are only five gross elements (*mahābhūtas*), viz., earth, water, fire (heat-light), air and the sky (space).

sive, active, plural, supported, emergent, composite and dependent'. The next *Kārikā* (11) further describes *Prakṛti* as 'characterised by three *guṇas* undiscriminated, objective, general (*sāmānya*), non-conscious and productive.

A reference to the Bh. P. (supra I. 10, II.5, III.5, III.7 etc.) will show that the *Prakṛti* is not an independent real as is presumed in the ĪSK. God, in his desire to realize himself, reflects himself in the Prakṛti which is his own power, and it is through this impregnation of himself in his own power, that Prakṛti is enlivened by consciousness, and he appears as individual Souls suffering from the bondage of Prakṛti. It is through his creative effort called Kāla (Time) that the equilibrium of the *guṇas* of Prakṛti is disturbed and categories (or 'Principles') are evolved. Later (infra XI.13, XI. 22 etc.) an extreme idealistic monism practically effaces Sāṁkhya realism, as the Bh. P. holds that ultimate reality is one and that all differences are merely in name and form. Prakṛti and its manifestations are due to the operation of the Māyā power of God. This Māyā is defined as that which manifests non-existent objects but is not manifested itself (Bh. P. II.9.33).

It will thus be found that the concepts of Prakṛti in the ĪSK and in the Bh. P. are not the same. (For Kapila's Philosophy in the Bh. P. vide Dasgupta—*Hist. Ind. Philo.* Vol. IV. 24. 24-48).

A systematic comparative study of the *Sāṁkhya* in the Bh. P. and the classical *Sāṁkhya* is beyond the scope of such foot notes.

798. I enumerated these on the basis of verse No. 14 below. But VR. states them as *manas*, *ahaṁkāra*, *mahat* and *avyakta* (*caturbhir mano'-haṁkāra-mahad-avyaktair/*). He later (verse 14) admits that if the four aspects of mind enumerated in this verse are counted as independent, the number of categories will be twenty-seven.

The subtle objects of these (elements)[799], viz., smell and others, i.e. taste, colour-form, touch and sound are also the same in number according to me.

13. The sense-organs are ten: the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue and the nose. (These are the cognitive organs). The organs of speech, the hands, the feet, the organ of generation and the anus is called (enumerated) as the tenth. (These are conative organs).

14. The internal organ has four aspects viz. *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra* and *citta*. (This) fourfold distinction is observed through its characteristic functions.[800]

15. This much is the list of the enumerated principles of Brahman as conditioned by *guṇas* as explained (to you) by me. What is called 'Time' (*Kāla*) is the twenty-fifth principle.

16. Some regard Time (*Kāla*) as the super-human power of God (Īśvara) whence comes fear (death, *saṁsāra* etc.) to the *jīva* who is possessed by Prakṛti, and thereby is deluded by I-ness (*ahaṁkāra*) in identifying himself with the body.

17. Oh Manu's daughter, that divine power is designated as *Kāla* which sets commotion in the undifferentiated *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* which were (originally) in a state of equilibrium.

18. He is the glorious Lord who dwells within all beings as a controller and yet is unaffected, and outside of them as Kāla[801].

799. *tanmātrās* : These are not included in old lists of evolutes in the BG. and Mokṣadharma (MBH). I believe that the Bh. P. is following BG. and MBH. in enumerating the objects of senses under *tanmātrās*. In the classical Sāṁkhya the objects of senses are left out of the list of *tattvas*. In it the *tanmātās* are the products of *ahaṁkāra* and serve as subtle potential of gross elements (*Mahābhūtas* vide ĪSK. 38.) G. J. Larsen writes : 'The subtle elements function somewhat like *manas*. . . They are products of self-awareness and yet they in turn come in contact with or generate the external world'.—*Classical Sāṁkhya*, pp. 205-6.

800. VJ. and VD. state the functions as follows: *Buddhi* leads to conclusions; *manas* entertains doubt ; *ahaṁkāra* creates pride; *citta* is the cause of remembrance.

801. ŚR. concludes: Thus there are twenty-four categories of Prakṛti. The twenty-fifth is the jīva (individual Soul) and Supreme Soul (Īśvara) which are identical.

19. The Supreme Man deposited his energy into his Prakṛti whose *guṇas* were disturbed and agitated by the *adṛṣṭa* (unseen-destiny) of *jīvas*. She gave birth to the principle called *Mahat* which was resplendent (as if made of gold).

20*. That cause of the universe which is unchangeable (eternal), wished to manifest the universe which was lying within it in a subtle form. It drank up (dispelled) by its lustre the thick darkness (of the time of deluge) which was capable of covering it. (*Mahat* was absorbed in Prakṛti at the time of *Pralaya*).

21. (It is well known in the *āgamas*) that *Mahat* which is characterised by *sattva-guṇa*, pure, free from passions (like love, hatred etc.) and the place of the Supreme Lord, is the *citta* which is called Vāsudeva and it is composed of *Mahat Tattva*[802].

It will thus be seen that the Bh. P. presents three aspects of Time : God, Power of God and Time-sequence. In this chapter, the Bh. P. deals with the first two aspects. Time is a supra-phenomenal reality. Its characteristic feature is to disturb the equilibrium of Prakṛti and set in motion the process of creation. It thus pre-exists creation. It is God's power, dynamism and effort, as it is a force driving the cosmic process to materialize into subtle and gross creation. Kāla pervades the mind of man as his inner controller and the external universe as time. When Bh. P. enumerates Time as the twenty-fifth category of Sāṁkhyas, it refers to the concept of Time as God. When it takes Time as the power of Puruṣa, it refers to the second aspect. For details Bhattacharya PSB. I.247-259.

*VR. takes this with reference to God: The Lord, the cause of the universe which is unchangeable, wanted to manifest the universe which was lying absorbed in Prakṛti within him. By his lustre (knowledge in the form of his will to create) he drank up (destroyed) the darkness (ignorance, the attribute *tamas*) which obscured (restricted the knowledge of) *jīvātman*.

802. ŚR. explains : From this verse the concept of the four *vyūhas* and how to worship them is given. Here what is considered from the causal or *adhibhūta* point of view is *Mahat*, the same is called *citta* from the point of *adhyātma* (relation to the body). It has Vāsudeva as an object of meditation (*upāsya*) and *kṣetrajña* as the presiding deity (*adhiṣṭhātṛ*).

It is a sort of a synthesis between the Sāṁkhya and the Pāñcarātra *āgama*. The four aspects of *antaḥkaraṇa* of the Sāṁkhyas are connected with the *vyūhas* (manifestations of God) of the Pāñcarātras as follows :

Sāṁkhya		*Pāñcarātra*	
as *adhyātma* (relating to body)	*adhibhūta*	*upāsya* (object of meditation)	*adhiṣṭhātṛ* (Presiding deity.)

1.	Citta	Mahat	Vāsudeva	Kṣetrajña (the Soul, occupant of the body)
2.	ahaṁkāra	Aggregate of *bhūtas*, senses and mind	Saṅkarṣaṇa	Rudra
3.	manas	manas	Aniruddha	Candra
4.	buddhi	buddhi (intellect)	Pradyumna	Brahmā

The Peñcarātra idea of *Vyūha* is briefly as follows :

Vyūha is derived from $\sqrt{}$ *ūh* with *vi*—'to push, to remove, to thruts' (Apte PSD 307). At the end of *mahāpralaya*, the following six attributes of God are manifested : *Jñāna* (knowledge), *aiśvarya* (power), *śakti* (prowess), *bala* (supremacy), *vīrya* (energy) and *tejas* (splendour). (They may be approximately rendered as : 1. Knowledge—pure consciousness, 2. Independence of activity, 3. Potency to become the material cause of the world, 4. Fatiguelessness and power to sustain, 5. Unaffectedness, 6. Selfsufficiency, splendour. These six *guṇas* form the material of pure creation. The *Vyūhas* have a cosmological function while *avatāras* are concerned with the *līlās*.

The *Vyūhas* are four : Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, each having some cosmic functions. Their traditional representation may be summarised in the following table (vide the *Sāttvata Saṁhitā* 5, 9-18).

1 :	*Vyūha* :	*Vāsudeva*	*Saṅkarṣaṇa*	*Pradyumna*	*Aniruddha*
2.	*Prominent attributes*	1. *Jñāna*	1. *Jñāna*	—	—
		2. *aiśvarya*	2. *aiśvarya*	—	—
		3. *Śakti*	—	1. *Śakti*	—
		4. *bala*	—	2. *bala*	—
		5. *Vīrya*	—	—	1. *Vīrya*
		6. *tejas*	—	—	2. *Tejas*
3.	*Complexion*	Moon-white	Red-lead	The Sun's rays	Collyrium-dark (like *añjanādri*)
4.	*Colour of Garment*	Yellow	Blue	Red	White
5.	Weapons etc. in 4 hands	All *Vyūhas* show *abhaya-mudrā* (assurance of protection) by the fourth hand and hold a conch in one.			
		1. a Discus	1. a Plough	1. a bow	1. a sword
		2. a Mace	2. a Pestle	2. arrows	2. a Club
6.	Emblem on the banner	*Garuḍa* (an eagle)	*Tāla* (a palm tree)	*Makara* (a crocodile)	*Mṛga* (a deer)

22. The definition of *citta* is given with reference to its attitudes (abiding states) such as clearness (capability to bear the reflection of the Lord), changelessness (absence of *laya* and *vikṣepa*) and tranquillity (freedom from passion). It is just like water in its pure state (before it comes in contact with the earth), changeless (free from foam, ripples etc.), sweet, transparent and clean.

23. The Principle called Mahat which was born out of the potentiality of the Lord, began to undergo modifications. From this *Mahat* was produced ego (*ahaṁkara*) of three kinds. It (*ahaṁkāra*) possessed potentiality to do active work.

24. (The three kinds of *ahaṁkāra* are) *Vaikārika*, *taijasa* and *tāmasa* (according as it is characterised by the *sattva-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa* respectively). From these is the creation of mind (*manas*), sense-organs and great elements (*mahābhūtas*).

25. (Herein the *vyūha*—manifestation of God—to be meditated is) the Puruṣa called Saṁkarṣaṇa. He has actually a thousand heads and is designated as Ananta (endless). He is of the form of aggregate of *bhūtas* (elements), *indriyas* (sense-organs and the mind.

26. The *ahaṁkāra* is characterised as being the doer (as *devatā*), the instrument (as the sense-organs) and the effect or product (as the *bhūtas*). Or it may be characterised by serenity (with *sattva-guṇa*), vehemence (with *rajo-guṇa*) and dullness (with *tamo-guṇa*).

27. The principle called mind (*manas*) was created from *sāttvika* or *vaikārika ahaṁkāra* undergoing modifications. It is characterised by thinking and special meditation and is the source of desire[803].

28. The wise persons know it by the name Aniruddha, the Supreme Master of sense organs. He is bluish in complexion like blue lotus in the autumn. He is to be gradually propitiated by *yogins* (as it is difficult to propitiate him).

29. Oh pious lady, from the *taijasa ahaṁkāra* undergoing modifications was created the principle called *buddhi* (which as distinguished from *citta*) is characterised by intelligence or

803. *kāma-sambhava*—The son of Kāma, i.e Pradyumna.

special knowledge of understanding reality and the power to favour sense-organs.

30. From the point of its aspects, it is separately characterised by doubt, misapprehension, correct determination, memory and sleep (or unconscious state).

31. All the sense-organs (*indriyāṇi*) classified as the conative and cognitive organs, are created from the *Taijasa ahaṁkāra* only. For conation (activity) is the power of Prāṇa (who directs the organs of action). And cognition or the power of understanding and knowing is the power of *Buddhi* (which controls the cognitive organs). —Both Prāṇa and Buddhi being products of the *Taijasa ahaṁkāra*, all the sense-organs are also the products of the *Taijasa ahaṁkāra*.

32. From the *Tāmasa ahaṁkāra* which was prompted by the Power of the Lord, was produced the *tanmātrā* called Sound ('the sound-potential'). Thence came forth the *Mahābhūta* (gross-element) called Space (*ākāśa*) whence was evolved the sense of hearing which receives sound.[804]

33. The wise people know the characteristic of Sound to be the capacity to convey meaning or ideas, to serve as an index of the seer (or the speaker), and to work as the subtle-potential of the space (sky).

34*. With reference to its functions, the characteristics of the space (*ākāśa*) are to provide space for beings, to pervade them within and without, to afford support (abode) to Prāṇa, sense-organs and the mind.

35. Out of the Space (*ākāśa*) characterised by its subtle-potential sound, while undergoing modifications by the force of *Kāla* (Time), there arose the subtle-principle of Touch. From it evolved the Vāyu (wind) and thence the Skin (*tvac*) the sense-organ of touch which gathers i.e. comprehends touch.

36. The chief characteristics of the Touch (*sparśa*) are softness, hardness, cold and heat. It is the subtle principle of Vāyu (wind).

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804. Cf. supra III. 5. 32.

* ŚR., VR. remark that in this way the following verses consist of groups of three, the first describing the creation of the gross-element, the second verse giving the characteristic of that *tanmātrā* and the third the characteristic of the *mahābhūta*.

37. From functional point of view, Vāyu is characterised by movement (of branches of trees), collecting together (of grass etc.) reaching (of things), carrying of particles (e.g. fragrance to the nose) and sound (to the ear) and giving strength to all sense organs.

38. When Vāyu with its characteristic subtle principle touch, was impelled by Destiny, was evolved the *tanmātra* (subtle principle) called *Rūpa* (Form—colour). Out of it arose *Tejas* (heat—light) and the eye which is the sense to grasp *Rūpa* (Form—colour).

39. Oh good lady, to give form to a substance, to be its attribute, to be co-extensive (and co-existent) with the substance as well as to be *Tejas* (heat-light) itself, are the abiding characteristics of the *tan-mātra* Rūpa.

40. To illuminate, to cook (food), to intoxicate, to destroy cold, to dry, to make one feel hungry and thirsty—these are the effects of *Tejas*.

41. When *Tejas* with its subtle principal(*tanmātra*) *Rūpa* (Form—colour) was undergoing modifications by being incited by Fate (*daiva*), the *tanmātra* called *rasa* (taste) was evolved. From it was produced water and the Tongue (the sense of taste) which grasps (apprehends) taste.

42. Due to the effect of substances mixed with it, *rasa* (taste), though only one, becomes distinguished as many, such as astrigent, sweet, bitter, pungent, sour (and salty).

43. Moistening, making adhesive, giving satisfaction, sustaining life, refreshing by satisfying thirst, softening, removing heat and exhaustion, abundance (unfailing continuous supply) or the preponderance (of water in the constitution of body)—these are the characteristic properties of water.

44. When water along with its subtle principle *rasa* was impelled by Destiny (*daiva*) and was undergoing modification, the subtle principle Smell was evolved. Thence was formed the earth, and the Sense of Smell (nose) which cognises smell.

45. Due to the different proportions of mixing up of particles of substances, the smell, though one, is distinguished as mixed smell, bad odour, strong fragrance, mild fragrance (as of a lotus), strong smell (as of garlic), acid smell and others.

46. The characteristic functions (and properties) of *Pṛthvī* are formation into an image of Brahman, independent stability in a position (without the support of *jala* etc.), supporting other objects (like water), to be the means of making distinction in *ākāśa* (such as *ghaṭākāśa*, *maṭhākāśa* etc.), to help distinctions in all beings and their qualities.

47. That is called the ear (the sense of hearing) of which the special characteristic is the apprehension of sound (*śabda*), the special attribute of the Space (*ākāśa*). They (the learned ones)know that to be the sense of Touch, the speciality of which is apprehension of touch, the special characteristic of Vāyu.

48. That is called the sense of seeing (eye) of which the object of perception is *Tejas* (Form—colour), the special quality of *Tejas* (Heat—Light). The wise know it to be the sense of taste (Tongue), the special object of which is *rasa* (taste) which is the special characteristic of Water. That is called the sense of smell (nose), the principal object of which is smell, the special characteristic of the earth.

49. The property of the cause is inherently found in the effect. Hence cumulatively, all the characteristics (of all elements) are found in the earth.

50. When the seven[805] principles such as Mahat and others remained separate (there was no creation of the universe so) the creator of the universe along with Kāla (Time), *karma* (action or *adṛṣṭa*) and *guṇas* entered into them.

51. Out of those principles synthesised and (thrown into commotion by him,) thre came forth the inactive, unintelligent Egg of the universe. From it arose the *Virāṭ-puruṣa*.

52. This Egg of the universe is called *Viśeṣa*. It is surrounded by (elements such as) water and others, each ten times bigger than the previous one. (All of them) are covered on the outside by *Pradhāna*. Here this extensive world is the body of Lord Hari.

53*. The Supreme God (giving up inactivity) rose from

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805. viz. *Mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* and *bhūtas*. As per older tradition *tanmātrās* are subsumed under *bhūtas*.

* VJ. takes the Abl. in *hiraṇmayad ... kośāt* in the sense of Acc. and interprets : The great God Hari made the golden Egg of the universe lying in the water to rise above it. He entered it and also the body of *Virāj*

the golden egg, lying on the water. After entering (=controlling) it, he pierced the vacant space[806] therein in various ways.

54. From this[807], at first was evolved the mouth. From the Mouth came forth the speech. Along with speech the Fire (*Vahni*) came out. Then were evolved two nostrils. Out of them was issued the sense of smell along with Prāṇa (vital breath).

55. From the sense of smell was evolved Vāyu. (Then) two eyes were formed and thence the sense of seeing. From this (sense) was evolved the Sun (*Sūrya*). (Then) were formed the ears. Thence issued the sense of hearing from which came forth the (presiding deities of) directions.

56. Then was evolved the Skin to *virāj*. Thence grew hair, beard, mustaches etc. from which were produced herbs and plants. Afterward was evolved the organ of generation (the penis).

57. Thence came forth the semen out of which was evolved water. Then was produced the anus whence the *Apāna*. From Apāna came forth Death which causes fear to the world.

58. (Thereafter) were formed the hands from which came forth strength. From them came forth Indra (*Svarāṭ*). (Then) were evolved the feet from which came forth locomotion or movement. Thence came forth Hari.

59. The blood vessels were then formed in him. From them was produced blood from which were issued rivers (goddesses presiding over rivers). Then was evolved the stomach.

Puruṣa who was born of him. Dwelling within, he made space (*ākāśa* in the form of the space in mouth (and other organs), differentiated and manifest.

VB. states : When Hari woke up from sleep, the sense organs were differentiated and evolved for enjoyment of the various *aṁśās* of God.

806. *kham*—(1) a hole,—ŚR. (iii) The conative and cognitive sense-organs which were undifferentiated in his four-foced body (was differentiated by him into different sense organs).

807. *asya* : VR. takes this gen. in the Abl. sense and interprets : God Brahmā's body is an aggregate considered to be made up of parts each of which is consubstantially the same with the whole. From the mouth of this Brahmā's aggregate body the mouths of individual gods were issued. From the mouth was differentiated the speech, and thence Fire, its presiding deity.

60. From it arose hunger and thirst. From them came forth (the presiding deity of) the ocean. Then the heart was evolved in him. From the heart came forth the mind.

61. From the mind was born the Moon. Then Intelligence (*buddhi*) was evolved. From it came forth the Lord of Speech (Brahmā). Then (was evolved Ego (*ahaṁkāra*). Thence was evolved *citta* from which was born *Kṣetrajña*.

62. These gods (with the exception of *Kṣetrajña*—the individual Soul) who have arisen, were unable to make him rise (and to activate him). (Therefore) in order to rouse him (into activity) they, one by one, entered into their own spaces (appointed sense-organs).

63. God Agni (Fire) entered the mouth along with the speech, but the Virāṭ was not roused thereby. When Vāyu (Wind) entered the nostrils along with the sense of smell, but thereby the Virāṭ did not rise.

64. The Sun entered the eyes along with the sense of vision, but even then the Virāṭ did not rise. When the (deities presiding over) directions (along with the sense of hearing entered the ears, the Virāṭ did not get up.

65. When the gods presiding over herbs and plants entered the skin along with hair, the Virāṭ did not rise. When the (presiding deity of) water entered the organ of generation along with semen, the Virāṭ was not roused.

66. The god of Death entered the anus along with *Apāna* but the Virāṭ was not activated. Indra along with strength entered the hands but the Virāṭ remained inactive.

67. Viṣṇu, along with power of movement, entered the feet but the Virāṭ was not roused. Goddesses of rivers entered the blood vessels along with blood, but the Virāṭ was inactive.

68. The (god of the) ocean entered the stomach along with hunger and thirst, but the Virāṭ remained unaroused. The Moon entered the heart along with the Mind, but the Virāṭ was not roused.

69. Even Brahmā entered the heart along with intelligence (*buddhi*) but the Virāṭ did not get up. When Rudra along with *ahaṁkāra* entered the heart, (still) the *Virāṭ* was not-roused.

70. But when Kṣetrajña (the intelligent individual

Soul), the master of *citta* entered the heart, the *Virāṭ Puruṣa* immediately was roused and got up from water.

71. Just as *Prāṇa* (vital breath), sense organs, mind and intelligence are not able to wake up the (body of a) sleeping person by their own power without his (*kṣetrajña's*) help (so was the case with Virāṭ Puruṣa).

72. By devotion unto God, (leading to) non-attachment to anything else, and with mind inclined to and concentrated by *Yoga*, and the knowledge obtained by it, one should meditate on the Soul (*Pratyagātman*) within oneself as different from it (from the chain of causal-relations)*.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

(*The Sāṁkhya Philosophy—Prakṛti and Puruṣa*)

1.** Though Puruṣa (the Soul) resides in the body (which is a product of *Prakṛti*), he is not affected by the *guṇas* of Prakṛti (such as pleasure, pain etc.), just as the Sun (in the sky) reflected in the water (is not affected by the qualities of or changes in the water). For the Puruṣa is destitute of *guṇas*; hence his freedom from action and the consequent changelessness.

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* GD. makes explicit the process implied above by ŚR : The first stage is devotion (*bhakti*) of nine kinds. When the heart is purified by devotion, there arises non-attachment to pleasures or worldly things. Then comes the knowledge about the distinction between Prakṛti, Puruṣa and Īśvara. By that knowledge, understanding the individual Soul (*Pratyagātman*) to be different and distinct from the body which is an aggregate of cause and effect, one should, with mind trained for concentration by *yoga* discipline, meditate on the Kṣetrajña or *Pratyag-ātman*.

** (i) VR. : Jīva, though abiding in a body (a product of Prakṛti) is not affected by the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* such as the form of existence as a god or a man or pleasure, pain etc. For the real nature of jīva does not undergo any change by his birth as a man or god. He is not the doer of the activities of his body, and is free from *guṇas* like *sattva* etc. He is like the image of the Sun in the water—the real remaining unaffected by changes in the reflecting medium. Jīva and the body have thus no connection

2* When this (*jīva*) is attached to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*, he becomes deluded by *ahaṁkāra* and regards himself as the doer (through false attribution).

3. Due to that (*Ahaṁkāra*), he loses his independence and blessed state. By the force of the (detrimental) effects of *karmas* due to the association with Prakṛti, he gets involved in *saṁsāra* in some form of existence, good (as a god), bad (as a sub-human being) or mixed (as a man).

4**. (The Soul being the non-doer), the real bondage of *karmas* does not exist. But *saṁsāra* does not cease to be till

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(*viprakarṣa*) from the point of place (*deśa*); time (*Kāla*) and nature (*svabhāva*).

Alternatively VR. interprets *Prakṛti dharma* as a birth in the from of existence as a man or a god, and states these *dharmas* do not belong to the jīva. His appearance as a man or a god is a false impression (*bhrānti*).

(ii) VJ : The Supreme Being and the *jīva* reside in the same body. But Viṣṇu being perfect is not affected by pleasure, pain, birth, death etc. for he is not affected by the six *vikāras* (changes such as birth, growth etc.). He is not dependent for his action on anybody, and hence an absolute agent. He is free from *guṇas* e.g. *sattva* etc. He is like the Sun, unaffected by the changes in the water wherein he is reflected.

(iii) JG., VC. follow ŚR. in general.

(iv) VB. : Although jīva is found in a body, he is merely reflected in the Prakṛti like the Sun in the water. He is not 'greased' by the *guṇas* like *sattva* etc. for there is no *vikāra* (change) in him. He has no *adṛṣṭa* and hence no action.

* (i) VR: The Soul is different from Prakṛti. But his (false) identification of himself with the body obscures his real essential nature. When he is attached to the *guṇas* of Prakṛti (like sound, taste etc.), he becomes egoistic that he is the indepeudent doer and gets the bondage.

(ii) VJ : When the jīva is attached to the *guṇas* i.e. his body which is composed of *guṇas*, he is deluded by Ego. Consequently he forgets the essential nature of the Lord and his own limits as a dependent doer.

(iii) SD : Though the Soul is really free, he wrongly identifies himself with *guṇas* and out of egoism he gets deluded to regard himself as a man or a god and considers himself as the agent.

(iv) VB : *guṇas* cannot do anything independently. The Soul being *cetana* (sentient), transfers his own attributes to them (just as the Sun makes water hot though it is cool by nature). After thus controlling *guṇas* he becomes deluded by identifying himself with the *guṇas*, and (wrongly) thinks that he is the door.

**(i)VR : The forms of a man, god etc. are not real forms of the Soul. But as long as he thinks about objects of senses, this calamity

he is brooding over the objects (of senses), just as one experiences misfortunes in a dream (even though it is unreal).

5. Therefore, the mind which is attached to the wicked path of sensual enjoyment, should be gradually brought under control by the *Bhakti yoga* (path of devotion) and intense non-attachment (to worldly objects).

6-11. He who practises meditation by the paths of *yoga* characterised by *aṅgas* (stages) like *yama*, *niyama* etc., is full of faith (in me) by real, sincere love to me, and by listening to stories about me, looks upon all beings as equal, renouncing all attachment and company; hates nobody, practises celibacy and observes silence, follows his own duties which are powerful on account of his offering them to God, that sage who is satisfied with whatever he gets by chance, is moderate in eating, resorts to solitude, is serene and friendly to all and self-controlled, does not entertain false attachment (like 'me' and 'mine') to his body and its dependents or property, has the knowledge whereby one can realize the truth about Prakṛti and Puruṣa, has superseded the stages like wakefulness, sleep etc., and hence has ceased to see other things except God. The self-seer sage realizes his Soul (*Ātman*) by his Self (conditioned by ego) just as one sees the Sun (in the sky) by the eye which is also a modified Sun, (such a sage) attains to that non-dual (absolute) Brahman which is completely distinct and free from the subtle-body (*liṅga-śarīra*) and which appears as real in unrealities like *ahaṁkāra* which is the friend, i.e. the support of Pradhāna; which is like an eye to the *Asat* (i.e. which sheds light on *Mahat* etc.) and which is woven fully into all causes and effects.

12. Just as the reflection of the Sun in the water is seen by its reflection on the (wall inside the house on the) shore

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of *saṁsāra* persists just as in a dream he experiences pain etc. though his body in the dream is unreal.

(ii) VJ. thinks the God's grace is essential for the cessation of *saṁsāra*.

(iii) VC.: Even though *karmas* are unreal, the Soul due to his *ahaṁkāra* as being the doer broods over the objects (and gets bound in *saṁsāra* by the actions done by his body).

(at first)[808] and just as (thereafter the real Sun in the heaven) is noted due to its reflection in the water.

13* Similarly *ahaṁkāra* of three kinds as typified by three *guṇas* is seen as the reflection of *Sat* by the images of *ātman* which are conditioned by the *bhūtas* (body), *indriyas* (sense-organs) and the mind. By the reflection of the *ātman* in *ahaṁkāra*, the real *ātman* whose essential nature is knowledge, is realized.

14. When, due to sleep, the *bhūtas*, their subtle principles (*tanmātras*), sense-organs, the mind, intelligence and others (such as *ahaṁkāra*) are completely absorbed in the unmanifest *Prakṛti*, that which remains awake and free from *ahaṁkāra* (in the dead-like sleeping body) is the Soul.

15. In that state, when the *ahaṁkāra* is dormant (lit. lost), the Seer (the *jīva*), though himself is not lost, wrongly thinks that he is lost, like a man stricken with grief at the loss of his fortune, feels (about himself).

16. In this way, having thoroughly thought over (this distinctness of the *ātman*), he realizes the Soul which is the basis and the illuminator of all the matter (or combination of cause and effect) including *ahaṁkāra*.

Devahūti said:

17. Oh Lord, Brahman, as both (*Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*) are interdependent (for their manifestation) and eternal, Prakṛti never leaves the Puruṣa.

18. Just as the existence of smell and the earth (the smelling substance) or of taste and water cannot be mutually separate, *Prakrti* and *Puruṣa* cannot be logically discontinuous (i.e. cannot exist separately).

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808. VJ. adds one more interpretation: Just as the reflection of the face in water indicates the real face (person) standing on the bank, similarly the reflection of the Sun in the water leads to the knowledge of the real Sun in the sky.

* VJ. gives a totally different meaning : Śeṣa is the presiding deity of three types of *ahaṁkāra* (according to three *guṇas*). He is seen through his reflections viz. the presiding deities of *bhūtas*, *indriyas* (sense organs) and the mind (*manas*). By the reflection called Śeṣa, the fourfaced Brahmā is perceived, and through the reflection called Brahmā is seen Lord Nārāyaṇa, the knower of the reality.

19. How can there be emancipation (lit. alone-ness) from Prakṛti when the *guṇas* of Prakṛti are in existence. These *guṇas* form bondage of *karmas* to Puruṣa who is (essentially), inactive.

20. Sometimes the terrible fear (of *saṁsāra*) may seem (practically) receded by careful reflection about the Principles (considered above). But as its cause (viz. the *guṇas* of Prakṛti) is not destroyed, the fear appears again.

21-23. By performance of one's duties (according to one's *Varṇa*—caste—and *āśrama*—stage in life) without any desire for its fruit, by pure mind, and by devotion intensified by hearing the stories of Hari for a long period, by knowledge which has comprehended the reality, by a very strong aversion to the world, by *yoga* accompanied with asceticism, and by intense concentration (of the mind) on the Soul (*ātman*), *Prakṛti*, being consumed day and night, gradually disappears in this very birth like the piece of *Śamī* wood (from which fire is enkindled), the source of fire, (is burnt down by fire).

24. *Prakṛti* which has been abandoned after enjoying her (products), and whose evil effects are always seen, does not bear anything inauspicious (like the bondage of *karma*) to the Supreme Lord who is established in his magnificence.

25. Just as a dream presents a great many of calamities to a man who is not awakened (but is dreaming in sleep), but the same (dream) is not capable of deluding him when he is awake.

26. Similarly Prakṛti never causes any harm to one who has realized the Truth, and who has set his heart upon me, and who is delighted in realizing the Self (*ātman*).

27. When a sage is delighted in his own Self (*ātman*), and after going through many births is unattached and averse to everything upto (i.e. including) the region of Brahmā.

28-29. (and being) my devotee has realized the true Self, by my grace, he easily attains to his essential state, as distinct from his physical body,—a state of final beatitude called *Kaivalya*. The wise man who has cut asunder all doubts (i.e. pseudo-knowledge) by his vision of the Self (*ātma-jñāna*) goes by my grace to the state attained after the destruc-

tion of the subtle body (*liṅga-śarīra*) and from which state there is no reversion (to *saṁsāra*).

30. Oh mother, when the mind of the *Siddha* (the emancipated sage) is not attached to the miraculous powers born of *yoga* and obtained through yogic practice, then only is attained the ultimate state pertaining to me—a state where even the death cannot laugh (is powerless).

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

(Exposition of the Aṣṭāṅga-Yoga (the eightfold Path of Yoga)

The Lord said :

1. Oh Princess, I shall explain to you the nature of the *sa-bīja*[809] type of Yoga, by practising which only, the mind becomes tranquil and pure, and goes to the path (leading) to Brahman[810].

2*. Performance of one's religious duties according to one's capacity, aversion to irreligion, contentment in what one obtains by the Lord's grace (or one's fate); worshipping the feet of those who have realized the Soul (*ātman*).

3. Abstention from duties pertaining to *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* (the first three common goals in life), devotion to duties leading to *mokṣa* (liberation), eating pure food in moderation and permanent stay in a safe, secluded place.

4. Non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, acceptance of only the bare necessities of life, celibacy, penance, purity,

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809. *sabīja* : The Yoga is of two types ; *sabīja* and *nirbīja*. *Sabīja* requires an object for meditation (ŚR.) which is according to VJ. & VD. Viṣṇu. The *nirbīja*-yoga consists of curbing the wavering mind and subjugating it solely to the Self as prescribed in the BG. 6.26 (VB.).

810. *sat-patham*—(i) The path of *bhakti* (RR.); (ii) The path leading to the realization of *ātman* (VB.) or of the Lord (VB., SD.).

* Although the commentators label the virtues enumerated in these (2-6) verses as *yama* and *niyama*, the first two *aṅgas* of Yoga, it is an elucidation of Ys. 2.30-32. Cf. the list of virtues in BG. 16.1-3; 17.7-11, 17.14-16 as 'means to knowledge' as the *daivī sampad* and as moral discipline (*tapas*)

study of Vedas (or *Śāstras*), (ritualistic) worship of the Supreme Man.

5. Silence, ever-firmness in bodily posture and steadiness, gradual control of breath, mental withdrawal of senses from their objects into the heart.

6. Concentration of the mind and the breath in one of the plexuses (like the *mūlādhāra cakra*), constant meditation of the *līlās* (sports, actions) of Lord, and concentration of the mind on God.

7. By these and other means (such as observance of vows, giving donations) one should attain control over his breath, and deliberately and without slackness, direct the mind to the right path—mind which has become polluted by going to the path of worldly enjoyment.

8*. Having firmly fixed his seat in a clean holy place, he should (firstly) get (thorough) control of his bodily posture. He should comfortably[811] be seated on that seat, and keeping his body erect, he should practise (breath-control).

9. He should purify the passage (path) of the breath (the respiratory system) by systematic inhalation, retention and exhalation of breath or vice versa, so that the mind becomes quiescent and steady.

10. The mind of a *yogin* who has mastered his breathing, becomes pure immediately just as gold melted by the blast of wind and fire, gives up the dross mixed with it.

11. One should burn one's impure humids in the body by breath-control, the sins by *Dhāraṇā*[812], the attachment to objects of senses by *Pratyāhāra*[813] and undivine qualities by meditation.

12. When one's mind becomes pure and properly steady

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*. This is practically a quotation from BG. 6.11-13.

811. *svasti* : ŚR. reads *svastikam āsīnam* and interprets : 'in the bodily posture called *svastikāsana*'. He quotes a verse describing this posture. VR., VC., SD., VB. follow ŚR.

812. *Dhāraṇā*—'Fixed attention' is binding the mind to a place like a plexus (*cakra*) in the body—YS. 3.1.

813. *Pratyāhāra—sva-viṣayāsamprayoge cittasya svarūpānukāra ivendriyāṇāṁ pratyāhāraḥ* / YS. 2.54. '*Pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses) is as it were the imitation of the mind-stuff itself on the part of the organs by disjoining themselves from their objects'. Wood—YSP. 197-98.

(poised), by *Yoga*, one should meditate on the form of the Supreme Lord, with his eyes fixed at the farthest end (the tip) of his nose.

13*-18. The Yogin should meditate on the complete form of God, till his mind is completely fixed on God; whose lotus-like face is kindly (i.e. gracious); whose eyes are reddish like the interior of a lotus; whose complexion is dark-blue like the petals of a blue lotus; who is holding (in his hands) a conch, a disc (*Sudarśana-cakra*) and a mace (*Kaumodakī gadā*) whose silk garments are yellow like the bright (shining); filaments of a lotus; whose chest bears the mark of *Śrīvatsa*; who wears the resplendent jewel *kaustubha* around his neck; who is garlanded by a *vanamālā* about which intoxicated bees are humming sweetly; who is adorned with invaluable necklace, bracelets, crown, armlets (*aṅgada*) and anklets; whose waist (lit. hips) is engirdled by a lustrous belt; whose seat is in the lotus-like hearts (of his devotees); who is the most beautiful, serene, delighting the eyes and the minds (of his devotees); who is extremely charming to look; who is ever bowed (and respected) by all the worlds; who appears like a boy (of fifteen) in age; who is eagerly absorbed in (showering) grace on his servants; whose holy fame deserves to be eulogised; who has enhanced the fame of Bali and other *puṇyaślokas* (persons of hallowed name).

19. With his mind full of pure devotion, he should contemplate the God as st nding, walking, sitting, lying, or occupying his heart—Lord whose *līlās* are worth looking.

20. When the sage finds that his mind becomes concentrated on all the members of the body of the Lord as a whole, he should try to fix on the members (of the body of the Lord) one by one.

21. He should reflect (contemplate) the lotus-like feet of the Lord which are enriched by the (lines showing) marks of the Vajra, the goad (*aṅkuśa*), the banner (*dhvaja*) and the lotus, and the lunar rays emanating from whose group of prominent, reddish, refulgent (toe-) nails have dispelled the dense darkness in the hearts (of his devotees).

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* From this verse, the author gives the different mental representations of Viṣṇu on which the Yogin should meditate in a serial order.

22. One should contemplate for a long time the lotus-like feet of the Lord—Feet, the waters washing which flowed forth and became a great river, the Gaṅgā. God Śiva bore the sacred waters (of the Gaṅgā) on his head and became supremely auspicious. (One should meditate on) those feet which are like a thunderbolt discharged against the mountain of evils (sins) in the mind of the meditator (or the feet which detonate the Vajra, the mark on his feet, against the mountain of evils).

23. One should contemplate in one's heart (the pair of the shanks and) knees of the All-pervading Lord who liberates from *saṁsāra*—the knees which are placed on her thighs and are gently served (pressed and massaged) with her brilliant sproutlike hands by Lakṣmī of lotus-eyes, who is the mother of god Brahmā, the creator of all the worlds.

24. (One should meditate in one's hearts on) the thighs of the Lord which appear superbly beautiful on the shoulder of Garuḍa, and which are the source (or reservoir) of strength, and are like *Atasikā* (linseed) flower in complexion. He should further contemplate his waist or round hips which are encircled (lit. embraced) with a girdle which belts his yellow garment (*Pītāmbara*) reaching upto his ankles.

25. (One should contemplate) his deep lake-like navel on the stomach which is like a cave accommodating all the worlds and from which sprouted forth the lotus which was the seat of God Brahmā and the abode of the universe. One should meditate on his pair of emerald-like nipples which appear bright and white by the rays of the shining wreaths of pearls.

26. One should then contemplate in one's heart the chest of the great God (Hari) which is the resting place of his Supreme Power (goddess Mahā-lakṣmī), and which brings great joy to men's minds and eyes. Next, one should meditate upon the neck of Lord Hari who is bowed down by all the worlds—the neck which beautifies the *Kaustubha* jewel.

27. One should then vizualize for meditation his arms, the armlets on which got burnished by the circular movements of the Mandara mountain (while the ocean was being churned for the nectar)—arms which are the support of the *Lokapālas*

(deities protecting the world). (One should then contemplate) the Sudarśana disc of one thousand blades (spokes) of unbearable splendour (and velocity), and the conch which looks like a royal swan in his lotus-like hand (due to whiteness of the conch and the swan).

28. Then one should remember (contemplate) the Lord's beloved mace, Kaumodakī, besmeared with the thick (mudlike) blood of inimical warriors. (Then one should contemplate) the garland (in his neck) which is (as if) resonant with the humming swarm of bees around it. He should (next) meditate on the spotless jewel *Kaustubha* which represents the essential principle of *jīvas* [814] (beings).

29. One should (then) properly contemplate the lotus-like face of the Lord who, with his mind full of compassion for his servants, has assumed a form (incarnation) in this world—(his) face (beautiful) with shapely prominent nose and spotless cheeks illuminated by the oscillations of the refulgent earrings of crocodile-like shape.

30*. With close attention, one should contemplate in mind the lotus-like face of Hari which manifests itself in the mind—face looking beautiful due to the locks of curly hair around it, and lotus-like eyes with flashing charming eyebrows, and which thus surpasses in beauty the lotus-abode of Lakṣmī, which, due to its beauty is attended upon (hovered round) by black-bees and resorted to by a pair of fish.

31. With perfect and intense devotion one should contemplate for a long time the glances of the eyes of Hari who is dwelling in the cave in the form of one's heart—glances which are cast with great mercy and favour for soothing the terrible-most afflictions of three types (—*ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaivika*), and which are accompanied with affec-

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814. The gem, *Kaustubha* represents the Soul—the *jīva-tattva*—VR., JG. Cf. *Ātmānam asya jagato nirlepam aguṇāmalam /*
Bibharti Kaustubha-maṇi-svarūpaṁ bhagavān Hariḥ //
—VP. 1.22.68.
'Lord Hari wears on his neck the gem Kaustubha which is a form of the Soul of the living beings. It is destitute of any deposit, *guṇa* or dirt.'

* By clever arguments VB. tries to show that the nine-fold devotion is described in verses 29 and 30.

tionate smile, and which confer abundance of grace (upon his devotees).

32. (One should then contemplate) Hari's most enchanting smile which dries up the sea of tears caused by the intense grief of all the people who bow to him ; (and should meditate on) his circular eyebrows which he has bent by his Māyā to entice and delude the god of love for the sake of sages (whom he—the god of Love—disturbs in their meditations).

33. Viṣṇu manifests himself in the cave of the heart in one's body. With a heart full of (lit. moistened with) devotion, one should contemplate on Viṣṇu's loud laugh as an object of meditation—laugh which exhibits his row of teeth like *Kunda* buds, which appear reddish by the bright glow of his lower lip. Having dedicated one's mind to him, one should not desire to look anywhere else.

34. In this way (of meditating on the Lord) the sage gets the love of Hari engendered in him. His heart is melted with devotion. He finds his hair standing on their ends through ecstatic joy. Due to the tears of joy flowing on account of his ardent love for God, he finds himself frequently submerged in the flood of joys. He gradually disentangles himself from his heart which is like a hook to secure the Lord.[815]

35*. When the mind becomes unattached and with-

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815. *citta-baḍiśam etc.* (i) The angle in the form of *citta* which hooks up the Lord who is difficult to capture—ŚR.

(ii) He should gradually disengage his mind from the person of the Lord which is to be meditated. He should then meditate on his *pratyag-ātmā* (Soul).—VR.

(iii) The sage who directs the hook of his heart to the Lord—the object of contemplation, disengages it (and enters *samādhi* without any purposeful efforts).—VJ.

This is the method of *sabīja samādhi*.

(iv) The heart of Yogin is hard like a hook. Its touch is troublesome to the Lord. When this hook is removed (disengaged), God confers experience of *Pratyag-ātmā* and Mokṣa on the Yogin but not the experience of the Supreme Soul.

(v) The hook of the mind which is the instrument of grasping worldly objects and turned to meditation etc. which lead to the attainment of Hari. —SD.

*VR. 's explanation may be summarised as follows :

When mind becomes unattached, it becomes destitute of objects of senses like a flame of lamp free from smoke. When the mind ceases to

drawn from the sense-objects, it loses its support (to function as the meditator has no standing in the absence of the object of meditation. It becomes dissolved in Brahman (i.e. its being is transformed into Brahman) just as a flame in the absence of its support (oil, wick etc.) becomes one with the Mahābhūta Fire. In this stage, a man who is free from the flow of *guṇas* i.e. the limitations of the body etc. at once realizes his Soul directly as one (without distinction such as the meditator and the object of meditation).

36. Even he (the devotee or Yogin) becomes dissolved in Brahman which is beyond pleasure and pain. In this last stage attained by the practice of Yoga, his (Yogin's) mind finally withdraws (and becomes free from *avidyā*). Tha Yogin thus realizes the essential nature of the Soul and transfers from himself the agency of the pleasure and the pain to *ahaṁkāra* (ego), known as *asat* which is the produce of *avidyā*.

37. Just as an addict, blind with the intoxication of wine, is not conscious of the existence of the garment he has worn, the perfect Siddha who has reached the final stage (described above) is not conscious whether his body is sitting or standing or is removed to another place or has returned by the will of the destiny, because he (the *siddha*) has reached (realized) his real self.

38. So long as the *karma* which is the cause of the body is effective (and not exhausted) till that period the body along with the sense-organs which is at the mercy of the fate does definitely exist. But he who has mastered the Yoga upto the *Samādhi* and who has realized the thing (i.e. the Soul) does not again accept the body along with its attendants (the *Prapañca*) as if it is an appearance in a dream. (He becomes

think about these and rises above the contemplation of forms etc., it abandons its external activities. Then the individual Soul loses attachment to his body and the idea of being absolutely independent and directly finds himself to be a part or attribute of the Supreme Self.—VR.

VC.: When mind becomes unattached and free from *viṣayas* (objects of senses), it loses its stay or support, (as it has nothing to think about). Hence it naturally attains to *nirvāṇa* like the flame of lamp when deprived of its wick and oil. In this stage of dissolution of mind, *jīva*, directly experiences the identity of the pure Soul and individual Soul (jīva). Thenceforth he never returns to *saṁsāra*.

free from the *ahaṁkāra* regarding his body, his relatives, belongings etc.).

39. Just as a man is found to be different from his son or wealth, even though they are accepted as his own, similarly the Soul is distinct from his body (and things in association with it, though they are regarded as his self).

40-41. Just as the (real) fire is different from the firebrand or from the sparks (emanating from it) or the smoke (issuing from it) or the burning wood is regarded as the fire, so also the Seer is different and distinct from *bhūtas*, sense-organs and the mind (*antaḥ-karaṇa*); the Brahman is different from what is designated as *jīva*, and the Lord (Supreme Soul) is different from *Prakṛti*.

42. Just as all types of beings (whether born from the womb or from the egg or from perspiration or germinating from seeds as plants) are identical from the point of their constitution from Mahābhūtas, similarly one should see (the identity of) the Soul (*ātman*) in all beings and of all beings in the *ātman*.

43. Just as the fire, though one, appears to be different according to the difference in the quality of its source (i.e. the shape, size and quality of the wood burnt by it)—similarly the embodied Soul appears different according to the difference in quality of its body (whether human, divine etc.).

44. Therefore, after conquering this incomprehensible Prakṛti, God Viṣṇu's own power, which is of the form of cause and effect (*sat* and *asat*), one remains in one's own (original, pure) form.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

(The Path of Bhakti (Bhakti-Yoga) and The Power of Time)

Devahūti said:

1-2. Oh Lord, the accurate description of the *Mahat* and other principles and of the Prakṛti and Puruṣa as described in the Sāṁkhya-Śāstra has been narrated—the accurate descrip-

tion by which the real nature of these (Sāṁkhya) principles is correctly understood. It is said to be the source of the Bhakti Yoga. Please tell (explain) to me in details thes path of the *Bhakti-yoga.*

3. Oh revered Kapila, please tell me the different types of births (existences) of this world of living beings, by hearing which a man becomes free from attachment to everything (and everywhere) in the world.

4. Please tell me about the nature of your all-powerful Kāla or Time. He is regarded as the controller of the great (gods like Brahmā). It is because (of the fear of) Time that people take to good actions.

5. You have certainly manifested yourself as the Sun shedding light on the Yoga, in order to awaken the people who are ignorant and hence full of *ahaṁkāra* (pride) about unreal objects (like their body etc.) and are exhausted due to the attachment of their minds to actions (*karmas*) and are hence fast asleep for a long time in the unending darkness of *saṁsāra.*

Maitreya said :

6. Oh prominent Kuru! The great sage hailed with joy the beautiful speech of his mother. Being pleased with her and out of compassion (for her), he spoke to her.

The Lord said :

7. Oh mother, the path of *Bhakti* is regarded as having many branches; for the objects of men differ according to their natural dispositions and attributes (like *sattva* etc.)

8. He who becomes my devotee with the intention of doing injury (to others) or out of hypocrisy and jealousy or under the influence of anger or with an outlook full of differences (or with incorrect outlook of things), is called a *Tāmasa* type of devotee.

9. He who, with a desire of worldly pleasures or of fame or authoritative power, worships me in my images and entertains notions of difference, is a devotee of *rājasa* type.

10* He who wishes to purge all (his) *karmas*, or desires

* ŚR. and later SD. and GD. state that there are 81 types of *saguṇa-bhakti.* ŚR. details them as follows : 1-3 *Tāmasa bhakti*—actuated by injury (*hiṁsā*), religious hypocrisy (*dambha*) and jealousy (*matsara*); 4-6 *Rājasa*

to dedicate them to the Supreme Lord or worships the Lord with the simple objective of worship (and expecting no return for it) but entertains the idea of difference[816], is called a devotee of the *Sāttvika* type.

11-12. Just as the waters of the Gaṅgā continuously flow into the sea, similarly by merely listening to (the description of) my qualities the mind incessantly flows to me who reside in the hearts of all (beings). This close and intimate devotion to the Lord (Puruṣottama), without any ulterior motive, is definitely regarded as the characteristic of the *nirguṇa* type of *Bhakti.yoga*.

13. Even if the kinds of liberation (*muktis*), viz. residence in the same region with me (*sālokya*), equality in wealth, power and glory like me (*sārṣṭi*), staying near me (*sāmīpya*), similarity of form like me (*sārupya*) and even union with God (*ekatva*) are offered to these persons (the *nirguṇa-bhaktas*) they do not accept anything except my service.

14. That only is called the absolute[817] (and the highest) *Bhaktiyoga* whereby one transcends the trinity of *guṇas* (and the *saṁsāra* caused by them) and attains to my state (Brahmahood).

15. The mind of the man (my *nirguṇa* devotee) becomes purified by careful performance of daily religious duties without any motive, by performance of disinterested worship with ardent faith (as prescribed in the Pañcarātra *āgama*) without involving the least injury to beings[818].

16. by beholding at my image, by touching, worshipp-

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bhakti—motivated by the desire for objects of enjoyment, for reputation and for authority; 7-9 *Sāttvikī bhakti*—generated by a desire to purge all sins, to dedicate *karmas* to God and to worship as a duty with no ulterior motive. Each of these is subdivided into nine according to the ninefold path of *bhakti* consisting of *Śravaṇa*, *Kīrtaṇa* etc.

816. VR. & VS. read *a-pṛthag-bhāva* : (i) The knowledge that he is like the body of the Lord (VR); (Who sees identity or oneness in my forms.

817. *ātyantika*—That which takes place finally, i.e. *sāyujyatā* (absorption into God).

818. *nātihiṁsraṇa*—Some *hiṁsā* (injury) to subtle beings is inevitable while washing the temple, cooking food for offering to God, collecting flowers and fruit etc. for worship. But this injury is condonable.—VC.

ing praising and bowing to me, by regarding me (as residing) in all beings, by firmness or fortitude and non-attachment.

17. by paying great respect to the great, by showing compassion to the afflicted, by friendliness towards one's equals and by observance of *yama* and *niyama*.

18. by listening to the philosophic discourses about *ātman*, by eulogizing the name (of God), by straightforwardness and by association with the noble (Souls) and by giving up *ahaṁkāra*.

19. As soon as such a devotee listens to (the description of) my attributes, he is easily attracted to me.

20. Just as fragrance being carried by (the chariot in the form of) the wind from its source (reaches the nose) and captures the smelling organ, similarly the mind which is constant and unperturbed and absorbed in *yoga*, attains to (and realizes) the *ātman*.

21. I am always abiding in all beings as their Soul (*antaryāmin*). A man who disregards me (the *antaryāmin*) performs a sham idol-worship.

22. He who foolishly neglects me, the controller of the world dwelling as a Soul (*ātman*) in all beings, and worships merely the images, is (as if), offering oblations in ashes (instead of in the fire).

23. The mind of a man who possesses *ahaṁkāra* (about his body identifying it with the Soul) and who hates me in another body regarding me as different (in every person) and contracts enmity with other beings, never attains tranquillity.

24. Oh sinless, I am not at all pleased with a person who slights all beings (even though) I am worshipped as an image by him, with (ritualistic) offerings of various articles (like sandle-paste, flowers, fruits etc.).

25. So long as a man does not realize in his heart that I, the Supreme Lord, am present in all beings he should perform his religious duties and worship me in an idol.

26* If a person makes even a slight difference between

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* JG. & VC. take *udara*=stomach. JG., VC. : One should treat a hungry man like himself and feed him properly.

VJ. : Mṛtyu in the from of Nṛsiṁha creates great fear (viz. throwing a man in the darkest hell) for the man who regards all the *antaryāmins* (inner Souls of beings) as different.

himself and the Supreme Self (*Paramātman*)[819], I, who am Death, create a big fear for him who entertains the idea of difference.

27. Hence he should worship me by gifts and respectful behaviour, friendliness and equality of outlook—me who dwell in all beings as their Soul.

28. Oh auspicious mother, sentient beings are superior to non-sentient ones. Those who bear Prāṇa (have vital functions of respiration etc.) are superior to the sentient beings. To them are superior the possessors of *citta*. Those who possess the function of the sense organs are higher than the possessors of mere *citta* (mind).

29. Even amongst the possessors of sense-organs those who possess the sense of taste are higher than those who possess the sense of touch. To these are superior those who possess the sense of smell. Higher than these are the possessors of the sense of hearing.

30. Beings which know the difference in colour and forms (i.e. have the eyes) are higher than those possessing the sense of hearing. To these are superior, the beings who have teeth in the lower and upper jaws. Higher than these are the multipeds. Quadruped animals are superior to multipeds and bipeds are higher than the quadrupeds.

31. Among the bipeds, four *Varṇas* (castes) are superior and the Brāhmaṇas are the highest among them (the castes). Among the Brāhmaṇas, the reciters of the Vedas are higher. Superior to these are those who understand the meaning of the Vedas.

32. He who can solve doubts and difficulties (of Vedic interpretation) is superior to him who simply knows the meaning (of the Veda). To him is superior the performer of one's prescribed religious duties. But a person who has renounced all association and does not desire the fruit of his religious acts is higher than the previous one.

33. Superior to him is the man who has dedicated all his actions and body to me and who does not entertain the notion of difference. I do not know anyone superior to a

819. Or : who regards body as coming in between his individual Soul and the Supreme Soul—ŚR.

person who has dedicated his body to me, deposited his *karmas* in me, and has no ego of being the agent of any action and who sees all as equals.

34. One should understand that the glorious Lord himself has entered all beings as their *jīva* (individual Soul) and should pay great respects to them mentally and bow down to them.

35. Oh daughter of Manu, the Bhakti-yoga (the path of Bhakti) and *Yoga* (of eight stages) have been explained to you by me. By following one of them, a man will attain to God (the Supreme Man).

36. This is the form of the glorious Lord, the Supreme Soul, the Brahman. It is both Prakṛti and Puruṣa (and still) is also beyond them. It is the unseen destiny (*daiva*) which is the cause of all *karmas* (in the form of *saṁsāra*).

37. The divine form (of the Lord) which is the cause of the differences in the appearances of things, is called Time. From it, fear is caused to beings, which entertain the notion of difference and which preside over the *Mahat* and others.

38. He enters into all beings (*bhūtas*) and supports them all. He eats them up (annihilates them) by their means. He is called Viṣṇu, presiding deity of sacrifices who confers the fruit of the sacrifice (on the performer). He is the Time, the ruler of rulers.

39. Nobody is dear or inimical to him. He has no friend or relative. He is always alert and enters into the negligent people in order to destroy them.

40. It is out of his (*Kāla's*) fear that the wind blows. It is due to his fear that the Sun shines. God Indra showers (water) out of his fear. Heavenly bodies shine out of his dread.

41. It is due to his fear that trees, creepers, plants and herbs blossom forth and bear fruits in the proper seasons.

42. It is out of his fear that the rivers flow and the sea does not overflow his fixed limits. Being afraid of him, the fire burns and the earth (burdened) with mountains does not submerge (in the sea).

43. It is due to his control that the sky affords space for living (breathing) creatures and the Principle *Mahat* expands its body into the world enveloped in seven sheaths.

44. It is out of his fear that (Brahmā and other) gods who preside over the *guṇas* (like *sattva* etc.) and who can control this mobile and immobile world (creatures), carry out their duties of creation etc. in every *Yuga*.

45. He is endless but puts an end (to all). Time is beginningless but marks the beginning of all. He is immutable. He causes beings to be born of parents and causes the end of *antaka* (god of death) by means of death.

CHAPTER THIRTY

(*Saṁsāra and Sufferings in Hell*)

Kapila said:

1. Just as a row of clouds does not know the force of the mighty wind even though they are dispersed by it, similarly the people, though at the mercy of Time—*Kāla*—certainly do not know the great prowess of the mighty Time.

2. Whatever object (of pleasure) a man acquires with great efforts for the enjoyment of pleasures, the omnipotent Lord destroys it (lit. shakes it off) and the man grieves over it.

3. For it is out of delusion that an ignorant person regards as permanent that which belongs to this perishable body and its relatives such as the house, lands, money (and other property) which are transitory.

4. In whatever kind of existence (birth) a being is born in this *saṁsāra*, he feels happy in that (particular) birth. He is never disgusted (and unattached) with it.

5. The *Jīva* is so deluded with the *Māyā* of God that even in hell, while he has to subsist on and find pleasure in the products of hell, he verily does not desire to give up his (hellish) body.

6. With his heart deeply rooted in his body, wife, children, house, cattle, wealth and relatives, he regards himself as great and happy.

7. All his body is as if burning with anxiety of supporting these; (and) this ignorant person of evil intentions continuously goes on committing sins.

8. His mind and senses are attracted by the spell of the seductive charms of unchaste women in privacy, and by the sweet indistinct warbling of children.

9. He is prompt and watchful in the householder's life which is characterised by unfair moneydealings leading to a lot of misery. In such houses the householder regards it a pleasure to counteract the miseries.

10 He maintains them with money (and other objects) acquired here and there (in various ways and from any place) with great injury (and trouble to all). He can enjoy (but little of) what is left after their consumption. By (thus) maintaining them, he goes down (to hell).

11. When, despite his fresh attempts to start again and again, his means of livelihood become a failure, he becomes overpowered with greed. Growing weak, he begins to covet after another's property.

12. Being unable to maintain his family, the unfortunate fellow, whose all attempts have ended in failure, becomes destitute of wealth and miserable. Being at a loss to know what to do; the wretch goes on brooding and sighing.

13. Just as miserly farmers neglect old (and hence useless) bulls, his wife and others do not treat him with respect as before, as he has become incapable of maintaining them.

14-15. Even in that stage he does not feel disgust. He is deformed with old age and is approaching death. He is overcome with disease. He eats but little due to loss of appetite. His movements slow down and he is now nourished by those whom he had brought up. He stays in the house like a dog eating what is contemptuously thrown to him.

16. By the (vital) breath which is passing out, he has his eye-balls shot out. Phlegm chokes up the tubular passage (in his lungs). He suffers from extreme difficulty in breathing due to cough and asthema and a gurgling sound is heard in his throat.

17. He lies surrounded by his weeping relatives. He

who is bound down with the noose of Death, does not reply, even though addressed (by his relatives).

18. In this way, a man who has devoted himself completely for the maintenance of his family and has not controlled his sense-organs, loses his consciousness (lit. intelligence, mind) through extreme pain and dies while his relatives are crying.

19. Then he sees two terrible-looking messengers of death with eyes full of anger. At their sight, with terrified heart, he passes on urine and excrement.

20. They perforce shut him (the *jīva*) in a body specially designed to torture him. Fastening a noose round his neck, they drag him along the rout (to the region of death) like the policemen (King's men) do to convicts (persons to be punished).

21-22. His heart is breaking with their threats. He is trembling (with fear). On the way, hellish dogs bite him. Remembering his sins, he feels distressed. He suffers from hunger and thirst. On the road covered with hot sand, he is scorched by the heat of the Sun, forest-conflagration and (hot) blasts of wind. He is severely whipped on the back. Though weak and exhausted, he drags (on the road) where there is neither shelter nor water.

23. Now and then he faints exhausted. He rises again led by the most accursed dark path to the house of Yama (hell).

24. He is dragged within three or two *muhūrtas*[820] on this road of ninety-nine thousand Yojanas and undergoes the sufferings.

25. His body is burnt by surrounding it with firebrands. Sometimes he is made to eat his own flesh cut by himself or by others.

26. While he is alive, his entrails are dragged out by the hounds or vultures in the hell. He is subjected to torments by the biting and stinging of serpents, scorpions, mosquitoes and others.

27. His limbs are chopped off one by one. He is crushed by being trampled by the elephants and such other animals.

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820. *muhūrta*—A period of 48 minutes.

He is thrown down from the tops of mountains. He is confined and suffocated in caves or under water.

28. Whether a man or a woman, he or she undergoes extreme tortures of the hells called Tāmisra, Andha-tāmisra, Raurava and others as a result of mutual illicit relations.

29. Oh mother, some say that the heaven or the hell is here (in this world) only, because whatever tortures or afflictions are meted out in the hell are seen in this very world.

30. In this way, he who maintains his family or earns his livelihood only, gives up his family and his body, and experiences such kind of fruit for it after death (in the other world).

31. He who has collected only sins as the provision for a journey (in *saṁsāra*) has to give up his physical body which he has maintained by doing wrong to other beings and goes alone to the hell of darkness (*andha-tāmisra* hell).

32. A man who commits sins for feeding his family, experiences in hell their evil consequences brought to him by Destiny. He becomes afflicted like a man who has been robbed of his wealth.

33. The being (*jīva*) who is eager to maintain his family by irreligious behaviour only, goes to the Andha-Tāmisra hell, the lowest region of darkness.

34. He regularly undergoes suffering and miserable types of births (of sub-human beings below, which he has passed through before his rebirth as a human being). He goes through them by degrees and becomes pure and is born as a human being.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

(Sufferings of the Jīva—The Rājasī Gati)

The Lord said :

1. The *jīva* is impelled by the force of his Karma which is under the direction and control of God. For the formation of his gross body, he, through the medium of the semen of man enters the womb of a woman.

2. In one night, the mixture of the (man's) semen and (the woman's) blood takes place. In five nights, a circular bubble-like mass is formed. In ten days, it becomes (somewhat) hard like the fruit of the jujube tree (*karkandhu*). Thereafter, it becomes a ball of flesh or an egg.

3. In one month, the head is formed. In two months, the body develops arms, feet and other organs. In three months, nails, hair, bones, skin, the penis and the anus are formed.

4. By the end of the fourth month, the seven essential ingredients of the body are produced. In the fifth month, hunger and thirst are felt. In the sixth month, the foetus is enveloped with an external skin called *jarāyu*, and it begins to make movements in the rightside of the mother's abdomen.

5. He develops the essential ingredients of the body by the mother's intake of food and drinks. The *jīva* stays in an abominable hollow place, full of urine and feces, a breeding place of worms.

6. By the frequent biting of the hungry worms which are there (in the same hollow place), his whole body, being very delicate and soft, is wounded all over. Being extremely tormented, he falls into a swoon at every moment.

7. He is affected by the bitter, pungent, hot, salt, astringent, acidic and such other unbearable substances eaten by the mother, and thereby suffers pain spread all over the body.

8. Enveloped in the womb and surrounded on the outside with the entrails, it lies there with his head protruding towards the stomach and with his back and neck in a bent position.

9. Like a bird (shut up) in a cage, he is incapable of making (free) movements of his body there. As a result of his *karma* in previous births, he recollects his actions (*karmas*) done in the last hundred previous births and suffers the endless pain without a sigh. What happiness can he have (in such a condition).

10. From the seventh month, he gets consciousness. But as he is always moved by 'the winds of delivery' (*sūti-vāta*), he cannot remain in one spot like the worms born in the feces in the same place.

11. The *jīva* who knows both body and the Soul but is bound by seven essential ingredients of the gross body, is afraid. In repentance he folds his hands and in words expressing distress, he praises the Lord who has confined him in the womb. *The jīva* (the Individual Soul) *said* :

12. That the Lord has shown me this condition (made me to experience confinement in the womb) is quite befitting as I am wicked[821]. I, who am of that type, (now) take shelter under the lotuslike feet of the Lord, who fearlessly moves over the earth, after assuming various bodies (incarnations), with the desire of protecting the world, which has submitted to him for refuge[822].

13. I stay as if bound down, here (in the mother's womb), depending on the Māyā in the form (of my body consisting) of five *Bhūtas*, sense-organs and mind (*manas*), and with

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821. VB., VR. read : *upa-pannam*—(the world) created by him.

822. VC. : "I am ruined by great calamities. But the God has inspired in me such type of mental attitude as is capable of delivering me from this."

VR. : Paramātmā occupies the same body (consisting of bhūtas etc.) as the one occupied by *jīva*. But though he is staying in Prakṛti along with *jīva*, he is untouched by the blemishes of the Prakṛti and hence is extremely pure. He is destitute of changes such as birth, death, grief, delusion, hunger, thirst etc. His knowledge is undiminished. Though he stays in the same impure body as the *jīva* who is subject to *karmas*, he is not at all affected by any impurities. Hence the *jīva* bows to him who manifests in his afflicted heart.

Basing his explanation on *Satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ Brahma* (Tait. Up. 2.1.1) VJ. states : The Paramātman stays in the body even in the womb as the director of the Prakṛti. But (*tu*) there is extreme difference between the *jīva* and the *paramātman* as he is extremely pure, changeless, of unlimited knowledge. I bow to Hari whose presence in my heart burning with afflictions, is determined by his being free from them.

VC. : I bow to the Lord as we do not know whether he stays in this body to protect us or as a part of his *līlā*. It is proper that as a result of my past sinful actions I am here, but how does he live in this hell as an *antaryāmin* ? His presence due to his dependence on Māyā does not bring any impurity, change or limitation to his knowledge as in my case. He stayed in my heart and gave me the (above) knowledge. Hence I realized this in my heart tormented with affliction.

VB. : This verse describes the absence of blemishes and excellences in the Lord. It describes the blemishes of the *jīva*. And the *jīva* bows to the Lord to remove his weaknesses and faults.

my real nature covered by *karmas*. I bow to the Lord who is being realized in my tormented heart yet is himself unaffected by changes (*avikāra*) as he is extremely pure and unlimited by conditions, and of uninterrupted knowledge.

14.* I who am falsely concealed in a body composed of five *Bhūtas*, am factually unattached to it. I am the *jīva* falsely reflected in the sense-organs, attributes (like *sattva*) and objects of senses. I bow to that Supreme Man whose greatness is not limited[823] by the body—the Supreme Man who is the controller of the Prakṛti and Puruṣa and who is omniscient.

15. By what means can the *jīva* regain for himself his original status[824] without the grace of the Lord by (the power of) whose Māyā he lost his memory (about his true self) and is wandering in this path of *saṁsāra* suffering the afflictions resulting from it and wherein he incurs heavy bondage from actions (committed) due to the three *guṇas*.

16. Which[825] of the gods except the Supreme Being has inspired in me this knowledge of the past, present and future? (It must be the Supreme God as) we *jīvas* follow the course of *karmas* (and are subject to births and deaths). By his *aṁśa*, he has pervaded the mobiles and immobiles (as an *antaryāmin*). We resort to him for the cessation of the three kinds of afflictions (viz. *ādhibhautika*, *ādhyātmika* and *ādhi-daivika*).

17. Oh Lord! this embodied being has fallen into the hollow place full of blood, feces and urine in the cavity in the body of another person (i.e. the mother). His body is extremely scorched by the abdominal fire (of the mother). Being anxious of getting out of this place, he is counting his months.

*VR. takes the first half as the description of Paramātman. "Paramātman, though concealed or covered by the body composed of five *bhūtas*, is not at all touched by the defects or blemishes resulting from the contacts with the body. He is the controller of both *cit* and *acit* (sentient and non-sentient) for his body consists of *guṇas*, objects of senses and the sentient principle (*jīva*)".

823. v.l. *avaguṇṭha-mahimānam*—The shroud enveloping whose greatness is destroyed—ŚR.

824. *lokam*—The real knowledge of the self, the means to liberation —VR.

825. *Kṛtamaḥ*—(1) Extremely blessed—VJ. (2) The highest Brahman —VB.

When will this low-minded being be delivered (lit. pushed out of this place)?

18. Oh Omnipotent Lord, you are simply incomparable. By your unbounded mercy, you have blessed a *jīva* of ten months with this knowledge. May that protector of the distressed (i.e. you) be pleased with his (your) own action (of this gift of knowledge). What can anyone do to him (you) except offering one's obeisance ?

19*. This another kind of *jīva*[826] (sub-human beings like birds, beasts) certainly feels physical (pleasures and pains) pertaining to his body. I am blessed by him with intelligence (knowledge and discretion) and gifted by him with a body capable of being disciplined with *śama*, *dama* etc. I can see that eternal, perfect Puruṣa directly both within and without my heart just like a *caitya* (the *jīva* who possesses *ahaṁkāra* and is an enjoyer of pleasure and pain).

20. Oh All-pervading Lord, though I am dwelling in the womb full of many kinds of afflictions, I do not wish to get out of the womb and fall into a dark well (of ignorance) (and be born in this world). (Because, outside) God's Māyā approaches the *jīva* which has fallen into the dark pit (well) of *saṁsāra*. The Māyā is followed by false apprehension (about the identification of the body and the Soul etc.) and this cycle of *saṁsāra*.

21. I have now attained to the feet of Viṣṇu and am

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* VR. compares the *jīva* in the womb with a Yogī (*damaśarīrī*). I can directly see the Lord in my heart by the power of knowledge (*dhiṣaṇā*) gifted to me. *Caitya*=the eternal god to be grasped by mind purified by Yoga. The *Yogī* has a body of seven sheaths but is different from the body. By the power of seeing, blessed by the Lord, a Yogī visualises the Lord due to his controlled mind and senses.

VC: This *jiva* in the human womb sees by his intelligence the physical pleasures and pains. Another fortunate one becomes a *damaśarīrī* (knower, *jñānī*). Though I am notorious of being evil-minded, I can directly see with the intelligence gifted by him, the Lord—the eternal Puruṣottama, presiding over my mind, both within and without my heart.

826. *sapta-vadhri*: *vadhra*=A leathern strap—ASD 828.

(i) VR. explains it as 'a *jīva* with seven skin sheaths' (i.e. body).

(ii) JG. and VC. : A *jīva* in the womb.

(iii) ŚR., SD, GD. : A *jīva*.

(iv) VJ.: *jīva*, the possessor of seven organs of knowledge.

free from destruction. I shall stay therefore, here (in the womb) only with the help of my mind which is like a friend, I shall soon lift myself up from ignorance. So that the calamity of staying in many holes (wombs at the time of each birth in *saṁsāra*) will not befall me.

Kapila said :

22. In this way, the *jīva* who is ten months old and who has acquired knowledge, makes up his mind. While he is praising the Lord in the womb the wind produced in the womb during the pangs of travail suddenly pushes him with his head downward for his birth.

23. Being thus thrust down by the wind of delivery, the *jīva* gets suffocated and anguished and loses his memory. With great trouble, he is suddenly born with his head downward.

24. He falls on the ground in a pool of blood and urine. He moves about like a worm in feces. (Finding that) he has lost his knowledge and has fallen in the contrary state (of dark ignorance), he frequently cries out.

25. He is being fed by persons who cannot understand the will (and need) of another. If he is presented an unwanted object, he is incapable of refusing it.

26. He is made to lie down (sleep) on a dirty bed rendered troublesome by worms born of sweat. He is unable to scratch his limbs or make movements like sitting, standing or moving.

27. Just as big worms gnaw and bite smaller worms, similarly mosquitoes, flies, bugs etc. bite the soft and delicate skin of the crying child who has lost its (previous) memory.

28. In this way having suffered miseries in childhood and boyhood, (in youth) he becomes down-cast with grief for his inability to obtain the desired object. He flares up with rage out of ignorance.

29. His pride and anger go on increasing with the growth of his body. He, being passionate, fights with other passionate persons like him, and meets his end (ruin).

30. This ignorant, dull-witted embodied being constantly entertains the false notion about this body which is composed of five *bhūtas* to be himself and as belonging to him.

31. He performs action for the sake of the body—the body which gives the *jīva* a great trouble (from birth to death) and which being bound down by *avidyā* (ignorance) and *karmas* (destiny, fruit of actions), always follows him (in the next birth). It is by being bound down to the body that the *jīva* goes to (and is entangled in) the cycle of *saṁsāra*.

32. While on the path of righteousness, if the being comes in contact with and is influenced by the unrighteous who are striving for the gratification of their lusts and appetites and enjoys himself (in those ways), he enters the darkness (of ignorance or hell) as before.

33. (For virtues such as) truthfulness, purity, mercy, silence (control over speech), intelligence or the sense of the highest objective (*puruṣārtha*), affluence, modesty, renown, forbearance, control of sense-organs, control of the mind, prosperity go on diminishing in the company of the evil.

34. One should not form association with those wicked persons who regard the Soul as identical with the body and are devoid of serenity and are ignorant. They are under the influence of women like the domesticated deer with which the women play and hence pitiable.

35. He is not that much affected by delusion and bondage on other occasions as when he is attached to women or to those who are attached to women.

36. The Lord of Creation (Brahmā) was enamoured of the beauty of his daughter when he saw her. When she assumed the form of a female deer, the shameless god assumed the form of a male deer and ran after her.

37. With the exception of the sage Nārāyaṇa who else in this world (and out of the sages like Marīci created by Brahmā and out of sages like Kāśyapa and others born of them and among gods, human beings etc. created by Kāśyapa), is not attracted by the Māyā in the form of woman.

38. Look at the power of my Māyā in the form of the woman. By the mere movement of her eyebrow she tramples under foot (conquers) the conquerors of the quarters (the entire world).

39. He who has attained Self-realization by my service and desires to attain to the highest stage of Yoga, should never

associate himself with women. (For) they (Yogins) call woman as the gate of hell.

40. A woman is the Māyā created by God. She slowly approaches you. You should look upon her as your death, like a deep pit covered by grass.

41. Similarly a woman who wants liberation (should regard as death the Māyā who approaches her in the form of a man and who she thinks to be her husband. The woman is a *jīva* who, due to his attachment to women (in a former birth) has attained the form of a woman which procures for her, wealth, a house and children.

42. Just as the song (sweet notes) of a hunter is a death to the deer, similarly one should understand the Māyā to be the death in the form of the husband, children and home brought to her by Fate.

43. By his *Liṅga-śarīra* surrounding the *jīva*, he wanders from one world to another (from one body to another). While the man enjoys the fruits of actions, he continuously goes on committing actions (*karmas*).

44. The *jīva* i. e. the subtle-body (*Liṅga-śarīra*) closely follows the *ātman* and is conditioned by it. The gross body is the product of the *Bhūtas*, *indriyas* (sense-organs) and *manas* (the mind). The suspension of the use of the gross-body is the Death, and the manifestation of its powers (to produce the effect) is the birth.

45*. When the gross body which is the place (and condition) of the perception of substances becomes incapable in its function of observing them, it is called death. When it (the gross body) is identified with the Self through *ahaṁkāra* and is capable of perceiving the objects, it is called the birth.

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*VR. states that the change of state is the death of the previous state and the birth of a new one. Here the subtle state (*sūkṣmāvasthā*) wherein a man becomes incapable of perceiving the elemental composition of the gross body, is called the death of that man. But when he sees it with *ahaṁkāra* (It is I). it is his birth.

VJ. agrees with ŚR. : The state in which a man is incapable of taking in the experience of gross objects in relation to the gross body, is called death. When he has the sense of I-ness ('I am this body') with reference to the body and is able to experience gross objects, it is the birth.

46* (For example) when the eyes (the region of visual perception of objects) becomes incapable of seeing the parts of a substance, it is the incapability of the sensory organ. When the (physical) eyeballs and the sensory organ both cease to function, the seer (the *jīva* that perceives (becomes incapable of seeing. (Thus the *Liṅga-śarīra*—subtle body—becomes incapable of functioning after the incompetence (and cessation of function) of the gross body. But that is not the death of *jīva*, himself).

47. (As there is no birth or death to the *jīva*), the wise man should not get agitated with grief or show niggardliness (or be down-cast with dejectedness in life) nor should get confused. He should understand the nature and the course of *jīva*[827] and should move about (lead his life) without any attachment.

48*. By the power of his intellect capable of properly grasping the truth, and reinforced by the practice of Yoga and non-attachment, he should place his body in this world created by Māyā (i.e. he should give up attachment to his body) and go about the world.

*VR. explains: For the creation of the sense of renunciation and to emphasize the distinctness of *ātman* from the body which is created and destroyed, the example of the organ of sight is taken. The physical eye is incapable of seeing the organ of sight and other objects. The organ of seeing is incapable to function when the eye is diseased, even though the object of seeing is present. When a person is absent-minded, he does not see the object though his physical eye and the sense of seeing are healthy and the object is present. Thus it is the intelligent seer (Soul) who sees and he is distinct from the rest. So is the distinction between the Soul and the body.

827. *jīvagati*—The nature of *jīva* as distinct from Prakṛti and Brahman.

*VJ. states that this is the way how *jīvan-muktas* should lead their life here :

The *jīva* is unattached to the body and things pertaining to it. The body of the *jīva* lives in this *karmabhūmi*—the world created by the will of Nārāyaṇa. He should give up attachment, be unmoved like the deep (ocean). He should have correct knowledge and faith. With his intellect strengthened by Bhakti, Yoga and *vairāgya* he should realize Nārāyaṇa, the support of heaven, hell etc. where *jīvas* go. He should lead his life in the service (and meditation) of Nārāyaṇa.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

(*Excellence of the Bhaktiyoga*)

Kapila said :

1. Now, a person who sticks to domestic life and performs the (religious) duties prescribed for householders, obtains from them the two objectives, viz. *kāma* (enjoyment of desired objects) and *artha* (wealth). He continues to perform the same duties again.

2. He also is so much deluded with the objects of enjoyments, that he becomes averse to the *Bhāgavata dharma*. Endowed with earnest faith, he continues to worship the gods and *Pitṛs* (ancestors) by performing sacrifices.

3. The man has his mind completely possessed of faith (in gods and *Pitṛs*). He observes the religious vows (for the propitiation) of manes and gods, and drinks Soma juice (in the Soma sacrifice). Such a man will attain to the heaven presided over by the Moon, (but) will come back (i.e. will be born) again to this world.

4. (But) when Hari who is seated on Ananta (Śeṣa) goes to sleep on the bed of that Lord of serpents (at the time of *Pralaya* at the end of Brahmā's day) those regions (accessible to such householders) are (also) dissolved.

5-7. The wise persons who do not perform their religious duties for obtaining *kāma* (their desired objects) and *artha* (wealth), who are unattached and have deposited (offered) all their religious acts (in God as his worship); who are extremely serene and of pure mind; who are engaged in the *Nivṛtti-dharma*; who have given up the sense of 'mine-ness' (ownership) and I-ness (*ahaṁkāra*)—such wise persons, by their power called 'observance of one's duties' (*Svadharma*), and by thoroughly purified mind, go through the portals of the Sun to the perfect (or omniscient) *Puruṣa* (the Supreme Man), who is the Lord of the universe (of the movables and immovables, the liberated and the unliberated etc.), and who is the material cause of the world, and who causes the creation and the destruction of the universe.

8. Those who meditate upon Hiraṇyagarbha (Brahmā)

as the Supreme Being[828], stay in the *Satyaloka* (Brahmā's region) to the end of the second Parārdha which is the time of god Brahmā's *Pralaya* (the *mahāpralaya* indicating the end of Brahmā's period).

9* When the great god Brahmā enjoys his full span of life called *Parārdha*, he desires to withdraw the universe composed of the gross elements, viz., the earth, water, fire, wind and the sky, the mind, the sense-organs along with their objects and the *ahaṁkāra*. He becomes one with the Prakṛti composed of three *guṇas* and enters the unmanifest Brahman.

10. The Yogins who have controlled their breath and mind and are unattached to worldly objects reach along with Brahmā (Hiraṇya-garbha) to the immortal highest Brahman, the ancient Puruṣa; (for till then) they have not yet shed off their ego (ahaṁkāra) completely.[829]

11. Oh brilliant mother, you devoutly take shelter under him who is enshrined in the lotuslike hearts of all beings and whose glory you have heard (from me).

12. (Even god Brahmā is born again). God Brahmā (who bears the Vedas within him) is the first (i.e. the creator) of the movable and immovable world. Along with sages (like Marīci), great Yogins like Sanatkumāra etc., and Siddhas who have propagated yoga path, even he—

13.** Having attained to the Saguṇa Brahman, the

828. *parasya paracintakāḥ* : Yogins who meditate upon the Paramātman —VR.

VC. notes that those who meditate upon Hiraṇyagarbha only are not liberated after Brahmā's liberation.

* VJ. gives a different process of this *saṁhāra* or withdrawal : Brahmā is withdrawn into the unmanifest Lakṣmī along with the deities presiding over all *Tattvas*. He enters Parabrahman through Lakṣmī.

829. *agatābhimānāḥ* : They are proud of being the votaries of Hiraṇyagarbha. Hence they are not completely absorbed in the Supreme Lord. Their dissolution being *prākṛtic* in nature, they are born again—VC.

* VJ. explains : Jīva attains to the Lord (Puruṣa) by proper understanding of the exact differences between Jīva, Īśvara and by complete knowledge that is so essential for Liberation (*mukti*) and by doing actions without any desire even after attainment of knowledge. The Lord is *Brahman*, i.e. full of all excellences. He possesses infinite *guṇas* like know-

foremost among the Puruṣas on account of his actions done without any desire for their fruit, but on account of his notion of being different[830] (from god) as a creator and the (consequent) *ahaṁkāra* about creation,

14. [He] is born again as before at the time of the (next) creation when the balance of three *guṇas* gets disturbed and the *guṇas* get into commotion by the force of Time (Kāla) which is a form of the Lord.

15. They (the sages etc.) also, having enjoyed the divine glories and positions accrued to them by their religious acts, are born again when the universe is created (lit. *guṇas* get mixed up at the time of creation).

16. Those whose minds are attached here to *Karmas*, perform with faith all the daily religious duties as well as those (*kāmya*) actions which are not prohibited by the Dharma Śāstra.

17. Those whose mind has become dull by *rajo-guṇa*, and is attached to enjoyments, have no control over senses. Their heart finds pleasure in domestic life. These (persons) propitiate the *Pitṛs* (ancestors).

18. Those who value only the first three objectives in life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) set their face against the stories of Hari (the vanquisher of demon Madhu) whose great prowess is worth eulogizing and memory about whom eliminates the *saṁsāra*.

19. They are certainly of accursed fate who leaving aside the nectarlike stories of Hari, listen to the vile accounts just as feces-eating animals feed upon excrement.

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ledge, power etc. and is *Saguṇa* as the creator of the universe. He assumes Human form for his devotees. Hence he is called *Puruṣa*. He is beyond *kṣara* and *akṣara Puruṣa*. Hence he is called *Puruṣarṣabha*. Brahmā 'enters' into him, that is, gets *sāyujya* type liberation.

830. *bhedadṛṣṭi* : (i) Jīva's ego as being independent and the wrong identification of the body and the Soul—VR.

(ii) The ego of being the creator of the world just as Viṣṇu is the protector—VC.

Even Sanatkumāra and others had the egoistic tinge of being the experiencers of Brahman and they regarded Brahman as 'spotted' with Māyā—VC.

20. They go to the region of *Pitṛs* (ancestors) through the southern path of Aryaman (technically called *dhūmra-mārga*—path of smoke). Those who perform all the prescribed religious rites from the pregnancy—*garbhādhāna*—to the funeral, are born in their own family (lit. of their descendants).

21. Oh pious mother, thereafter when their merit (accrued to them by their religious acts) is exhausted, they are immediately deprived of their means of (celestial) enjoyments by Gods. They being helpless (at the mercy of their *karmas*) fall again to this world.[831]

22. Therefore you adore the Supreme Lord (Viṣṇu) with utmost regard and devotion based on (i.e. felt on account of contemplation of) his excellent attributes. The lotuslike feet of the Lord deserve service.

23. If the *yoga* called devotion to Lord Vāsudeva is intensely practised, it immediately generates desirelessness and knowledge that leads to the realization of Brahman.

24. (As a matter of fact) all objects are equal. But it is when the mind of the devotee becomes fixed and steady in God due to the votary's love for the excellent attributes of the Lord that it does not discriminate (between them) according to the attitude of the senses—as being favourite and agreeable and non-favourite and disagreeable.

25. At that time (in that stage) he realizes the Brahman by his own Self as being free from all attachment, of perfect wisdom,[832] free from acceptability or rejectability (i.e. above merits and demerits) and full of the highest bliss.

26. The Para Brahman is pure knowledge (consciousness). It is described as the Supreme Ātman, the Īśvara and the Puruṣa. The Lord (Bhagavān) is the same who is equally perceived in different capacities (as the seer, the thing-to-be-seen and the act-of-seeing).

27. Perfect non-attachment (to the world) in all respects is the only desired fruit that a Yogin is to get by practising all *yogas* in this world.

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831. Cf. *Kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti*/ BG. 9.21.

832. *sama-darśana*—(i) One who gives pure knowledge—SD.
(ii) One who knows the reality as it is—VJ.
(iii) One who knows all world as imbued with Brahman—VR.

28*. The Brahman is one (without a second). It is of the nature of knowledge or consciousness and without any attributes. It is an illusion when through outward looking sense-organs it appears as things (like the sky) possessed of sound and other attributes.

29. Just as the one *Mahat* (*-tattva*) appears as *ahaṁkāra* of three types (viz. *sāttvika, rājasa* and *tāmasa*) and of five kinds (according to the five *Mahābhūtas*) and eleven kinds (as per ten sense-organs plus the internal organ, viz. the mind), it is from the same principle that the *Svarāj* (jīva), its body and its egg (of the universe) make their appearance.

30. Verily it is only a non-attached person whose mind is composed and serene by faith, devotion and continuous practice of Yoga who realizes this Brahman.

31. Oh mother, I have uptill now explained to you the knowledge that leads to the realization of the Brahman. It is by this knowledge that the real nature of Prakṛti and Puruṣa is clearly understood.

32. The path of knowledge (*Jñāna yoga*) pertains to the attributeless Brahman while the Yoga called *Bhakti* (devotion) is based on firm devotion to me. But both of them have the same objective viz. (the realization of) the Supreme Lord.

33. Just as the same object possessing many attributes is perceived in different forms by the sense-organs with separate functions (lit. doors), (similarly) the Supreme Lord (though absolutely one without a second) is seen in different ways through different *śāstras*.

34. By doing religious acts, by performing sacrifices, by donating gifts, by penance, by the study of the Vedas, by sub-

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* (i) VR. Quoting BG. 14.27 interprets 'Brahman' as *jīva*. *Jīva* is of the nature of knowledge, destitute of *guṇas* like *sattva*. To regard it as identical with its gross body is illusion. Jīva is conditioned by elements like *Pṛthvī* but the Supreme Soul is beyond these.

(ii) Brahman which incarnated as a Fish, should be understood as possessing non-prākṛtic body. It appears as one endowed with a gross body to the senses which are familiar with gross objects. But that is a delusion.—VJ.

(iii) The Brahman which is of the nature of knowledge appears to outward-looking sense-organs as objects (like the sky) possessing the attribute of sound. It is devoid of rejectable attributes.—SD.

duing the *ātman* and the sense-organs and by renunciation of *karmas*.

35. By means of the *yoga* with (eight) different stages, and by the Path of Bhakti (*Bhakti yoga*), by religious practices both with and without the desire for their fruits, which are called *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*.

36. By clear knowledge about the nature of the Soul and by firm sense of non-attachment—by means of these, the self-illuminating Lord whether *Saguṇa* or *Nirguṇa* is realized.

37. I have clearly described to you the nature of the four kinds of *Bhakti-yoga* and of *kāla* (Time) whose course is unmanifested but which runs within the beings (to bring about their birth and death).

38. (I have narrated to you) the external courses of *jīva*, which are created by *avidyā* and *karma*. Oh mother, when the Soul enters into these, he does not know its own real nature.

39. This knowledge should not be explained to the evil person nor to one of undisciplined (arrogant) nature, nor to a dullard nor to a man of bad character, nor to a hypocrite.

40. (One should not) advise this to a person of greedy nature, nor to a person whose mind is attached to his house (property etc.), nor to one who is not devoted to me. It should never be taught to the enemies of my devotees.

41. It should be taught to my faithful devotee, who is modest and disciplined and is not jealous of anybody; to one who has formed friendship with beings, and who takes pleasure in serving (his elderly persons or preceptor).

42. It should be expounded to him who is completely unattached internally and externally, who is of tranquil heart, and is not envious of anybody, is pure and to whom I am the dearest of the dear.

43. Oh mother, the man who even once hears this knowledge with faith, or relates this to others with his mind set on me verily attains to my abode.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

(*Devahūti's Enlightenment and Liberation*)

Maitreya said :

1. Having heard the discourse of Kapila, his mother Devahūti, the (beloved) wife of Kardama, got her veil of delusion torn open. She bowed to him and praised him who was the founder (lit. land) of the Sāṁkhya (system of philosophy) which is mainly characterised by the topic—treatment of *Tattvas* (principles).[833]

Devahūti said :

2. Even god Brahmā himself who was born of the lotus in your stomach (could not see your body but mentally) meditated upon your person which was lying manifest in the cosmic waters; which was the cause of the entire universe; which consisted of *bhūtas* (elements), sense-organs and their objects (e.g. fragrance, taste etc.), and the mind, and which has the flow of *guṇas* (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) in it.

3. It is with your power divided by the flow of your *guṇas* that you (of above description), remaining inactive, bring about the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe; Your will power is effective; You are the controller of all the *jīvas* (for whose enjoyment you create the universe; Your powers are infinite and beyond comprehension.

4. Oh Lord, how was it possible that you were borne by me in my womb. It was your Māyā, you in whose stomach lay the whole of the universe, and who, at the end of *Yugas*

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833. *Tattva-viṣayāṁkita-siddha-bhūmim.*

(i) Kapila was the patron of Yogins who are famous for their knowledge of the *Tattvas* viz. Prakṛti, Puruṣa and others—VR.

(ii) Kapila was the supporter of Brahmā and other numerous Siddhas who are devoted to the Tattva, viz., Viṣṇu.—VJ.

(iii) Kapila is so called because he was the past master in the Bhakti-tattva, Sāṁkhya-System, Yoga-tattva etc.—VC.

(iv) Kapila was the asylum of Siddhis which are characterised by Vaiṣṇava-Sāṁkhya the main subject of which are the Tattvas, viz., *cit*, *acit* Brahman.—SD.

(v) Kapila was the preceptor of Siddhas who are characterised by the knowledge of Tattvas, viz., Prakṛti, Puruṣa, Īśvara etc.—GD.

(i.e. after the deluge set in) lay alone on a banyan leaf in the form of an infant sucking its toe.

5. Oh Supreme Lord, you have assumed the corporeal form for the destruction of the wicked sinners and for the prosperity of those who obey your commands. Just as you have your (other) incarnations of Boar etc., this incarnation (of yours) is for showing the path of self-realization.

6. Oh glorious Lord, even a Cāṇḍāla (lit. a dog-eater) immediately becomes worthy (like a performer) of the Soma Sacrifice, if he has but once heard or uttered your name or bowed to you or remembered you. What need be said of a person (like me) who has (directly) seen you ?

7. Oh how wonderful it is that even a Cāṇḍāla (the lowest-born person) becomes superior and worthy of respect simply because Your name is on the tip of his tongue. Those persons of noble behaviour who take your name have (the merit of having) performed penance, sacrifices and baths in holy waters, and Vedic studies (Or : It is as a result of doing these meritorious acts in the previous life that they take your name in this birth).

8. I pay obeisance to you, Kapila, who are the highest Brahman, the Supreme Man who are worthy of meditation in mind which is withdrawn from external objects, and who have dried up the flow of *guṇas* by your brilliance and who are Viṣṇu (who holds Vedas within him).

Maitreya said :

9. The Supreme Man called the venerable Kapila who was thus praised and who was affectionate to his mother, spoke thus to her in words deep in significance (Or: with words choked up with emotions.).

Kapila said :

10. Oh mother, I have explained to you the path which is easy to follow. By following this path, you will reach the highest stage (of being liberated while alive).

11. Have faith in my doctrine which has been followed by the knowers of Brahman (or the Vedas). By following

this you will attain to me who am without birth (i.e. eternal). Those who are ignorant about this path go to death (*saṁsāra*).

Maitreya said :

12. The venerable Kapila showed to his pious mother the path leading to Ātman. Having obtained the permission of his mother, who realized the Brahman, Kapila departed (from her hermitage).

13. And in that hermitage which was like a flower-chaplet on the head of the Sarasvatī (river), she adopted Yogic practice in accordance with the guidance of her son, and became composed in mind.

14. She performed ablutions three times a day. Her curly hair became matted and tawny in colour. By severe penance her body became emaciated. She wore bark-garments.

15. The household comforts that were created by Prajāpati Kardama by means of his penance and Yoga were incomparable. They were covetable even to gods.

16. The beds were white and soft like the foam of milk. The ivory couches were chased with gold. The seats of gold were provided with soft cushions (covers).

17. In the walls of transparent crystals and very costly emeralds were shining jewel-lamps along with statues of beautiful damsels made of precious stones.

18. The garden around the house looked beautiful with many blossoming celestial trees, on which couples of birds were warbling and the intoxicated black bees were humming sweetly.

19. Where the followers of gods (Gandharvas) used to praise her when she, fondled by Kardama, entered in the swimming pool fragrant with lotuses.

20. It (the household) was most covetable even to the queens of Indra. But she just abandoned it. Due to the anxiety caused by the separation of her son, she was dejected in appearance.

21. As her husband left for the forest (after renouncing the world) Devahūti, though she realized the Truth (the Sāṁkhya Principles), became overanxious due to the separa-

tion from her son, like a calf-loving cow is fond after her young one.

22. Oh child (Vidura), she meditated upon her child Kapila who was the God Hari. In a short time, she became indifferent to that type of rich household.

23. According to the guide-lines given by her son, she meditated upon the form of the gracious-looking Lord—the object of meditation—by the method of contemplating the complete form followed by concentration on the parts of it.[834]

24. By means of stream or overflow of devotion, by powerful renunciation, and by knowledge which was produced by the proper observances of vows[835] leading to Brahmahood.

25. Her mind became pure. She was then lost in the meditation of all-pervading Ātman who by his essential light removes the limitations of the *guṇas* of Māyā.

26. Her mind became steadied in the glorious Brahman which is the shelter of all the *jīvas*. As she superseded her state of being a *jīva*, all her afflictions were over and she attained to the blessed stage.

27. As she was always engaged in continuous meditation and her delusion due to *guṇas* was dispelled, at that time she did not remember her body, just as an object seen in a dream (is found to be unreal) after waking up.

28. Her body was fed by others (viz. Vidyādhara damsels who were produced by Kardama for attendance upon her). As she was free from diseases, she did not become emaciated. Her body was covered with filth. She looked like a fire covered with smoke.

29. Her mind was so deeply entered (i.e. absorbed) in Vāsudeva that she was not conscious of her body. She had so completely given herself up to penance and Yoga that her hair fell dishevelled and clothes were dropped and she was protected by her previous *karma* (*daiva*).

30. In this way she progressed by the path expounded by Kapila. Within a short period she attained to the Supreme

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834. Vide Supra III. 28.12-33.

835. Cf. BG. 6.17.

Soul, the Brahman, the glorious Lord; the stage called Nirvāṇa.

31. Oh warrior (Vidura), the place called Siddhapada where she attained the Liberation became famous as the holiest place in the three worlds.

32. Oh gentle Vidura, her mortal body from which impurities were eliminated by Yoga, was transformed into a river, a prominent one among many rivers. It blesses one with *siddhis* and is resorted to by Siddhas.

33. Even glorious Kapila, the great Yogin, obtained the permission of his mother to depart from his father's hermitage and proceeded to the northern direction.

34. He was praised by multitude of Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, sages and celestial nymphs. He was also respectfully received by the sea and was presented a valuable dwelling place.

35. Kapila stays there practising Yoga. He is highly eulogized by the great teachers of Sāṁkhya School. For the peace and tranquillity of the three worlds, he lives there (absorbed) in meditation.

36. Oh child (Vidura), as per your query I have narrated to you the sacred dialogue between Kapila and Devahūti, Oh sinless one.

37. He who listens to this or narrates this doctrine of the Sage Kapila regarding the secret knowledge about the Ātman, becomes able to concentrate his mind upon the venerable Lord whose banner has the emblem of Garuḍa, and he attains to the lotus-like feet of the glorious Lord.

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FOURTH SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

(The Progeny of Svāyambhuva Manu's Daughters)

Maitreya said:

1. Besides (his two sons Priyavrata and Uttānapāda) Manu had three daughters from Śatarūpā. They became well known as Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti.

2. The king, with the consent of Śatarūpā, gave Ākūti to (the progenitor) Ruci in marriage, on condition of *Putrikā dharma*[1] (even though) Ākūti had brothers.

3. The venerable progenitor Ruci, full of the spiritual glory of Brahman, begot through her a twin—a son and a daughter, by virtue of his supreme concentration (of mind on the Lord).

4. Of the two, the male child was Viṣṇu himself who had assumed the form of Yajña). And the female child was called Dakṣiṇā ('sacrificial fee') who was a part of Lakṣmī (the goddess of fortune) inseparable (from Viṣṇu)[2].

5. (As per stipulation in the marriage) Svāyambhuva Manu brought to his house his daughter's son of pervasive glory. With great delight, Ruci (also) joyfully accepted Dakṣiṇā (as his child).

6. Lord Yajña, the Lord of all Sacrifices (or *mantras*) married her (Dakṣiṇā) who was in love with him. He felt

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1. *Putrikā-dharma* : When a daughter is given in marriage on the explicit condition that the first male child of the daughter shall be the (adopted) son of the giver, it is called *Putrikā dharma*. This was done by one who had only daughters and no son. The obvious object was securing the continuity of one's race. VJ. explains that although Manu had sons, he laid down this condition as he knew that Lord Viṣṇu would be born to Ākūti. He wished to secure Viṣṇu's higher grace by becoming his adopted father.

2. *anapāyinī* : ŚR., VR. VG. point out that Dakṣiṇā was an *aṁśa* (part) of Lakṣmī. Hence the marriage of *Yajña* and *Dakṣiṇā*, though born as brother and sister, is not objectionable. VJ. takes the word to mean 'One who has neither birth nor death'. Like Nārāyaṇa, Lakṣmī manifested herself to others as an *āvirbhāva*.

delighted and had twelve sons by her, who too was highly pleased.

7. These twelve sons were : Toṣa, Pratoṣa, Santoṣa, Bhadra, Śānti, Iḍaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva, Rocana.

8. In the epoch (*Manvantara*) called Svāyambhuva, they (these sons of Yajña and Dakṣiṇā) officiated as gods, and were (collectively) called *Tuṣitas*; Marīci and others were the seven sages (*Saptarṣis* of that era) while Yajña, the incarnation of Hari, occupied the post of Indra (the rulership of gods).

9. Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, the sons of Manu, were endowed with great power and splendour. They, their sons, grandsons (both from sons and daughters) and their descendants ruled throughout the period (of this *Manvantara*)*.

10. Oh Vidura, Manu gave his (second) daughter Devahūti to Kardama (a Lord of created beings). (History) relating to them has been already heard by you as narrated by me.

11. Venerable Manu gave (his third daughter) Prasūti (in marriage) to Dakṣa (another Lord of creation), a mind-born son of Brahmā. Their progeny has very widely spread all over the three worlds.

12. Now, hear as I tell you about the sons and grandsons of the nine daughters of Kardama who became the wives of the Brāhmaṇa Sages (born of Brahmā) and about whom I have spoken to you.

13. Kalā, the daughter of Kardama and the wife of the sage Marīci, gave birth to two sons—Kaśyapa and Pūrṇiman whose descendants have fully populated (filled) the world.

14. Oh conquorer of enemies (Vidura), Pūrṇiman was the father of (sons) Viraja and Viśvaga and (a daughter called) Devakulyā who washing the feet of Hari became the heavenly river Gaṅgā (in her next birth).

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*According to VP. 3.2.48 every Manvantara (epoch of a manu) has the following batch of office bearers: (1) Manu, (2) seven sages—Saptarṣis, (3) gods, (4) The ruler of gods—Indra, (5) Ruling progeny of Manu. To these Bh.P. 12,7.15 adds : (6) Incarnations of Hari. The dignitaries of these posts in the Svāyambhuva Manvantara are mentioned in the above verses.

15. Anasūyā, the wife of Atri, gave birth to three illustrious sons, viz. Datta (god Dattātreya, the sage), Durvāsas and the Moon-god, each of whom was separately born (as a manifestation of the portion) of Viṣṇu, Rudra and Brahmā (respectively).

Vidura said :

16. Oh Preceptor, please narrate to me for what purpose these (three) most eminent gods who are severally the cause of the creation, preservation and destruction (of the world), were born in the house of (the sage) Atri.

Maitreya said :

17. When the sage Atri, the foremost of the knowers of Brahman, was urged by god Brahmā (to undertake the work of) creation, he along with his wife went to one of the principal mountain ranges, Ṛkṣa[3] and was engaged in the performance of austere penance.

18-19. The mountain was covered with the forest of *Palāśa* and *Aśoka* trees which were beautified with clusters of flowers. All around, it was resounded with the echoes of the waterfalls of the river Nirvindhyā. On that mountain, the sage controlled his mind by means of Prāṇāyâma (breath-control) and stood for one hundred years on one leg, defying heat and cold (and such other pairs of opposites), and subsisted on air.

20. He contemplated (and prayed in his mind): 'I take shelter under him who alone is the Lord of the World. May he bless me with progeny just like himself.'

21-22. Seeing that the three worlds were being distressed by the fire produced by the fuel of (the sage's) breath-control (Prāṇāyāma) and issuing from the head of the sage, the three Lords (of the world, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) went to the hermitage of the sage—the three Gods whose glories were extensively eulogised by celestial damsels, sages, Gandharvas

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3. *Ṛkṣa*—The eastern part of the Vindhya range extending from the Bay of Bengal to the sources of the Narmadā and the Śoṇa—including the mountains of Chhota Nagpur and Gondwana in which the Mahānadī rises—GDAMI 168-69.

(celestial musicians), and (demigods like) Siddhas, Vidyādharas and Nāgas.

23. The sage got his mind illuminated by the simultaneous manifestation of the three gods. (To show them respect) he stretched up his body (while standing on the leg), and saw those prominent gods.

24. (He paid them homage) by prostrating himself fully (before them) on the ground, like a stick. With articles of worship in the hollow of his palms, he respectfully received the gods who were severally riding a swan, Garuḍa and a bull and were characterised by their speciality (viz. possession of a Kamaṇḍalu, Sudarśana discus and a trident).

25. They directly expressed their pleasure by their gracious looks and smiling faces. The sage closed his eyes as they were dazzled by their (gods') brilliance.

26. With his mind concentrated on them and with folded palms he praised, in sweet words of deep significance, the three gods who are the supreme-most in all the worlds.

Atri said :

27. You are (obviously the celebrated gods) Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva who in every Yuga (kalpa), assume forms with the help of the *guṇas* (attributes) of Māyā, trifurcated for bringing about the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the universe. I bow to you all. (Kindly tell me) which of you has been invocated by me here.

28. In this hermitage, I have concentrated (contemplated) only on one glorious Lord by various means, with a desire to get a child. It is a great surprise to me how (all of) you who are beyond the range of the mind of bodied beings, have come here. Be pleased to tell me the mystery.

Maitreya said :

29. Oh Lord (Vidura), hearing this speech of the sage (Atri), the three prominent gods laughed. They replied to the sage in soft gentle words (as follows) :

The gods said :

30. "Oh Brahman ! As you have willed it, so shall it exactly happen and not otherwise. You are of true resolve. We

three form that Principle (called the Lord of the world) which you are contemplating.

31. Oh sage! May you be blessed! from our aṁśa (parts) now you will beget sons who (themselves) will be celebrated in the world and spread your reputation as well."

32. Having granted their desired boon, the Lords of gods who were properly worshipped by the couple, returned from that hermitage while they (Atri and Anasūyā) stood looking on (agape).

33. Thus Soma was born with a portion of Brahmā, Datta, the master of Yoga, with that of Viṣṇu, while Durvāsas with the portion of Śaṅkara. Now listen (to me), about the progeny of Aṅgiras (another mind-born son of Brahmā).

34. Śraddhā, the wife of Aṅgiras gave birth to four daughters viz. Sinīvālī, Kuhū, Rākā and the fourth Anumati.[4]

35. Besides these he (Aṅgiras) had two sons—Utathya who was the venerable Lord himself and Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) the eminent knower of Brahman. They became celebrities in the Svārociṣa Manvantara.

36. By his wife Havirbhū, Pulastya (another mind-born son of Brahmā) had a son called Agastya who was abdominal fire in another birth and also (another son) Viśravas, the great ascetic.

37. Of Viśravas and his wife Iḍaviḍā was born god Kubera (the god of Wealth), the king of Yakṣas. Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa and Vibhīṣaṇa were born (to him) by another wife (Keśinī).

38. Oh talented Vidura, Gati, the pious wife of Pulaha, gave birth to three sons, viz. Karmaśreṣṭha, Varīyān and Sahiṣṇu.

39. Even Kratu's wife, Kriyā, bore sixty-thousand (thumb-sized) sons known as Vālakhilyas—all brilliant with the splendour of Brahman.

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4. These are the deities presiding over the 14th and 15th day of the bright and dark fortnights who came to designate those days. Thus Sinivālī is the day preceding the new moon day. On this day the moon rises with a scarcely visible crescent, while Kuhū is the 15th day or the last day of the lunar month when the moon is invisible. Rākā presides over the full moon (15th) day, while Anumati is the 14th day in the bright half—Vide ASD under these heads.

40. Oh tormentor of enemies (Vidura), by his wife Ūrjā (Arundhatī) Vasiṣṭha had seven sons of whom Citraketu was prominent. They all were pure-hearted Brāhmaṇa-sages.

41. They were Citraketu, Surociṣ, Virajas, Mitra, Ulbaṇa, Vasubhṛd yāna and Dyumat. He had other sons such as Śakti and others (by another wife).

42. Citti (or Śānti), the wife of Atharvan, got a son, Dadhīci alias Aśvaśiras who took the vow (of austere penance). (Henceforth) hear from me the race of Bhṛgus.

43. The distinguished sage Bhṛgu begot by his wife, Khyāti, (two) sons—Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ, and a daughter, Śrī, who was devoted to the glorious Lord (Viṣṇu).

44. (The sage) Meru gave his daughters Āyati and Niyati (in marriage) to these (sons of Bhṛgu) severally. Of them (Āyati and Niyati) were born Mṛkaṇḍa and Prāṇa (respectively).

45. Of Mṛkaṇḍa was born Mārkaṇḍeya, and of Prāṇa, the sage Vedaśiras. Kavi, (another) son of Bhṛgu, had the venerable Uśanas (Śukrācārya, the preceptor of Daityas) as his son.

46. All these sages peopled the worlds by their descendants. I have narrated to you, Oh Vidura, the account of the progeny of Kardama's grandsons (from daughters' side)—an account which immediately removes the sins of the faithful and reverential listener.

47. Dakṣa, another (mind-born) son of god Brahmā, married Prasūti, the daughter of (Svāyambhuva) Manu[5]. He begot, by her, sixteen fair-eyed daughters.

48. The Lord (Prajāpati Dakṣa) gave thirteen of his daughters to Dharma, one to Agni, one to all Pitṛs combined, and one to god Śiva, who cuts the bonds of Saṁsāra.

49*. Śraddhā, Maitrī, Dayā, Śānti, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Kriyā, Unnati, Buddhi, Medhā, Titikṣā, Hrī and Mūrti—these (thirteen) are the wives of Dharma.

50*. Śraddhā gave birth to Śubha (auspiciousness), Maitrī to Prasāda, Dayā to Abhaya, Śanti to Sukha, Tuṣṭi to Mud (a daughter) Puṣṭi to Smaya.

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5. Vide supra 4.1.11 above.
Vide infra p. 427, note

51-52*. Kriyā bore Yoga, Unnati, Darpa; Buddhi, Artha; Medhā, Smṛti (a daughter); Titikṣā, Kṣema and Hrī, a son called Praśraya. Mūrti who was the fountain-head of all excellent qualities, gave birth to sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

53. When these two (sages) were born, the universe rejoiced with great pleasure. The minds (of men), the quarters, winds, rivers and mountains—all became calm and serene.

54. Trumpets were blown in the heavens; showers of flowers rained; sages offered their prayers. Gandharvas and Kinnaras sang joyfully.

55. The celestial nymphs and goddesses danced; highest bliss reigned everywhere. (There was auspiciousness everywhere). All divinities like Brahmā (and others) attended upon (Nara and Nārāyaṇa) with eulogistic prayers.

Gods said :

56**. Salutations to the Supreme Man who, manifested in himself this universe created by his own Māyā power, just like the phenomenal appearance (e.g. a city of Gandharvas) in the (cloudy) sky, and who appeared today, in the house of

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*Dharma (Religion or Piety) is always associated with virtues or certain pious mental states. These are described as the wives of Dharma and his progeny from them.

**(i) By his Will or Māyā power, this created universe is supported on Brahman, but it does not affect the Brahman, just as colours blue, white etc. of the clouds, do not stick to the sky. Or the changes of form, such as that of a god or a subhuman being with which *jīva* is associated (when it is born in that particular *yoni*), do not affect the real nature of Ātman. The Lord has manifested himself as sages under the roof of Dharma in order to instruct the distinctness of Ātman, Brahman, from the form of god, man etc., and to lead to liberation by this knowledge. We bow to that Supreme Person.—VR.

(ii) His own Māyā has arranged (created) this universe on the support of Ātman like the cluster of clouds in the sky. For shedding light (explaining the nature) of the Ātman, he has manifested himself.—VC.

(iii) Just as different kinds of cavities, (*ghaṭākāśa*, *maṭhākāśa*) are in the sky, similarly the universe is arranged (created) in Yourself. Just as the sky is neither different from, nor circumscribed by, these cavities or vacuums, so also the Lord is neither affected nor delimited by the universe. The illustration of the sky is taken to emphasize the unattachedness and not unreality.—GD.

VB. has not written his commentary on this skandha.

Dharma, in the form of sages (Nara and Nārāyaṇa), for revealing the true nature of the Self.

57. May the Lord, whose real nature is to be inferred by the Śāstras, condescend to look on us, the gods, who have been created by him, by means of Sattva, for the protection of the world from the disturbances in the orderly existence of the world—his eyes which are overflowing with mercy and which surpass the beautiful lotus, receptacle of Śrī (or the home of Lakṣmī).

58. Oh child (Vidura), the two divine sages who were thus extolled and worshipped by the (multitude of) gods, blessed them by their look, and left for mount Gandhamādana.

59. Verily, those two part (-manifestations) of Lord Hari, have incarnated in this world as Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Yadu, and the dark-complexioned Arjuna of the Kuru race, for relieving the burden of the earth.

60. And Svāhā, the wife of Agni, gave birth to three sons—Pāvaka, Pavamāna and Śuci—all of whom are the deities presiding over Agni, and who subsist on sacrificial offerings.

61. They gave birth to fortyfive fires. These fortyfive fires, their three fathers (Pāvaka, Pavamāna and Śuci) and one grandfather (god Agni) make fortynine fire-gods.

62. These are the fire-gods in whose name *iṣṭis* (small sacrifices) called Āgneya (pertaining to Agni) are performed during Vedic sacrificial sessions, by persons, well-versed in the Vedas.

63. The manes (Pitṛs) are* (1) Agniṣvātta, (2) Barhiṣad, (3) Saumya and (4) Ājyapa. They are either Sāgnaya (receiving libations of water through the sacred fire) or Anagnaya (receiving libations directly without *agnaukaraṇa*). Svadhā, the daughter of Dakṣa was their wife.

64. Svadhā bore to them two daughters—Vayunā and Dhāriṇī. Both of them were well-versed in scriptural knowledge and spiritual knowledge, and they expounded the same.

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*These are main divisions of the Pitṛs : (1) Those who joined the manes by following only *Smārta karmas* are *Agniṣvātta*; (2) Those who joined forefathers after performing *Agnihotra* and Vedic sacrifices are *Barhiṣadas*; (3) Those who drink Soma in sacrifices and become Pitṛs are *Somapas* or Saumyas; and (4) Those who partake of ghee in sacrifices are *Ājyapa*.

65. Though Satī, the wife of Śiva who was like him in qualities and character served him, she had no son.

66. (For) when she was quite young, she cast off her body of her own accord by Yogic process, as she was angry with her father who was antagonistic to her innocent husband, Śiva.

CHAPTER TWO

(The Rift between the God Śiva and Dakṣa)*

Vidura said :

1. Dakṣa was affectionate to his daughter. Why did he disregard his own daughter Satī and cherish hatred towards Śiva who was the foremost among the virtuous ?

**Introductory* : Chapters 2 to 7 (both inclusive) treat of the legend of Dakṣa's sacrifice. It is a very popular legend and is found in MBH. Shānti. 284 (283 is a different episode), the Va. P. Ch. 30 (which repeats verbatim the MBH. text), to mention a few pre-Bhāgavata texts.

The development of the conception of Dakṣa in the Vedic period is traced in PCK 407 and *MP-a Study* 54-8. This solar deity of the Vedic age seems to have developed into two Dakṣas in the Purāṇic period : (1) Dakṣa Prajāpati of the Svāyambhuva Era (*Manvantara*) and (2) Dakṣa Prācetasa of the Sāvarṇi Era. The MBH and subsequently Va.P. mix up these two Dakṣas and the story of the destruction of the sacrifice of the first Dakṣa is described to have happened in the case of the second (Prācetasa) Dakṣa.

According to the BH.P. the cause of rift between Dakṣa and Śiva is due to Dakṣa's insult by Śiva (Bh. P. IV. 2, Br. P. I.1.64). But in MBH. and Va.P. it is the argument between Dakṣa and Dadhīci as to the relative superiority of Śiva and Viṣṇu which led Dakṣa to ignore Śiva during the sacrifice.

It is possible that this legend represents the conflict between the *pravṛtti dharma* characterised by the orthodox sacrificial culture and the *nivṛtti dharma* emphasizing renunciation and Yoga. The latter may be pre-Aryan as the relics of Yogins and Śiva worship are found in the Indus valley. But it is an overstatement to say that this legend is a symbol of the struggle between monarchy and republics as stated by Dr. T.S. Rukmani (*A Critical Study of the Bh.P.* 100-2).

2. Who would and how could one hate the god Śiva who is a great divinity to the world of the movables and immovables; who bears enmity towards none, and who is tranquillity incarnate; and who is delighted in his own blissful self ?

3. Oh Brahman ! Narrate to me what led to the enmity between the son-in-law (Śiva) and the father-in-law (Dakṣa) which made Satī give up her life with which it is difficult to part.

Maitreya said :

4. Formerly during the sacrificial session of the Prajāpatis (progenitors of the world) were assembled great seers and sages, all classes of gods including divinities presiding over the sacred fires, along with their attendants.

5-6. When Dakṣa who was brilliant like the Sun entered, he dispelled the darkness of the great assembly-hall by his splendour. Seeing him, all the members of the assembly, including the presiding deities of fire, were overwhelmed with his brilliance, and stood up from their seats. Only Brahmā and god Śiva did not stand up.

7. The leaders of the assembly reverentially received Lord Dakṣa. He bowed down to god Brahmā, the creator of the universe and with Brahmā's permission, he took his seat.

8. Finding that Śiva (the Delighter of the world) was already seated and had ignored him, Dakṣa did not tolerate this. Looking askance at him, as if to consume him with the fire (of his wrath), he burst forth :

9. "Listen to me, Oh Brāhmaṇa Sages, along with gods and divinities of fire, I explain to you the mode of behaviour of good people. This is not out of jealousy or ignorance (that I speak).

10. This (god Śiva) is shameless, and has detracted the glory of the protectors of the world. This haughty fellow who does not know what should appropriately be done, has polluted the path followed by the good.

11.* He has been like a disciple unto me, as he, like a virtuous person, took the hand of my daughter who is like Sāvitrī, in the presence of Brāhmaṇas and sacrificial fire.

*Some annotators interpret this as the praise of Śiva.

12.* Having married (lit. taken the hand of) my daughter, this monkey-eyed fellow did not show due courtesy, even by words, to me whom he should have respected by standing and by bowing.

13.** To this proud, impious fellow who has given up performance of religious acts, and has violated all the bounds (of religious propriety), I gave my young daughter though reluctant to do so, as one would be to impart the sacred beautiful word (Vedas) to a Śūdra (who is not eligible to receive Vedic lore).

(i) Conforming to the traditional religious practice (at the time of his marriage), he took the hand of my daughter who is pure like Sāvitrī, in the presence of Brāhmaṇas and the sacred fire. He is, however, of the status of non-disciple i.e. worth bowing. He is a *jivan-mukta*, and is, therefore, above formalities—GD.

(ii) Being omniscient, Śiva knew from the beginning my unworthiness which remained undisclosed till today. Hence he did not pay respect to me who am like (but not really) a good person. It is due to the virtuousness of my daughter like Sāvitrī that he married her, in the presence of Brāhmaṇas and the sacred fire—VC. & VD.

*Out of his grace, he (Śiva) satisfies the desires of persons who are passionate etc., like monkeys. He deserves to be respected by us, by standing and paying obeisance. But fie upon me ! I did not show even verbal courtesy to him—VC. & VD.

(ii) He is anxious about the redemption of people who, like a monkey, take interest in sensual pleasures. To remove the pride of the egotist Dakṣa, he established relationship with him by marrying his daughter. To eliminate his ego, Śiva incited him by not paying even verbal respect to him, though Dakṣa, as a father-in-law, should have been shown due courtesy—GD.

**(i) All religious activities are lost in Śiva as he is the Brahman. Nothing is more pure than he. He is not proud nor has he crossed any bound of propriety—VC.

VC. presumes an *avagraha* before *mānine* and *bhinna-setave*.

(ii) He is so great that even the desire to give my daughter in marriage to him did not occur to me, as comparatively my daughter was not worthy of him. It was due to the advice of Brahmā that I overcame that shyness. Śiva accepted her out of respect to Brahmā's word. Śiva is *Śūdra* i.e. one who removes grief by his favour and advice (*śucaṁ śokaṁ kṛpayā jñāna-bhaktyādyupadeśena drāvayatīti śūdraḥ* / As this belongs to 'Pṛṣodarādi' group 'c' in 'śuc' is lost and -u- is lengthened as -ū-. As to violation of etiquettes, Śiva being the Brahman, all *kriyās* (religious and other actions) are lost in him. He is absolutely pure and worthy of the highest respect. He is beyond the limits of ordinary *jivas*. Hence the duties prescribed by the Vedas, do not apply to him.

14.* Surrounded by spirits and hosts of goblins, and with his hair scattered, he wanders in nudity, laughing and crying like a madman, in the terrible abodes of ghosts (crematories).

15.** He is bathed in the ashes of funeral pyres, and is adorned with the garlands on corpses and with human bones. He is Śiva (auspicious) in name only, but is (actually) inauspicious. He is (always) intoxicated and loved by drunken people. He is surely the Lord of devilish spirits (*pramathas*), and ghosts which are the personification of *tamo-guṇa*.

16.*** Alas! It was at the instance of god Brahmā, that I gave my virtuous daughter to such a fellow who is destitute of purity (and cleanliness), and of wicked heart, the lord of goblins (called *unmāda*).

Maitreya said :

17. Having thus reproached Śiva who sat all the while quiet (without retaliation), the enraged Dakṣa touched water (sipped it in *ācamana*) and proceeded to curse him.

18. "When sacrifices are offered to gods, this Śiva, accursed of the gods, shall not (henceforth) get his share (in

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*VC. states that Śiva's behaviour like a mad person is his *līlā* (sports) out of godly ecstasy.

(ii) GD. : The bounds of Vedic injunctions are not applicable to a votary who has realized the Brahman. The show of madness is for the purpose of teaching the world, to renounce worldly bonds of wife, sons, property etc. Rudra performs penance, while he externally behaves like a mad person.

Cf. Supra III. 14.26.

**ŚR. explains the eulogistic aspect thus :

He, being the Brahman, no *kriyās* are possible in him. There is nobody more pure than he. I was diffident about offering my daughter (a human being) to this great god, but did so to establish relationship. There is none more auspicious than he. That he is the Lord of goblins, evil spirits etc. shows how kind he is to his devotees. He removes their *tāmasic* nature and protects. He is compassionate to the wicked in his heart. Hence he is *dur-hṛd*. I am glad (*bata*) that as per advice of Brahmā, I overcame shyness, fear etc., and gave my daughter to him.

***VR. rightly criticises the absurdity of giving double, i.e. contrary interpretations, one a praise, the other a censure of Śiva. Pertinently he asks the propriety of uttering a curse on Śiva if Dakṣa praised him so highly.

the sacrificial offerings) along with Indra, Upendra (Viṣṇu) and other gods".

19. Oh Vidura, though Dakṣa was prohibited (from uttering the curse) by prominent members of the assembly, he pronounced it, on Śiva (the Lord of the mountains). In great rage, he left the place and retired to his abode.

20. Having come to know about the curse, Nandiśvara, the leader of Śiva's followers, with his eyes reddened with anger, uttered a terrible curse upon Dakṣa and the Brāhmaṇas who approvingly listened to Śiva's denunciation.

21. "He who, being ignorant, highly thinks of this mortal frame, and hates the Lord (Śiva) who does not bear enmity against anybody, cherishes the notion of difference, and has his face turned away from the Truth.

22. With the desire of gratifying low sensual pleasure, he (Dakṣa) is attached to householder's life which is full of deceptive psuedo-religious practices. His intellect is confused by *arthavāda* in the Vedas, and he is engrossed in kārmic ritual (pertaining to sacrifices and other such acts).

23. With his intellect wrongly concentrated on the body as the Soul, and having forgotten the real nature of the Soul, Dakṣa is as good as a beast. He will be intensely addicted to women, and will soon have the head (face) of a goat.

24. This dullard (Dakṣa), who regards the *avidyā* (ignorance) consisting of performing of sacrifices and other religious acts, as the real knowledge, and those who followed him (approved of him) in his censure of Śiva, shall continue in the *saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths).

25. The enemies of Hara (Śiva) shall be infatuated with (and attached to) *karmas*, as their minds will be agitated by the churning (rod) of rich promises (viz. happy life in heaven) alluring like the smell of wine given in the flowery language of the Vedas.

26. Brāhmaṇas will eat anything and everything (without considering whether it is permitted by *Śāstras*). They will be devoted to learning, *tapas* (penance) and *vratas* (vows) for the sake of their own livelihood. They shall wander a-begging in this world, taking delight in property, (pleasure of) the body and sense organs."

27. Hearing him pronounce this curse upon the Brāhmaṇa community (as a whole), Bhṛgu uttered a counter-curse which is an irrevocable punishment inflicted by Brahmanical power.

28. "Those who observe the vows to propitiate god Śiva, and those that follow them, shall be the heretics and the opponents of true Śāstras.

29. They shall lose their (sense of) purity, shall be dull-witted. They shall wear matted locks of hair and bones, and smear themselves with ashes. They shall enter the cult of Śiva worship where wine shall be the divinity.

30. As you denounce the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas who, like protective dams, lay down fixed laws restricting men (for preservation of the society), you have embraced hereticism.

31. This is the only auspicious, ancient path for the people (viz. the path laid down by the Vedas). The ancients (our forefathers) have followed it, and Janārdana is its standard authority.

32. It (Veda) is the Supreme Brahman, absolutely pure. It is the eternal path of the good. Condemning this, you shall embrace hereticism wherein the Lord of goblins is the divinity".

Maitreya said :

33. While Bhṛgu was uttering the curse, Lord Śiva, being slightly disconsolate at heart (for what had happened), left (the assembly hall), along with his followers.

34. The progenitors of the world also completed the sacrificial session of one thousand years-sacrifice in which Lord Hari was the deity to be propitiated.

35. At the conclusion of the session, they took their concluding bath (*avabhṛtha*) in the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā. Purifying themselves thus, they returned to their respective homes.

CHAPTER THREE

(Śiva dissuades Satī from attendance at Dakṣa-Yajña)

Maitreya said :

1. A long time elapsed while the son-in-law (Śiva) and the father-in-law (Dakṣa), continued their lasting enmity to each other.

2. When Dakṣa was installed as the chief of all Lords of creation by Brahmā, the highest of gods, he felt puffed up with pride (An additional factor to exclude Rudra from sacrifice).

3. Having performed the Vājapeya sacrifice, and disregarded Īśvara and others who were thoroughly proficient in Brahma-Vidyā, he (Dakṣa) began the best of sacrifices, called Bṛhaspatisava (as the Śruti enjoins this sacrifice, after the performance of the Vājapeya).

4. In that sacrifice, all Brāhmaṇa sages, heavenly sages, Pitṛs (and other) divinities were welcomed with auspicious formalities. Their wives, along with their husbands, were given auspicious reception (Those divinities, whose wives attended, were thus worshipped again).

5. Goddess Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa, came to know about the grand festival of her father's sacrifice, from the talks of the heavenly beings, while they were passing through the sky.

6-7. She saw that beautiful women of demi-god tribes (e.g. Gandharvas, Yakṣas) of rolling eyes, clad in rich garments, and wearing *padakas* (a gold ornament) round their necks, and burnished ear-rings, going with their husbands, in heavenly cars, from all directions. Seeing them flying past her own mansion, she in her eagerness, spoke to her consort, god Bhūtapati (the protector of all beings).

Sati said :

8. "It is reported that the great sacrificial festival of your father-in-law, Prajāpati Dakṣa, has now commenced. Oh beautiful Lord, let us go there, if you so desire, as these gods are also going thither.

9. My sisters, desirous of seeing their kith and kin, will certainly go there with their husbands. I wish to receive along with you, the presents which will be offered by my parents.

10. Oh Śiva, really I am eagerly longing to see there, my sisters worthy of their husbands, my aunts and my mother whose heart is full of (lit. wet with) affection, and the greatest of the sacrifices being conducted by leading sages (or the flag or sacrificial post of the sacrifice raised by great sages).

11. Oh unborn Lord ! This wonderful universe consisting of three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*), appears created in you by your own Māyā.[6] (Hence you have no curiosity to go). I am, however, a poor woman who do not know your real nature. I, therefore, strongly desire to see my native place.

12. Oh birthless Lord, look at those other women (in no way related to Dakṣa), richly adorned, going with their husbands in crowds. Oh Śitikaṇṭha the sky looks beautiful by the movements of their aerial cars white like sweet warbling swans (Kala-haṁsas).

13. Oh great God, how can the body (including mind) of a daughter remain unmoved, after hearing about a festival in the father's house ? Even though uninvited, people go to the houses of their friends, their husbands (masters), their preceptor and parents. (The formality of invitation is superfluous in these cases).

14. Oh immortal Lord ! Be gracious unto me. You are compassionate. You should really grant me this desire. I have been located in half of your person by you who possess perfect wisdom. Do this favour as entreated by me, to you."

The Sage said :

15. Thus earnestly entreated by his beloved wife, Śiva, who was so affectionate to his friends and relatives, was (pain-

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6. Militant Vaiṣṇava commentators like VR., VJ. refuse to give the credit of creation to Śiva. Instead of taking *aja* (unborn) as a vocative addressed to Śiva, they take *ajātma-māyayā* as one compound and interpret : 'The universe that is created by the unborn Lord Viṣṇu by his Māyā'. According to them, Śiva being a great Yogin, has the direct perception of the universe and hence no curiosity to see the festival of Dakṣa's sacrifice.

fully) reminded of the shaft-like bitter words, cutting to the quick, which Dakṣa spoke to him in the presence of (other) progenitors of the universe. He, however, replied to her with a smile.

The Lord Śiva said :

16. Oh charming lady, you have put it nicely when you said that people go to their relatives, even though they are not invited. But that is only when their vision (outlook) is not prejudiced by their powerful ego about the body being the *ātman*, and by their wrath (against such a visitor).

17. Learning, penance, wealth, beautiful personality, youth and (high) pedigree are good qualities in the case of the good, but are like a curse to the most wicked. When these attributes destroy the memory and knowledge of the wicked, they increase only the arrogance, as these wicked people cannot realize the glory of the great.

18. One should never go to the house of such persons, of unsteady minds, regarding them as relatives—persons who look upon the visitors (to their house), with crooked mentality, with frowning eye-brows and angry eyes (looks).

19. A person whose body is (deeply) wounded with arrows of the enemies, does not feel the tortures to that extent, as he who is cut to the quick by the harsh words of his own relatives of crooked minds. For the former can (at least) get sleep, but the latter suffers day and night, with a tormented heart.

20. Oh beautiful lady (of charming eyebrows), I do certainly agree that you are the most beloved of all the daughters of Dakṣa (the Lord of created beings) of eminent rank. You wlll not however receive (proper) attention or respect from your father, because of your relations with me, whom he hates intensely.

21. At the sight of the prosperity (glory, possession of *siddhis*) of great persons who stand (unconcerned) like a witness to the minds of *jīva* (i.e. are devoid of *ahaṁkāra*—ego), his heart is boiling with jealousy, and his senses are over-anxious for gratification. But being incapable of attaining to their

eminent position easily, he hates them intensely as the Asuras hated Hari.

22. Oh slender-waisted lady, the mutual exchange of respects, viz. going forth to receive, expressing modesty, paying obeisance is properly done by the wise *bhāgavatas* (devotees of the Lord) only. They do it all mentally to the Supreme Person Vāsudeva, who abides in the heart of all, but not to him who regards the Soul and the body as identical (and expects the external observance of formalities directed to his body).

23. The absolutely pure *sattva* (heart or the attribute called *sattva*) is designated as Vāsudeva; for it is in the *sattva* that Supreme Man Vāsudeva is manifested (and realized) in his real (unveiled) form. It is in the *sattva* (absolutely pure mind) that I pay obeisance[7] to him who is beyond sense perception.

24. Therefore, Oh beautiful lady, you should not see Dakṣa and his followers—even though Dakṣa is your father, the protector of your body, Dakṣa is my enemy. When I went to attend the sacrifice performed by the Prajāpatis, he expressed his hatred, by using abusive language to me, even though I was innocent (not at fault at all).

25. If you go there ignoring my advice, no good will betide you thereby. When a person of well-established reputation suffers insult from his relatives, the indignity leads immediately to his death.*

CHAPTER FOUR

(Satī's Self-immolation by Yoga)

Maitreya said :

1. Having said this much, Saṅkara became silent, as he anticipated the destruction (death) of his wife's body, in either case (whether he permits her to go or refuses to do so).

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7. v.l. *manasā*—deeply meditate upon him in mind.—SR.

*Cf *sambhāvitasya cākīrtir maraṇādatiricyate*/ BG. 2.34

Satī who was eager to see her friends and relatives, but was afraid of Śaṅkara, became indecisive (two in mind). (Like an oscillating pendulum) she went out (to see her relatives), and returned (for fear of Śiva).

2. Satī was troubled in her mind by the thwarting of her desire to see her kith and kin. Out of affection, she burst into tears and wept in utter despondence. She trembled in rage. She looked in wrath at the peerless Śiva, as if she would burn him.

3. Then she lost her judgment, due to her womanly nature. Heaving heavy sighs, and with her heart tormented by grief and anger, she went to her parents' house, leaving him (Śiva) who is beloved of saintly persons and who, out of love, had given half of his body to her.

4. Thousands of followers of the three-eyed-god (Śiva) including personal attendants and Yakṣas like Maṇiman, Mada and others, and with Nandikeśvara at the head, hastily yet fearlessly (or with saddened heart at her disobedience to Śiva), went after Satī who set out all alone, with quick pace.

5. They made her ride the best of the bulls (Nandikeśvara). They accompanied her, taking with them Sārikās (singing birds), balls, mirrors and lotuses (for her entertainment), a white umbrella, *chowries*, and garlands (her insignia of royalty) and musical instruments like kettle-drums, conchs and flutes.

6. She entered the place of sacrifice where Vedic hymns were loudly chanted by Brāhmaṇas, keenly competing with each other in reciting Vedic *mantras*[8]; where Brāhmaṇa sages and divinities were in attendance; where on sides were (seen) vessels and utensils made of clay, wood, iron, gold, *darbha* grass and hides.

7. Being afraid of the sacrificer (Dakṣa), who treated her insultingly, nobody except her mother and sisters, dared to welcome her, on her arrival. They (her mother and sisters),

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8. *ā-brahma-vaikasam* : OR 'Where the sacrificial act of killing the animal is sanctified by the loud chanting of Vedic hymns.'—ŚR.

RR. brands this as 'coarse' (*ślīla*) and prefers the explanation given above. All commentators do the same.

however, eagerly and rapturously embraced her, with their throats choked with tears of affection.

8. Satī who was not welcomed by her father, did not accept the hospitality and the seat of honour respectfully offered to her by her mother and maternal aunts. Nor did she pay attention to her sisters' affectionate enquiries about her health etc.

9. Seeing the sacrifice being performed without offering the due share to Rudra, and the insulting treatment meted out to Lord Śiva by her father, the great goddess Satī, who herself was not given proper reception at the sacrificial assembly, became enraged, as if she would burn the worlds in anger.

10. By her divine lustre, the goddess Satī controlled the hosts of goblins (who accompanied her) who sprang to their feet (to destroy the sacrifice). But within the hearing of the whole world, she censured (Dakṣa), the enemy of Śiva who was proud of his exertions in the path of smoke (i.e. was puffed up with performance of great sacrifices), in accents faltering with anger.

11. "Who else than you would behave inimically towards the Lord, who is above enmity? To him nobody is superior in the world. Though he is the beloved Soul of all embodied beings, nobody is dear or hateful to him. He is the cause of all.

12*. Oh Dvija ! Persons who are jealous like you, discover faults in the virtues of others (and not merits) are called mean. Those who, occupying a middle position, note merits and demerits as they are, are regarded as great. Good people note only the merits and not the weaknesses (and these are greater). The greatest ones do not see the defect at all, but they magnify even the minutest good points.

13. It is no wonder that out of jealousy, there is always the malicious condemnation of the great among unrighteous persons who look upon this inert material body as the Soul. The glory (of such slanderers) is obscured by the dust of the

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* *Literally* : Oh Dvija ! People like you detect (see) faults even in the good qualities of others; but no good person does this. Those who magnify even the trifling merits in others are the greatest of all. You have however found fault with them (great persons).

feet of those great men. Hence it befits these (slanderers to revile the good Souls)!

14. Alas ! Your honour has become inauspicious, as you hate god Śiva, whose fame is holy and commands inviolable, and whose name of two syllables (Śi-va) if incidentally uttered by the tongue even once, destroys all the sins of men (who utter it).

15. Your honour is hating (Śiva), that friend and protector of the universe. His lotuslike feet are resorted to by the bee-like minds of the great (sages like Sanaka etc.), who long to taste the winelike honey of Brahmānanda (bliss of being absorbed in Brahman)—Feet which shower blessings upon people desirous of worldly objects (irrespective of their worthiness to receive them.)

16.* You say that god Śiva is inauspicious—*a-śiva*—in his dress and behaviour. If that be so, do not gods etc. other than your honour, (such as Brahmā and others) who wear on their heads flowers etc. fallen from his feet,' know that he is auspicious (śiva) only in name but is really inauspicious—Śiva who with his dishevelled matted locks of hair, dwells in the cremation grounds in company of goblins, and. who decorates himself with the flower-garlands, ashes (of funeral pyres) and skulls lying there ?

17. When the Supreme Lord (Śiva), the protector of religion, is blasphemed by restraintless people, one should shut one's ears and leave the place if he is powerless (to kill the slanderer or die in the action). If he is powerful enough, he should, by force, cut off the vituperative tongue which utters such evil words, and lay down his own life (if necessary for that). Such is the course of righteous duty (*dharma*).

18. I, therefore, shall not retain this body which is born of you, the slanderer of Śiva. For, the wise people say that the remedy for eating of the impure food taken in through ignorance, is to vomit it out.

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*VR. is hard put to it to reconcile this verse with the injunction in the *Sāttvata-tantra* that no god other than Nārāyaṇa should be respected (*nānyaṁ devaṁ namas-kuryāt* etc.). He says that injunction is restricted to those who are trying for *mokṣa*. He concludes :

sarva-devatānām brahmātmakatvena-anusandhānaṁ tvaviruddhaṁ-eveti na virodhaḥ ।

19. The mind of the great sage who finds joy in his own Self, does not necessarily follow Vedic statements (regarding injunctions and prohibitions). Just as the movements of celestial beings and men are different (the former through the sky and the latter on the earth) a person who follows his own course of duty, should not find fault with another following a different path.

20. It is true that *karmas* of two kinds—*pravṛtta* (sacrificial acts etc.) and *nivṛtta* (self-control, renunciation etc.) are prescribed in the Vedas, severally, for two distinct types of men—one characterised by attachment to worldly objects and the other, by absence of it. Both the types of *karmas* cannot be found (practicable) simultaneously in the same agent. But no duty of doing a *karma* of any kind devolves upon the Brahman (god Śiva).

21. (You need not entertain the pride that you are affluent and Rudra is a pauper for), the mystic powers (*siddhis* like *aṇimā* etc.) possessed by us, can never be yours, oh father. They are not found (attained) in sacrificial halls (by performance of sacrifices). The cause of our (attainment of) powers is unmanifest (as they depend on our will). They are enjoyed by Avadhūtas (knowers of Brahman who have renounced everything). While your path is extolled by creatures following the path of smoke (*karma-mārga*) who are gratified with the food offered in sacrifices.

22. Now enough of this impure body born of you who have sinned against (offended) Lord Śiva. I have been ashamed of my kinship with an unworthy father. Fie upon the birth from a man who vilifies the great Souls.

23. When (out of joke) Lord Śiva (the bull-bannered god) refers to your *gotra* by addressing me as "Dākṣāyaṇī" (Dakṣa's daughter), I immediately lose all joyfulness and smiles, and become extremely pained at heart. Therefore, I shall give up this body (corpse) begotten of you."

Maitreya said :

24. Oh vanquisher of enemies ! Having thus addressed Dakṣa in the sacrificial hall, she sat silently on the ground with her face to north. She wore a yellow garment. She

touched water (i.e. sipped it as in *ācamana*), and closing her eyes, she entered the *yogic* path (for casting off her material body).

25. Steady in her *yogic* posture, she controlled *prāṇa* and *apāna* equally at the navel. Forcing up the vital air called *udāna* from the mystic plexus at the navel (*maṇipūra cakra*), she gradually brought it up and steadied it along with intellect at the mystical plexus in the heart. The pure, sinless lady brought it through her throat to (*ājñā cakra*), the mystical plexus in the midregion of the eyebrows.

26. Thus, out of her anger against Dakṣa, she desired to cast off her body which was many times lovingly placed (and caressed) on his lap by god Śiva, the most exalted amongst the great. The strong-willed lady instituted the *yogic* contemplation (*dhāraṇā*) of fire and wind in her limbs (body).

27. Then meditating on the bliss of the lotus-like feet of her lord, the preceptor of the world (Lord Śiva), Satī (was so absorbed that she) perceived nothing else. She destroyed all impurities. And her body was soon ablaze with fire produced by her *samādhi* (*yogic* concentration).

28. There arose a tremendous uproar of grief ('alas ! alas !!') both in the heaven and on the earth by those who witnessed the great miracle. "Alas ! provoked by (her father) Dakṣa, Satī, the beloved spouse of Lord Śiva, had thrown away her life.

29. Oh ! Look at the enormous wickedness of the Lord of Creation (Dakṣa) from whom are born all creatures, mobile and immobile. His high-souled daughter who always deserved honour, had to give up her life, due to insults inflicted by him.

30. This Dakṣa of intolerant (jealous) heart, the hater of the Brahman, will reap great infamy in this world. This enemy of god Śiva did not prevent his own daughter, while she prepared for death, on account of the disrespectful treatment meted out to her."

31. While the people were criticising thus, at the sight of the miraculous self-immolation of Satī, her attendants rose with their weapons to kill Dakṣa.

32. Having noticed the vehemence of the on-rushing attendants of Śiva, venerable Bhṛgu offered oblations in the

sacrificial fire called *dakṣiṇāgni* reciting the *mantras* of Yajurveda efficacious to kill the destroyers of the sacrifice.

33. While the priest *adhvaryu* (viz. Bhṛgu) poured the oblation, gods called Ṛbhus who had secured share in the *soma* juice by their austere penance, rose up in thousands, (from the sacrificial pit) with great force.

34. Beaten by the gods who were armed with fire brands and who were resplendent with Brahmanic lustre, all the attendants of Śiva, *pramathas* and *guhyakas* dispersed in various directions.

CHAPTER FIVE

(Destruction of Dakṣa's Sacrifice)

Maitreya said :

1. Having learnt from Nārada, the report of the death of his wife (Satī) on being insulted by Prajāpati Dakṣa, and of the total rout of the army of his attendants by the Ṛbhus in that Sacrifice, Śiva's anger knew no bounds.

2. Śiva (the god with matted locks of hair) got enraged, and bit his lips. He pulled out a matted lock of hair which dazzled with terrific splendour, like the flash of lightning, and a flame of fire. He suddenly sprang to his feet, and with a loud laughter and roar, dashed it on the ground.

3. From it (was born Vīrabhadra), of colossal size, who touched the skies, by his stature. He had a thousand arms. His complexion was like a dark cloud. He had three eyes brilliant like the Sun. He had sharp fangs. His locks of hair were shining like burning flames of fire. He wore a garland of skulls and held various weapons aloft (for striking).

4. Śiva, the Supreme Lord, the master of *bhūtas*, commanded Vīrabhadra who, with folded hands, requested for an order. "Oh Rudra, as you are my part (manifestation, you need not be afraid of Brahmanic power). You be the leader of my army, oh warrior, and destroy Dakṣa along with his sacrifice".

5. Being thus commanded by wrathful Śiva, he circumambulated the all-powerful god of gods. Oh Vidura, he then regarded himself capable of withstanding the might of very powerful warriors, by his irresistible force.

6. He was followed by the attendants of Rudra who were roaring loudly. He himself thundered most terribly. Raising his trident which was capable of killing even the god of Death, he dashed forth, with his feet jingling with ornaments.

7-8. Having seen (a cloud of) dust in the northern direction, the sacrificial priest, the sacrificer (Dakṣa), members of the sacrificial assembly, Brāhmaṇas and their wives began to speculate : "What darkness is this ? From which place is the cloud of dust (coming) ? Winds are not blowing. Nor can these be robbers, as king Prācīnabarhiṣ of iron rule, is still alive. Cows are not driven home so hastily. Whence is this dust ? Is the world now due for dissolution (*pralaya*)?"

9. Ladies of whom Prasūti was prominent, commented with a troubled heart : "This is the consequence of the sin committed by Dakṣa, the Lord of Creation, who slighted his innocent daughter Satī, in the presence of his other daughters.

10. It may be due to Dakṣa's offence against Rudra who dances at the end of the universe, with his locks of matted hair scattered about, and with the elephants supporting the directions pierced on the prongs of his trident, and with his bannerlike hands holding up the missiles (for discharge), tearing down the directions, by thunderlike peals of laughter.

11. When he is full of rage, can anyone fare well, even if he be god Brahmā himself who provoked his (Rudra's) wrath —Rudra, who is of irresistible splendour, full of wrath, unbearable to look at when he knits his eyebrows in angry looks, and who has scattered the whole group of constellations with his terrible fangs."

12. While people with perturbed eyes, were speculating thus wildly, there were thousands of omens portending misfortune to Dakṣa, frequently appearing in the sky, and on the earth.

13. Oh Vidura, in the meanwhile the big sacrificial pandal was rushed at on all sides, and occupied by the followers of Rudra with their weapons held up in their hands. They

were short in stature, dark and brown (in complexion) and their faces and stomachs were like crocodiles.

14. Some broke the *Prāgvaṁśa* (the beam resting on the eastern and western pillars of the sacrificial hall). Others broke the apartment of the sacrificer's wife (This is to the west of the sacrificial hall). Some broke the assembly hall in front (of the sacrificial hall). Some broke the store-room of the materials for sacrificial offerings; others, the cottage of the sacrificer himself, and the kitchen.

15. Some smashed the sacrificial utensils; some put out the sacrificial fire; some urinated in the sacrificial pit, and some cut down the zonelike construction around the sacrificial platform.

16. Some struck the sages; others threatened the wives of the priests, etc.; others seized gods who were near by and trying to run away.

17. Maṇiman bound Bhṛgu; Vīrabhadra, Prajāpati Dakṣa; Caṇḍīśa, god Pūṣan; Nandīśvara caught hold of Bhaga.

18. All the sacrificial priests, along with the members of the assembly and gods, saw this. Being severely pelted with stones, they ran quickly, helter-skelter in all directions.

19. Glorious Vīrabhadra pulled out mustaches and the beard of Bhṛgu, while he was offering the oblations with *sruva* (a ladle) in his hand, as he had laughed derisively in the assembly showing his beard (when Dakṣa insulted Śiva).

20. Out of anger, venerated Vīrabhadra knocked down Bhaga and pulled out his eyes, as in that sacrificial session of the assembly (while Dakṣa censured Śiva), he made signs with his eyes to Dakṣa.

21. He knocked out the teeth of Pūṣan as Balarāma did to the king of Kaliṅga, as he laughed, showing his teeth, while the great god Śiva was vilified by Dakṣa.

22. The three-eyed Vīrabhadra (threw down Dakṣa and) seating himself on Dakṣa's chest, he tried to cut his head by a sharpedged weapon, but he was unable to do so.

23. Hara (Vīrabhadra) was greatly wonderstruck to find that the skin of Dakṣa was not cut by weapons charmed with Vedic *mantras* called *astras*. He (who is a form of Paśupaṭi) deeply thought what to do.

24. Observing the way in which animals are killed in the sacrifice, the Lord of Paśus (Souls) severed by that method the head of Dakṣa, the sacrificer, whom he made the animal to be sacrificed.

25. There arose a shout of applause 'well done', 'bravo' from the *Bhūtas*, *Pretas* and *Piśācas* (members of Vīrabhadra's army) who praised that act of gallantry. The reverse was the case in others (i.e. in Dakṣa's camp).

26. Full of rage, Vīrabhadra threw Dakṣa's head in the sacrificial fire called *Dakṣiṇāgni*, as an oblation. Having burnt down the sacrificial edifice, he returned to Kailāsa, the home of Guhyakas.

CHAPTER SIX

(*Appeasement of Rudra—Revival of Dakṣa*)

Maitreya said :

1-2. Thereupon all the hosts of gods who were defeated by the armies of Rudra, had got their bodies hacked and hewn with tridents, spears (*paṭṭiśa*), swords, maces, iron bars and clubs. Being overwhelmed with fear, they, along with the sacrificial priests and their associates, approached god Brahmā, bowed down to him, and narrated in details this incident.

3. (As) worshipful Brahmā and Nārāyaṇa, the Soul of the universe, had long back foreseen it, they did not go to the sacrifice of Dakṣa.

4. After giving them hearing, Brahmā said, "the desire to retaliate against a person of superior might, even though he has offended you, cannot generally lead to the welfare (of the weak retaliator).

5. Here, however, you have committed the offence against Śiva, inasmuch as you excluded him from the sacrifice, even though he had a rightful share (in the sacrificial offerings). Now, with a pure chastened heart, you resort to his lotuslike feet and obtain his grace, for he can be easily propitiated.

6. You, who wish for the revival (and completion) of the sacrifice, should immediately beg the pardon of the god, who is cut to the quick, by words of abuse (by Dakṣa), and is bereaved of his beloved wife. If he is enraged, the whole world along with its protectors, will cease to be.

7. The Lord Rudra is absolutely independent. Neither I nor Yajña (Indra of that era), nor you nor sages or any embodied being, knows his real nature and the extent of his strength and power. (This being the case) who can be certain of the means to be adopted (for his propitiation)".

8. Having advised the gods, thus, Brahmā accompanied by them (gods), Pitṛs, Prajāpatis set out from his own region (Satyaloka) to Kailāsa, the chief of the mountains, the favourite abode of god Śiva, the destroyer of the Tripuras.

9. Mount Kailāsa is inhabited by gods who have attained superhuman powers (*siddhis*) by their (superiority in) birth, or by drugs, penance, *mantra* (incantation of mystic power) or the practice of *Yoga*. It is always crowded with Kinnaras, Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and celestial damsels.

10. Its summits are made up of various kinds of gems; they are variegated with different kinds of metallic ores; they are covered with various kinds of trees, creepers and shrubs. They abound in different kinds of wild beasts.

11. With its streams of crystal clear water, and its peaks and caves, the mountain is a pleasure-haunt for *siddha* women, to sport along with their lovers.

12. It is resonant with the cries of the peacocks, melodious humming of bees intoxicated with honey, loud notes of cuckoos and warbling of birds.

13. It seems to invite birds, by the highly raised boughs of wish-yielding trees. It appears to be in motion by the wandering of elephants. It is, as if, speaking with the murmuring of flowing springs.

14-15. It is beautified with trees such as (the heavenly) Mandāra and Pārijāta; with Saralas, Tamālas, Sālas, Tālas, Kovidāras, Asanas, Arjunas, mango-trees, Kadambas, Nīpas, Nāgas, Punnāgas, Campakas, Pāṭalas, Aśokas, Bakulas, Kundas, and Kurabakas.

16-19. It is ornamented with lotus flowers of golden

hue (and hundred petals), excellent cardamom creepers, Mālatī (Jasmine), Kubjas, Mallikās, Mādhavīs; and also with (fruit) trees (such as) Panasa, Audumbara, Aśvattha, Plakṣa, Nyagrodha, Hiṅgu, Bhūrja; with herbs and plants like betel nuts, Rājapūga (a kind of arecanut palm), rose-apple trees, date-palms, Jambū, mango-trees and others, with Priyāla, Madhuka, and Iṅguda (soapnut trees). It was adorned with various kinds of bamboos called Veṇu and Kīcaka; it was beautified with swarms of birds which were sweetly singing on the banks of the lakes rich in the beds of lilies and lotuses of various kinds.

20. It was abounding in deer, monkeys, boars, lions, bears and Porcupines, Gavayas (a species of ox) Sarabhas (a mythological eight-footed animal), tigers, *ruru*-deer, buffaloes and other beasts.

21. It was infested with a number of beasts called Karṇāntra, one-footed animals, horse-faced animals, wolves, musk-deer; and it presented a charming sight with its sandy banks of lotuslakes, surrounded by gardens of plantain trees.

22. It was surrounded by the Nandā (the Ganges) whose waters have been all the more hallowed by the ablutions of Satī. At the sight of that mountain of Lord Śiva, gods were filled with wonder.

23. There (on the mountain), they beheld the famous and beautiful city of Alakā, with its garden called Saugandhika, where grew the species of lotus, bearing the same name (Saugandhika).

24. Along the outskirts of the city, flow the two rivers Nandā and Alakanandā, which are highly sanctified with the dust of the ever-hallowed feet of Viṣṇu.

25. Oh Vidura, when celestial women get tired of their amorous sports, they descend from their heavenly cars into these rivers. They then plunge and sport therein, sprinkling their mates with water.

26. (Being tempted by the fragrance of saffron), elephants, though not thirsty, drink the waters of these rivers, yellow on account of the fresh saffron washed (from the breasts of celestial women) during their baths, and make the female elephants also drink it.

27-28. Alakā, the capital of the Yakṣa king (Kubera), which was swarmed with hundreds of aerial cars made up of silver, gold and highly precious stones, and inhabited by Yakṣa women, looked like the sky, overcast with clouds and streaks of lightning. They (Brahmā and others) bypass the capital of Kubera, and the Saugandhika forest, which was beautified with wish-yielding trees with variegated flowers, fruits and leaves.

29. (Therein) the cooking and warbling of cuckoos and other birds, harmonised with the melodious humming of bees. It was full of lakes with lotus beds, which were the most favourite haunts of swans of melodious notes.

30. (In that forest) the breeze blowing over the Haricandana trees against which wild elephants have rubbed their bodies, created frequently more agitation in the wives of Yakṣas.

31. There were tanks beautified with lotuses, with steps of *vaidūrya* gems, built around them. It was enjoyed by Kiṁpuruṣas. Having seen the forest, the gods saw a banyan tree near by.

32. It was hundred *Yojanas* in height; its branches extended seventy-five *Yojanas*, on every side; it had a permanent shade on all sides; it had no nests on it, and it warded off the Sun.

33. Beneath that tree, which induced great concentration of mind (*mahā-yoga*), and which is the resort of people seeking liberation, the gods beheld Śiva, seated like the god of Death, free from anger.

34. (They saw) Śiva of a very tranquil personality. He was attended upon by great serene Yogins like Sanandana and others and also by Kubera, his friend, and the master of Guhyakas and Rākṣasas.

35. (They saw) the Supreme Lord Śiva, the friend of the universe, who is following the path of *upāsanā*, concentration and Yoga meditation[9], practising it out of affection for the welfare of the people.

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9. *Vidyā-patham*—(i) The path of *bhakti* supplemented by paths of knowledge (*jñāna*) and of *karma* (action)—VR.

(ii) One who propagated (and thus resorted to) the paths of *vidyā*, *tapas* and *yoga*—VC.

(iii) VJ. reads *dhyāyantam* for *carantam* and treats it as adj. quali-

36. His body had the golden hue of evening clouds. He wore the marks which are desirable of ascetics e.g. sacred ashes, a club, matted hair and the hide of a deer. He bore the crescent moon (on his forehead).

37. He was seated on a seat of *darbha* grass. He was expounding to Nārada the nature of the eternal Brahman, while other saints were listening.

38. He placed his left lotuslike foot on the right lap, and placed his left hand on the left knee (i.e. in the Vīrāsana posture[10]). A rosary of beads was round his right wrist, and he assumed *tarka mudrā*[11].

39. The sages, along with the protectors of the world, folded their hands and bowed to god Śiva (Lord of Mountains). Śiva who was absorbed in the meditation of being one with the blissful Brahman; who wore a *Yoga-kakṣa* (a strap to secure the position of the left knee)[12]; and who was the foremost among the contemplators.

40. Knowing that god Brahmā (Self-born god) had come, he (Śiva) whose feet had been respected by the Lord of gods and *asuras*, rose (from his seat) and bowed to him with his head, as the most adorable Viṣṇu did to Kāśyapa (in Vāmana incarnation).

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fying Śiva and takes other adjectives to qualify Viṣṇu. So according to VJ.: They saw Śiva who was contemplating on Nārāyaṇa who is the disinterested friend and well-wisher of the universe, and confers auspiciousness on the people, and who is the preceptor in and object of knowledge, penance and Yoga which he is practising.

(iv) GD. explains: Śiva practises the path of *upāsanā*, mental concentration and *Yoga*. He practises *upāsanā* out of affection for the world, to confer on it auspiciousness. He is the well-wisher of the world of which he is the creator, preserver and destroyer. Being the Lord of the world, he takes care of its welfare.

10. It is described as under :

eka-pādam athaikasmin vinyased ūru-saṃsthitam /
itarasminsthitā bāhum vīrāsanam idam smṛtam //

11. *Tarka-mudrā* or *Jñāna-mudrā* : Joining the tips of the thumb and the index finger, and straightening the other fingers after joining them together. This position of the hand is *tarka mudrā*.

12. Probably it might be a wooden support called *kubḍi* in Marathi. Yogis keep it under their armpit to support the erect posture of their body during contemplation.

41. So also the hosts of other Siddhas, along with great sages, who were (sitting) around Śiva, did the same. God Brahmā who was thus bowed (to by them), spoke, as if with a smile, to Śiva (the god who wears the crescent moon on the head), who was still in a respectful pose (bowing).

Brahmā said :

42*. I know you to be the Lord of the universe. You are the same undifferentiated Brahman which is the cause of both the Śakti (*prakṛti* or the divine energy) and Śiva (the *puruṣa*) who are both the womb and the seed of the world.

43. Oh Lord, it is you who carry on your sport through Śiva and Śakti who are essentially one (*sarūpayoḥ*)[13], and create, protect and destroy the universe, as a spider does with his cobweb[14].

44**. You have created the institution of sacrifice through Dakṣa, as a string or instrument for the preservation of the

*(i) Parabrahman is the inner controller (*antar-yāmin*) of Rudra who is merely an *āveśa* type of incarnation of Parabrahman. Therefore Rudra is identified with the Parabrahman and the attributes of the latter are applied to him. Hence this is the eulogy of Parabrahman—VR. (ii) VJ. says that these verses are in praise of Narasiṁha (Viṣṇu) for the same reason as above. (iii) VC. regards that the author has followed *Śaiva-mata*, in this panegyric.

13. VR. accepts the v.l. *svāṁśayoḥ* : Śiva and Śakti are the parts or *aṁśas* of the *viśiṣṭa* mentioned as *sva*. This verse is addressed to Parabrahman who is the *antar-yāmin* of Rudra. *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* form the body of Parabrahman. VR. expounds the stand of *viśiṣṭādvaita* with reference to god and the world etc. in this com. (ii) VC. explains this reading: Śiva is god's *aṁśa*. *Śakti* is Śiva's shadow. Hence they are equated here. VJ. accepts the v.l. *Svarūpayoḥ*. He regards this verse as addressed to Viṣṇu who is the *antar-yāmin* of both Śiva and Śakti. They are not one in essence with Viṣṇu. He uses them as instruments for the creation etc. of the universe.

14. Cf. *yathorṇa-nābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhṇate ca* /—Muṇḍaka Up. 1.1.7.

**Oh bestower of *dharma* and *artha* (religious merit and wealth)! For the attainment of *puruṣārthas*, you have created the institution of sacrifice by efficacious (*dakṣa*) *sūtra*. The bounds of *varṇa*, *āśrama* etc. are fixed by you. Brāhmaṇas adopt strict religious vows and faithfully follow these limitations or commands—VR.

(ii) VC. and SD. state that here Brahmā implies that as Śiva had destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa who followed Vedic injunctions laid down by Śiva, it was Śiva's responsibility to see to it that the sacrifice was completed.

three Vedas which bestow *dharma* and *artha* (religious merit and wealth)[15]. It is you who have ordained the boundaries (of the course of conduct) of the world-boundaries which Brāhmaṇas, who have adopted religious vows, follow with faith.

45. Oh auspicious Lord! You confer heaven (*svarga*) or final beatitude (*Mokṣa*) on those who perform auspicious deeds, and assign the terrible dark hell to the perpetrators of evil deeds. Why is it that the same act in the case of some persons, gives the contrary result? (Why should Dakṣa who followed the Vedic path, and accordingly tried to perform a sacrifice as per Vedic injunction, meet with that fate?)

46*. Verily anger cannot generally[16] overwhelm pious people as it would do in the case of brute (-like ignorant persons. For these (righteous people) have offered their hearts to your feet, and visualise you in all beings, and see all beings as one with (their Soul)[17]. (If your righteous devotees are above anger, how is it that you, their god, can be wrathful?).

47. A person (of exalted status) like you, ought not to kill those who perceive differentiation in their hearts; who fix their eyes on *karmas* (ritualistic acts) only; being of wicked minds, they are always jealously burning in their hearts at the prosperity of others; who being naturally disposed to hurt the

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15. *dharmārtha-dugha* : Alternatively ŚR. takes it as a Voc.—*dugha*. Oh Lord Śiva who give religious merits and wealth ! For the attainment of *dharma* and *artha* you have created etc.

(ii) VJ. takes this as instr. sing. and explains it as qualifying Dakṣa. According to VJ. : Dakṣa's sacrifice was disturbed by Hari, as Dakṣa treated Śiva disrespectfully. Śiva was superior to Dakṣa even as a devotee. Hence Hari disturbed the sacrifice, as the boundary or etiquette to be observed was crossed by Dakṣa.

*(i) It is impossible that your wrath can be the cause of such a contrary result. The righteous persons entertain no anger against good people (ŚR.) (ii) VJ. takes this verse as addressed to Viṣṇu, and explains that Brahmā does not attribute any anger to Viṣṇu. If the devotees of Viṣṇu are not overwhelmed with anger, there is no possibility of finding resentment in Viṣṇu.

16. *Prāyeṇa*—Śiva might have been angry as there are exceptions in such people, e.g. Sanaka's anger on Jaya & Vijaya —VC.

17. *apṛthag-didṛkṣatam*—Those who positively see things as they are —VJ.

feelings of others, wound them by harsh words. For such (wicked) persons are doomed by the Providence.

48*. If persons who have their minds deluded by the unfathomable Māyā of Viṣṇu, and who consider the universe as different from God, offend the righteous at any time or place, they regard it (the offence) as caused by the Providence. Out of compassion they (the righteous) definitely show mercy to them, but do not show their prowess for their destruction.

49. Oh Lord! you have your intellect uninfluenced (untouched) by the irresistible Māyā of the Supreme Man, and hence you are Omniscient. You should therefore show grace to persons whose minds are affected by the Māyā, and hence, whose minds follow (the path of) ritualistic *karmas*.

50. Oh Lord! Be pleased to revive (recommence) the sacrifice of Dakṣa, the son of Manu—the sacrifice which remained incomplete as it was wrecked by you when the petty minded priests who conducted the sacrifice did not offer you, your due share (in it).

51. May this sacrificer (Dakṣa) be alive again. May Bhaga get back his eyes as before. Let Bhṛgu grow his beard and mustaches. Let Pūṣan have his teeth as before.

52. Oh Rudra (Manyu)! By your grace may gods and sacrificial priests, the limbs of whose bodies have been wounded and broken by weapons and stones, be restored to health immediately.

53. Oh Rudra! Whatever will remain after the completion of the sacrifice shall be your share[18]. Oh destroyer of the sacrifice, let this sacrifice be consummated today, with this share assigned to you.

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*VJ. This verse is addressed to Rudra so that he should not entertain any anger against Dakṣa : 'In this world, minds of persons like Dakṣa, are overpowered by Māyā—the binding power of Viṣṇu. How is it that when the persons of incorrect perception, offend or hate the good, righteous persons like you do not feel compassion for them, and oblige them by toleration ? For the ignorant have acted so, due to their previous *karmas* and under compulsion of Lord's will.

(ii) SD. & GD. : The righteous persons take the offence done to them as due to their own *karmas*, and feel compassion for the wicked, for their future life in hell.

18. Literally : Oh Rudra ! May all that has remained of the sacrifice be your share.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Completion of Dakṣa's Sacrifice)

Maitreya said :

1. Oh Vidura (of mighty arms)! God. Śiva who was thus entreated by Brahmā, was highly pleased. With a loud laugh, he said, "Listen".

Śrī Mahādeva said :

2. Oh Lord of the created beings, I do not refer to (pronounce), nor do I recollect the misdemeanour of the ignorant who are overwhelmed with Lord's Māyā. I have only meted out punishment there (to the offenders).

3. The head of Prajāpati Dakṣa which has been burnt, may have the face of a he-goat. Let god Bhaga look at his own portion of offering in the sacrifice, through the eyes of Mitra god.

4. Let god Pūṣan who eats flour only eat the offering of flour with the teeth of the sacrificer. The gods, who have offered to me the remaining portion of the sacrifice, will have all their limbs restored, properly.

5. Let *Adhvaryus* and other sacrificial priests who have lost their arms use the arms of gods, Aśvins; while those who have lost their hands should work with those of god Pūṣan. Bhṛgu will have the beard and mustaches of a he-goat.

6. Oh Vidura, when all beings heard the speech of the most bountiful god Śiva, their hearts were fully satisfied, and they exclaimed 'Well done, well done'.

7. Thereupon, gods along with sages, (cordially) invited god Śiva(to help the consummation of the sacrifice), and went again to the site of the sacrifice, along with Śiva and Brahmā.

8. Having accomplished completely whatever Lord Bhava instructed them to do, they joined the head of the sacrificial animal (he-goat), to the trunk of Dakṣa.

9. While the head was being joined (to Dakṣa's body), Śiva cast a gracious look at it, (and lo!) Dakṣa got up as though from sleep, and saw Śiva in front of him.

10. Prajāpati Dakṣa whose mind had been turbid with hatred against Śiva (god with a bull on his banner), became

free from that impurity (hatred), like a pool (the waters of which become clear and translucent) in the autumn.

11. He (Dakṣa) had a mind to offer praise (to Śiva). But recollecting his daughter who was no more, his throat got choked with tears of affection and anxiety, and he could not utter a word of praise.

12. The wise Prajāpati Dakṣa who was overwhelmed with affection, controlled his mind with difficulty. He then praised Lord Śiva, with sincere devotion.

Dakṣa said :

13. "Oh venerable Lord! Even though you were disrespected by me, a great favour has been shown to me by you, in meting out a (corrective) punishment. Both you and Hari are never different to even fallen Brāhmaṇas. How can you be so to those who follow religious vows (i.e. the sacrificial duties).

14. For the preservation of the Vedas and knowledge of Ātman[19] you created out of your mouth[20] Brāhmaṇas who possessed learning and practised penance and religious vows[21] at the beginning (of the world). Oh great god, you therefore protect Brāhmaṇas in all calamities like a herdsman protects his cattle with a staff.

15. May the Lord who, though insulted in the assembly with arrowlike piercing words of abuse, by me, who was ignorant about the true knowledge (of his real nature), ignored them, and with his gracious look (at me) saved me who was falling down for having reviled the most worshipful person— May that venerable Lord be pleased with his own (merciful) act (as it is beyond my capacity to repay this obligation)."

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19. *Brahmātva-tatavmavitum*. To protect the continuity of the knowledge that everything mobile and immobile is in reality Brahman, GD.

20. *mukhataḥ*—chiefly (VC.).

21. Or : Manifesting yourself as Brahma at the beginning of the world.—ŚR. VR. : You are the four-faced Brahmā who created Brāhmaṇas for the preservation of the true knowledge about *Paramātman* and *jīva* by your own realisation and instruction, at the beginning of the *kalpa*. VJ. accepts the v.l. *brahmātmatām prathayitum*. For proclaiming that you are the protector of the Vedas (Brahman). Or : You are the special abode of Brahman (Hari) perfect in all highest attributes.

Maitreya said :

16. Having thus apologised to Śiva (who showers blessings on devotees), he (Dakṣa), with the permission of god Brahmā, restored the continuity of sacrifice, with the help of preceptors and sacrificial priests and fire.

17. For the continuity of the sacrifice and for purification (from the pollution resulting) from the touch of warriors (such as, Pramathas), the best of the Brāhmaṇas offered in three plates Puroḍāśa (oblation made of ground rice) dedicated to Viṣṇu.

18. Oh King (Vidura), while, along with the sacrificial priest (*adhvaryu*) who stood holding the oblation in hand, the sacrificer (Dakṣa) meditated upon Hari with pure heart (so earnestly that) Hari manifested himself.

19. Then eclipsing their (of the members of the assembly) splendour by his lustre which illumined the ten quarters, he was brought there by Garuḍa whose two wings were the two Sāma hymns[22] (viz. *Bṛhad* and *Rathantara*).

20. He was of blue complexion and wore a zone of gold. He was adorned with a (gold) crown brilliant like the Sun. His countenance was beautified with locks of hair, dark like black-bees, and with ear-rings. With a conch, a lotus, a discus, an arrow, a bow, a mace, a sword and shield in each arm adorned with gold ornament, he looked (beautiful like a blossoming Karṇikāra tree).

21. His consort (Lakṣmī) was resting on his bosom (in the form of *Śrīvatsa*). He wore a garland of forest-flowers (*vanamālā*). He delighted the universe even with his slight winsome smile and looks. On his sides were waving fans and *chowries* (white) like royal swans. He appeared beautiful with a moonlike white umbrella over his head.

22. Seeing him arrive, all gods and others of whom Brahmā, Indra and Śaṅkara were prominent at once stood up and bowed to him.

23. Their splendour was eclipsed by his. With their tongues faltering through his awe, they folded their hands on their heads, and attended upon him (respectfully).

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22. *Stotra-Vājinā*—(i) Who was expert in singing the hymns (VR).
(ii) VJ. reads *Stotra-nirjita* : Who has secured Hari's grace by singing Sāma hymns.
(iii) Cf. *bṛhad-rathāntare pakṣau*—Kauṣītaki Up. 1.5.

24. Even though his glory was beyond the reach of their capacities (as they are his partial manifestations), Brahmā and others began, to the best of their knowledge, to sing the glory of him (Viṣṇu) who manifested that form to confer his blessings.

25. Dakṣa himself took with him the articles of worship in an excellent receptacle[23]. Joyfully singing his praise with his hands folded, devoutly he sought the protection of the Lord of Sacrifices, who is the Supreme preceptor of the Prajāpatis and who was surrounded by attendants like Nanda and Sunanda.

*Dakṣa said** :

26. In your own essence (essential form)[24], you are pure, untouched by states of mind (e.g. wakefulness etc.). You are absolutely one (without a second), and (hence) above fear and of the nature of pure consciousness. You have negated Māyā[25] and are completely self-dependent. But when you take incarnations (as Rāma or Kṛṣṇa) by the same Māyā, you appear to abide in Māyā tainted with impure matter.

The officiating sacrificial priests said :

27**. Oh Lord, untainted by merits or demerits (or by

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23. *gṛhīta-uttamam* : Taken as adj. qualifying *Yajñeśvara* it means : Viṣṇu who out of grace, accepted the excellent receptacle of presents from Dakṣa. But VR.'s interpretation is better : 'Viṣṇu who is the best of all the means which lead to *puruṣārthas*'.

* As ŚR. points out, the following eulogy of Viṣṇu contains a variety of metres.

24. *pratiṣiddhya māyām* etc. : VJ. The word *Māyā* signifies inert, unintelligent *prakṛti* the material cause of the world and not unreal juggllery (*indrajāla*). The verse means : You have distanced the unintelligent Prakṛti. You have created Mahat (and other principles) and grossest bodies called Puruṣa from it. You are called Puruṣa as you are the inner-controller (*antar-yāmin*) of these bodies. The ignorant Māyā-vādins regard you affected by Prakṛti like the JIva.

25. *sva-dhāmni* (i) In Vaikuṇṭha—JG.

(ii) Of the nature of the highest bliss—SD.

**(i) VJ.: It is through the gracious looks of Sadāśiva which blossomed (created) in us the real knowledge that the ritualistic act, viz. this sacrifice that we are performing, is an act of worshipping you. It leads to devotion and other pious qualities. This is logically proved by three

upādhi or *māyā*) ! Due to the curse of Nandīśvara[26], we were strongly attached to ritualistic duties, and we did not know your real nature. We have known this sacrifice (*yajña*) as your form—the sacrifice which is established by (and expounded in) the three Vedas[27]; which implies (i.e. creates) religious merit (*apūrva*); for the purpose (of accomplishing) which, the definite instructions for the arrangement of specific deities in specific places, have been laid down (Or for this purpose, you have assumed different forms such as Indra).

The assistant priests said :

28. Oh Lord (who affords protection to all)! This caravan of ignorant people who are overburdened with the heavy load of their body (misconceived as their Soul), and their house (mistaken as their own), and who are tormented with desires (passions), is traversing the path of *saṁsāra* (lit. path of births) which is devoid of any shelter; (and) is difficult to travel on account of great hardships; which is under the strict watch of the terrible serpent called Death (to devour) them; which has the (enticing) mirage of the objects of senses; which is full of pitfalls of pleasures and pains (and such pairs of opposites); which is fearful on account of carnivorous beasts in

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modes of proof, viz., *Pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) and *āgama* (authoritative word or the Veda). For accepting the oblations due to you, but offered to gods like Brahmā etc., you dwell in them. This is the decisive proof.

You, being the Supreme God, are object of *apūrva* (merit) which accrues from the performance of sacrifice. We thought that the act of sacrifice is for Indra and other deities. Hence our ignorance about you.—VJ.

VC : When we did not comprehend your real nature, how can Dakṣa do so ? We knew the sacrifice only as your form.

GD : Due to the imprecation of Nandiśvara, we could not understand that you underlie the forms of the deities of Rudra etc. Hence we ignored Rudra's share in the sacrifice, and proceeded with it. Now we realize that it is you who have assumed all forms.

26. Vide Supra IV.2. 24-26.

27. *tri-vṛt*—(i) Vedas of which three *pramāṇas* (modes of proof) viz. *pratyakṣa* (apprehension by senses), *anumāna* and *āgama* (Vedic testimony) are given.—VJ.

the form of the wicked; and which is encircled by the wild fire of grief—when will this crowd resort to your feet for shelter ?

Rudra said :

29. Oh bestower of boons! Your excellent feet which confer all the *puruṣārthas* here (in this very world), are definitely worthy of worship with reverence, even by the sages who are not attached to worldly pleasures. I have fixed my mind on your feet. Even, if the ignorant people call me an apostate (fallen from the path of established rules of conduct), I do not mind it due to your supreme grace.

Bhṛgu said :

30. Brahmā and other embodied beings have been deprived of their knowledge of Ātman by your mysterious Māyā. They sleep (i.e. are immersed) in the darkness of ignorance, and do not even now comprehend your real nature lying within them (as *antar-yāmin*). May you, who are the Soul and friend of your suppliants, be gracious unto me.

Brahmā said :

31. What man perceives through his sense-organs which cognize difference between the objects, is not your (real) nature. You are the basis of knowledge, the objects of senses and the (three) *guṇas*, you are (hence) quite distinct from the illusory phenomenon of Māyā.

*Indra said** :

32. Oh Acyuta! Even this form of yours which creates the world and which is delightful to the mind and the eyes, is a real one (even though it is perceptible)—your form which is distinguished with eight mighty arms holding weapons in readiness, to destroy the enemies of gods.

The wives of the Priests said :

33. (In days of yore) the institution of sacrifice was established by god Brahmā as your worship. It has been now

*According to ŚR. here Indra contradicts Brahmā by stating that the form of Viṣṇu that is visible to them is real even though it is perceived through a sense-organ.

ruined by Paśupati (Śiva) out of his ire against Dakṣa. Therefore, Oh embodiment of sacrifice, be pleased to sanctify with your lotuslike charming eyes, this sacrifice of ours which has been made (desolate) like a cremation-ground devoid of joy and auspiciousness.

The sages said :

34. Inscrutable are your ways, Oh Lord, for you perform an act of your own accord but are not affected thereby. People worship the Supreme goddess Lakṣmī for their prosperity. But you do not think highly of her, though she waits upon you of her own accord.

Siddhas said :

35. This elephant in the form of our mind which is scorched in the forest-conflagration of afflictions, and is distressed by the thirst (of sensual pleasures/desires) has plunged in the pure, nectarlike river of your stories. It does not (even) remember the wild-fire of *saṁsāra*. Nor does it come out of it like one who has attained Brahman.

Dakṣa's wife said :

36. Oh Lord! Auspicious (indeed) is your appearance here. Please be gracious unto us. I bow to you. Oh Lord of Śrī (Lakṣmī), may you and your consort Lakṣmī protect us. Oh Supreme Lord, a sacrifice, though complete in all its parts (e.g. *prayāja*, *anuyāja*), does not appear beautiful (i.e. really complete), like the trunk of a man without its head.

Guardians of the worlds said :

37*. Are you (in your real form) seen (by us) with our

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*The different interpretations are interesting :

(i) ŚR. : To those of pure heart, you appear in pure *sāttvic* form. But to us whose senses can look externally only you are simply a *jīva* invested with a material body of five elements. You (i.e. your real form) are not perceptible to our senses. Fie upon our life !

(ii) VR. : The attribute *bhūman* (all pervasive) distinguishes the Lord from *jīva* which is atomic in size (*aṇu-svarūpa*) and also from *prakṛti*. "It is due to your mystical power called *māyā* that *ātman* and the material body are falsely regarded as one, and *jīva* is wrongly taken to be identical

eyes (senses) which can perceive things in the wrong light?[28] (No) you are the seer from within (as *antaryāmin*) by whom the phenomenal world is seen. For, Oh infinite Lord (*bhūman*), it is certainly your Māyā that you appear to be (as if) the sixth (*jīva*) associated with the (material body composed of) five *bhūtas* (elements).

Yogeśvaras (*Masters of Yoga*) *said* :

38*. Oh Lord! There is none who is more beloved to You than he, who does not see (regard) himself different from You, the Para Brahman (lit. the *ātman* of the universe). However, Oh merciful Lord, please be gracious to those (Your devotees) who resort to You with unswerving devotion (like loyal servants to their masters).

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with the Lord (*Īśa*). You are different from *jīva* and *acit* (five *bhūtas*) but you appear as the sixth (i.e. *jīva*) due to your *māyā*".

(iii) VJ.'s alternative explanation : Oh how lucky we are that you who can be apprehended with the divine eye (of knowledge), are visible to our sight.

(iv) VC. : Though you are the Seer, it is through your Grace that you can be seen. The apprehension of our senses which are accustomed to grasp their objects, is not real. It is your Māyā that you appear to be vested with material body with you as the sixth (distinct from the five *bhūtas*). Jarāsandha and others who thought your real form (Śrī-vigraha) to be material, have not seen your real self, though they have just seen you, for they remained impervious to your sweetness.

(v) GD. : The sense organs are incapable of apprehending you. It is your Will due to which you became visible to us.

28. *asad-grahaiḥ*—(i) By us who are strongly attached to body and its belongings, and who look upon the body as the *ātman*—VR.

(ii) By our eyes or senses which are habituated to apprehend inauspicious sounds, objects etc.—VD.

(iii) By senses which comprehend their objects—VC.

(iv) By senses, mind, intelligence (and other *vṛttis*) which have attachment to this transient *saṁsāra*—SD.

*(1) RR. and VD. clarify that devotees (servants of God) are more dear to him than mere possessors of knowledge (*jñānin*).

(2) VR. accepts the v.l. *bhṛtyeśatayā* for ŚR.'s *bhakteśatayā*, and points out that 'master-servant relation' given here conflicts with the interpretation which supports the identification of the *jīva* with God, as such identity between *jaḍa* and *ajaḍa* is sheerly impossible. Thus VR. interprets : There is none more dear to you than he who does not regard himself existing independently of you, and who sees that he is a part of Lord's body, as such his existence is inseparable from God.

39*. By means of your Māyā in which are exhibited many and different varieties of *guṇas* by the destiny (*adṛṣṭa*) of the *jīvas*, you give rise to a notion of diversity about yourself (by assuming the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu etc.) for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. But in your own real, essential state, you are free from the illusive notion of difference and its cause, the *guṇas*. We bow to you who are such.

Brahmā (Śabda-brahman or Vedas) said :

40. I pay my obeisance to you who have assumed the *sattva* attribute and are (hence) the source of (*puruṣārthas* like) Dharma (*artha* etc.), but are still destitute of attributes. Yur real nature is incomprehensible to me as well as to others.

Agni said :

41. I, whose flames are brightly enkindled by your light, bear the offerings soaked in ghee, in every good sacrifice. I bow to you who are sacrifice incarnate, and the protector of sacrifices—you who are five-fold in form[29] and are duly worshipped by five hymns[30] of the *Yajurveda*.

The gods said :

42. You, the first Puruṣa who, formerly, at the end of the kalpa, withdrew in your stomach the universe which is the

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(3) SD. : (the first half). Those who know that *jivas* who are your parts (*aṁśas*) are different *inter se* and from you, and that they are still not different from you as you are the Soul of the universe (and an *aṁśin*), are dearest to you.

*VR. : Obeisance to you who have given rise to differentiation about the Soul (*ātman*) such as god, man etc. through your Māyā. Your Māyā assumes the forms of Brahmā, Śiva etc. with you abiding in them. Your essential nature always keeps away the attributes (e.g. *sattva* etc.) which lead to misapprehension.

29. The five forms of sacrifice are : (i) *Agnihotra, darśa, Pārṇamāsa, Cāturmāsya* and *Paśusoma* (ŚR., VC., SD., GD.).

(ii) VR. lists : *Dakṣiṇa, Āhavanīya, Gārhapatya, Sabhya* and *Āvasathya*. (iii) VJ. enumerates : *Yajña, Yajña puruṣa, Yajñeśa, Yajña-bhāvana* and *Yajña-bhuj*, as the five forms.

30. The five hymns mentioned are : *dīrāvaya, śrauṣat, yaja, ye yajāmahe* and *Vaṣaṭ*.

effect caused by you, lie down on the excellent bed of Śeṣa (the king of serpents), over the cosmic waters (after the deluge). You, the path of realizing whom is sought after by the Siddhas in their hearts, today move in the range of our sight and protect us, your servants.

Gandharvas said :

43. Oh God, these progenitors like Marīci and others, the hosts of gods like Brahmā, Indra and others of whom Rudra is the foremost, are merely the parts of your part (manifestation), Oh highest Lord! We always pay obeisance to you whom this universe is a toy-box.

Vidyādharas said :

44. Oh Lord, (even) after entering into the human body which is the means of (attaining) the (highest human) objective, viz. *Mokṣa*, a person thinks his material body as 'I' and 'mine' due to Your Māyā. This wicked-minded fool hankers after the unreal pleasures of the senses, even though he is reproached by his relatives. He who drinks the nectar in the form of stories about you, will be able to shake off the delusion about his body.

The Brāhmaṇas said :

45. You are the Sacrifice. You are the sacrificial offering. You are the sacrificial fire. You are certainly the incantations (sacred *Mantras* recited at the time of offering the oblations to fire), the sacrificial fuel, the *darbha* grass, and sacrificial utensils. You are the *sadasya* and the *ṛtvij* (the superintending and officiating priests forming the assembly at the sacrifice). You are the couple (the sacrificer, and his wife), the divinities (to be propitiated in the sacrifice), the *agnihotra* (the act of offering oblations to fire), the *Svadhā* the sacred oblations offered to *Pitṛs*), the Soma juice, the clarified butter (to be offered to the sacrificial fire) and the sacrificial animal.

46. Oh Lord, whose body is constituted of three Vedas, you are the embodiment of sacrifice (and of the will and the activity of the performance of sacrifice. Formerly you assumed the form of a mighty boar. While Yogins were eulogizing you, you, with a roar, sportively brought the earth on your

tusk (to the surface of waters), from the Rasātala, just as a big elephant would playfully do to a lotus plant.

47. May you (who are) of so great a glory, be gracious unto us, who long to see you, as our auspicious undertaking (of performing sacrifice) is interrupted. Oh Lord of Sacrifices, when your name is sung by men, all obstacles to sacrifices vanish. To you we offer our obeisance.

Maitreya said :

48. Oh blessed Vidura ! While Viṣṇu the protector of sacrifices was being eulogized, the wise Dakṣa recommenced the performance of the sacrifice that was interrupted by Rudra (Vīrabhadra).

49. Oh sinless Vidura ! The Lord who is within all (as *antaryāmin*) and (thus) the enjoyer of the oblations offered to all, expressed pleasure at the offering of his share (of *tri-puro-ḍāśa*). Addressing Dakṣa, He said :

The Lord said :

50*. I am the prime cause of the universe. I am its Soul and the Lord[31] and the witness (of all). I am the self-refulgent one, not subject to any condition (*upādhi*)[32]. I am Brahmā and Rudra (the creator and destroyer of the universe).

51**. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Dakṣa), having entered my own Māyā constituted of three Guṇas, it is I, who create, protect

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*The gist of VR.'s lengthy commentary is as follows:

I, Brahmā and Śiva (the latter two) who constitute my body and who have (thus) no independent existence, (as I am their *antaryāmin*) are the cause of the world. I am the Lord of myself and abide as the controller from within, in all *jivas* (*ātmeśvara*). Being bereft of name or form (as a god or a man) I am simply a witness or onlooker (*upadraṣṭā*). I am free from the defects or limitations of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* such as lack of intelligence, limitedness, affliction. (*aviśeṣaṇa* is not a negative concept as the Lord is) *svayaṁ-dṛk*—possessor of all excellent attributes.

31. *ātmeśvara*—(i) The Lord of all *jivas*—VJ.

(ii) Having none superior or Lord to him—SD.

32. *aviśeṣaṇaḥ*—(i) The best of all (*sarvottama*)—VJ.

(ii) With nobody equal or superior to me—SD.

(iii) Free from all attachment—GD.

**(1) VR. : I alone am the cause of the effect called universe consisting of *cid* (sentient) and *acid* (non-sentient). By my will, I enter my

and destroy the universe, and assume the name (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra) suitable for the function.

52. It is only the ignorant persons who view Brahmā, Rudra and all creatures as distinct from me who am the one Brahman without a second (either of the same or different kind, and who am the absolute, the Supreme Soul (*paramātman*).

53*. Just as a man never entertains the idea that his own limbs like head, hands etc. belong to others, similarly a person devoted to me does not regard other creatures as distinct from him.

54**. Oh Brāhmaṇa ! He who sees no difference between the three (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) who are essentially one and who are the Souls (*antaryāmins*) of all creatures, attains real peace (*Mokṣa*).

Maitreya said :

55. Thus enlightened by the Lord (Viṣṇu), Dakṣa, the foremost among the Prajāpatis (first) worshipped Hari by his special sacrifice (*tri-kapāla-puroḍāśa*), and (then) other gods

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Māyā and protect the world, and create it through Brahmā, and destroy it through Rudra. I assume the names Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva according to the function performed.

(2) VJ. : I enter the unintelligent Prakṛti under my control. With *rajo-guṇa* as the material cause, I create Brahmā, enter into and abide in him and create the world . . . . In this way, by my form as Viṣṇu and my *aṁśas* in Brahmā and Rudra. I carry on the functions of the creation etc. It is a wrong notion that Brahmā or Rudra creates or destroys the universe.

(3) SD. : God is essentially free from *vikāras*. His modifications etc. are due to his Śakti. It is by means of his *aṁśa* that the creation etc. take place, and God assumes the particular name suitable for the function.

*VR : Even a man who wrongly identifies his body with his Soul, does not regard that the limbs of his body (which cannot exist independently of his body) as belonging to another person or have an existence apart from his body. Similarly, a person devoted to me, does not think that creatures can have an existence independent of me (*Brahman*).

**VR tries to interpret this verse as supporting the tenets of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school. The gist of his lengthy erudite Com. is as follows :

'The existence of the three (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) is dependent upon Viṣṇu who is really independent and exists by himself, and the existence of Brahmā and Rudra is in Viṣṇu's power.

also in both ways (i.e. through principal and secondary types of sacrifices).

56. With a concentrated mind, he waited upon Rudra, by offering the share due to him (viz. the remains of the sacrifice). By performing the concluding rite called *udavasāna*, he offered oblations to gods who were eligible to drink Soma and also to others. Thus, after completely performing the sacrifice, he (Dakṣa) along with the priests (participants in the sacrifice), performed the sacred ablution called *avabhṛtha*.

57. Even though Prajāpati Dakṣa attained Siddhis (divine powers or knowledge) by his own merits, the divinities blessed him with devotion to Dharma only and returned to heaven.

58. We hear that Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa cast off her previous body, was born of Menā, the wife of Himavān (the presiding deity of the Himālayas).

59. Just as Śakti (the Divine Power) which lies asleep (dormant, during the period of *Pralaya*) again resorts to Puruṣa (God, at the beginning of creation), Ambikā (Satī, of the previous life) who was devoted to Rudra exclusively as her only resort[33], sought again the same beloved (Rudra) as her husband.

60. This deed of Lord Śambhu (Śiva) who destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice, was heard by me from Uddhava, the great devotee of the Lord and the disciple of Bṛhaspati (preceptor of gods).

61. Oh Vidura (descendant of Kuru), a person who, every day, devotedly listens to and recounts this sanctifying work of the Supreme Lord (Rudra)—the work which enhances glory, confers longevity and purges all sins—shakes off sin (of himself and his listener).

62*. Oh Vidura, Śiva again obtained as his wife Satī, (now) the daughter of Menā. God Śiva enjoyed himself with her for a hundred years.

63. Realizing that she is incapable of bearing his semen, Dhūrjaṭi (Śiva) discharged it out into the sky, and the river Gaṅgā bore it.

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33. *ekagatim* : VR. takes this as adj. qualifying Rudra : 'Rudra who was brooding over her only'.

*The verses 62-65 are commented upon by VJ. only.

64. (Finding the Gaṅgā too weak to bear it), Agni swallowed it (through *svāhā*) into a bush of reeds. There was born god Kumāra whom the six Kṛttikās (the stars constituting the Pleiades) adopted as their son.

65. By sucking their milk with six mouths, the child came to be known as Ṣaṇmukha (six-faced god). The gods then appointed him—the terror of all Asuras,—as the commander of their army.

CHAPTER EIGHT

*(Story of Dhruva)**

Maitreya said :

1. Sanaka and others (viz. Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra), Nārada, Ṛbhu, Haṁsa, Aruṇa and Yati—these sons of Brahmā did not take to the life of a householder, and observed life-long celibacy.

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* From the 8th verse of this chapter, we find the famous story of Dhruva, so popular in Purāṇas and later literature. V.S. Agrawala (*MP—a Study* 58-9) traces this story to RV. X. 72.3-4. Agrawala interprets it as 'the Sun', while Siddheshwar Shastri Chitrav takes it to mean 'the tree' (*RV. Marathi translation*, p. 671). In MBH, Dhruva is a holy name which if remembered, wards off difficulties (*Anuśāsana*. 150.78). The *Vā. P.* (2.62.75-83) briefly refers to the story of Dhruva of the Cākṣusa Manvantara, but therein, it is god Brahmā and not Viṣṇu who confers on him the eternal astral position. The nucleus of the story of Dhruva in the Bh. P. is obviously the one given in *V.P.* I. Chs. 11 and 12. But there are some important differences. For example :

(1-2) In the *VP.*, Nārada plays no part in Dhruva's spiritual guidance. The seven sages initiate Dhruva with the *mantra* : *Om namo Vāsudevāya* and *Not Om namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya* as given in the *Bh. P.* (vide verse 54).

(3) In the *VP.* 1.12. 13-30, gods tried to disturb Dhruva's meditation by their Māyā. In the *Bh. P.* there is no such distraction.

(4) The eulogy of Viṣṇu sung by Dhruva in the *VP* 1.12. 53.75 is a Paurāṇic version of the *Puruṣa Sūkta* (RV.X.90). But the beautiful classic eulogy in the *Bh. P.* IV.9.6-17 is quite independent.

The *Bh. P.* seems to have revised and enlarged the story of Dhruva as given in the *V.P.*

2. Oh Vidura (destroyer of enemies), Adharma's wife, by name Mṛṣā (falsehood) gave birth to a twin—Dambha (Hypocrisy) and Māyā (deceit). Nirṛti (the Evil spirit presiding over the South-West) who was childless adopted that couple (as Dambha married his sister Māyā).

3. Oh man of great wisdom (Vidura)! To them (Dambha and Māyā) were born Lobha (Avarice) and Nikṛti (Wickedness). Of these (Lobha and Nikṛti) were born Krodha (Anger) and Hiṁsā (Violence); of these again (were born) Kali (Quarrel) and his sister Durukti (Abusive language).

4. Kali begot Bhaya (Fear) and (the daughter) Mṛtyu (Death) through Durukti. Of this couple (Bhaya and Mṛtyu) was born a twin, viz. Niraya (Hell) and Yātanā (Extreme tortures), Oh righteous-most Vidura.

5. Oh sinless one! I have described to you briefiy the *Pratisarga* (secondary creation or the crèation that leads to *Pralaya*). Having heard this sacred account thrice, one shakes off the impurities from his Soul.

6. Oh Scion of Kuru! I shall now describe the race of Svāyambhuva Manu of sacred renown, born from the part of (Brahmā who himself was) Hari's *aṁśa* (part).

7. Priya-vrata and Uttāna-pāda, the sons of Manu, the consort of Śatarūpā, were engaged in the protection of the world, as they were endowed with an *aṁśa* (a part of protective energy) of Lord Vāsudeva.

8. Uttānapāda had two wives—Sunīti and Suruci. (Of the two) Suruci was more beloved of her lord, and not the other (Sunīti) whose son was Dhruva.

9. One day, while the king was fondling Suruci's son Uttama by placing him on his lap, he did not like Dhruva who also wished to climb up his (Uttānapāda's) lap.

10. To Dhruva, her co-wife's son who was thus trying to climb (his father's lap), the extremely proud Suruci jealously spoke, while the king was listening :

11. 'Oh child, even though you are the king's son, you do not deserve to ascend the royal throne, as you were not borne by me, in my womb.

12. It is a pity that you are but a child, and you do

not verily know that you were borne in another woman's womb. Hence you desire for an unattainable object.

13. If you cherish a desire fór the king's throne, you propitiate the Lord (*Puruṣa*) by penance, and by His grace, get yourself borne in my womb (secure birth as my son)."

Maitreya said :

14. Being cut to the quick by the harsh words of his stepmother, Dhruva, like a serpent beaten with a stick, heaved heavy sighs with anger. Leaving his father who was merely looking on tongue-tied, he went away crying to his mother.

15. Sunīti took up on her lap, the child which was (heavily) sighing with quivering lips. She was extremly distressed to hear from the inmates of the harem, the words of her co-wife.

16. Being scorched by grief like a forest creeper by the (encircling) forest conflagration, the young queen lost her heart and wept bitterly. Remembering the words of her co-wife, tears flowed out from her lotuslike beautiful eyes.

17. Heaving long sighs, and being unable to see the end of the misery (miserable state), the young lady spoke to her child, "Oh child! Do not blame others for the misery. A person experiences the same suffering which he has inflicted on others.

18. What Suruci said was true as you were borne in the womb of and were brought up with the milk of my unfortunate self whom the king is ashamed of recognising as his wife (nay even his maid servant).

19. Oh child! Remain above jealousy. Abide by the true path even though it is advised by your step-mother. If you desire the highest seat (throne) like Uttama, propitiate the feet of Adhokṣaja (god Viṣṇu).

20. It is by worshipping the lotuslike feet of Lord Viṣṇu who has assumed the *sattva guṇa* for the protection of the universe, that god Brahmā attained to the position of parameṣṭhin (the most exalted among gods), which is worthy of being bowed to by sages, who have controlled their minds and breath.

21. So also, your grandfather, the venerable Manu, with complete faith in him as the *antaryāmin* of all, worshipped

him, by performing sacrifices with liberal sacrificial fees (*dakṣiṇā*). He obtained earthly and heavenly happiness, and the highest bliss in Mokṣa, unattainable by other means.

22. Oh child, resort to him who is kind to his servants (devotees), the path of whose lotuslike feet should be sought by people desirous of Liberation (Mokṣa). Adore the *Puruṣa* (Supreme Man) by firmly fixing him in your mind by being exclusively devoted to him, and purified by performance of righteous duties.

23. My child! I find none other than the lotus-eyed God who can redress your grievance. The Lord is sought after by goddess Lakṣmī with a lotus in her hand, but who herself is sought by all others (like god Brahmā etc.).

Maitreya said :

24. Having heard the words thus spoken out to him, guiding him how to attain his objective, Dhruva controlled his mind by his will power, and left his father's capital.

25. When Nārada heard this and came to know what he (Dhruva) desired to do, he touched his (Dhruva's) head with his purifying hand, and said to himself in wonder :

26. "Oh, how wonderful is the spirit of the Kṣatriyas who cannot put up with the loss of respect; for even though (Dhruva) is but a child, he has taken to heart, the vile speech of the step-mother."

Nārada said (to Dhruva) :*

26.A "Oh child! Where are you going alone leaving behind your home full of prosperity? I can perceive, Oh child, that you are indignant at the insulting treatment (meted out to you) by your own relatives."

Dhruva said :

26B. "Did you perceive this, Sir, by your power of contemplation developed by Yoga ?[34] I cannot console my heart which is wounded by the words of Suruci."

* 26 A and 26 B are additional verses in the text of the Bh. P. commented by VR. and VJ.

34. You have seen everything by your Yogic power born of contemplation. Although you can perceive everything, I, however, tell it to you. —VJ.

Nārada said :

27. Oh child, we do not find that (the sense of) honour or dishonour is developed now (at this early stage) in a child (like you), who is (normally and) naturally fond of play and (such) other things.

28* Even though the sense of distinction between honour and dishonour is developed, there are no other causes of dissatisfaction and misery for a man except his misapprehension. For in this world, people are different in their weal and woe as a result of their (past) *karmas*.

29. Therefore, observing the ways of the Almighty, a wise man should remain contented with whatever has been allotted to him by the Providence, Oh child.

30. Moreover, the Lord whose grace you aspire after by the path of *Yoga* as advised by your mother, is in my opinion, very difficult to be propitiated by men.

31. Though the sages have been seeking his path by intense *Yogic* meditation, and by remaining free from attachment through many births, they have not been able to find it.

32. Hence please return home. This persistence of yours is futile. You may try for your good (or final beatitude), at the proper time (viz. in advanced age).

* (1) VC : Insults or those who inflict them (upon us) are the creations of our misapprehension. From the point of *jñāna-yogins*, the *vikalpa* (the difference between honour and dishonour) being non-existent, the misery (resulting from mal-treatment) or the persons who cause it have no existence. In the case of *bhaktas* (*bhakti-yogins*) and *karma-yogins*, they consider that as everything in this world happens according to our past *karmas*, they should not blame anybody else except their own fate.

(2) In the first half VR. prefers to read *vikalpe avidya-māne'pi* instead of *vidyamane'pi* : In the same *ātman* there is no difference of categories like man, god etc. But it is the false identification of *ātman* with the body (of man, god etc.) which causes dissatisfaction.

In the later half :VR. prefers to read *lokāḥ* for *loke*. *Lakas* i.e. sentient beings are different (as men, gods etc) as a consequence of their past *karmas*.

(3) VJ. affirms that there is a difference in the world as friend or foe; but it is due to misapprehension that dissatisfaction or troubles to mind are caused. People are different from each other, according to their past actions (*karmas*).

33. An embodied being, who reconciles himself to the pleasure or pain (happiness or misery) meted out to him by Providence, reaches the end of the darkness of ignorance (i.e. attains *Mokṣa*).

34. One should feel delighted to see a person of superior merits; should feel compassion to one who is inferior; and should desire friendship with one's equals. (In this way) one is not overwhelmed with afflictions.

Dhruva said :

35. This path of tranquillity has been graciously shown by your venerable Self, to persons whose hearts are affected with pleasure and pain. But it is beyond the ken of persons like us.

36. It, however, does not dwell (i.e. impress) in my heart which is shattered by sharp arrow-like words of Suruci—heart of mine who am undisciplined, and have inherited terrible martial (*Kṣatriya*) spirit.

37. Oh Brāhmaṇa (sage Nārada), I desire to secure (lit. conquer) a place which is the highest and the most exalted of all in the worlds, and which had never been attained either by forefathers or anybody else. Be pleased to tell me a good path (leading to it).

38. You are the son of the Lord Parameṣṭhin (Brahmā). Certainly it is for welfare of the world, that your honour roam over (the world) like the Sun, playing on (your) *Vīṇā* (lute).

Maitreya said :

39. Hearing this excellent reply, the venerable Nārada was pleased with the child. Out of compassion, he then spoke to him the (following) excellent words in reply.

Nārada said :

40. The path pointed out to you by your mother will verily lead to the highest good. The course is no other than Lord Vāsudeva. Adore him with a mind completely devoted to him.

41. If one wishes to be blest with good fortune known as Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa (righteousness, wealth,

sense-pleasure and Liberation from Saṁsāra), worship of Hari's feet, is the only course for attaining it.

42. Therefore, Oh Child, God bless you ! You go to the holy bank of the Yamunā where there is the sacred Madhuvana which is ever permeated with Hari's presence.

43. You bathe in the holy waters of the Yamunā three times (morning, mid-day and evening) a day; perform religious duties (e.g. bowing to god) proper for (a child like) you; be steady in a suitable easy posture (like *Svastikāsana*) on a seat (of *Kuśa*-grass etc.).

44. Gradually remove the impurities fickleness etc. of *Prāṇa*, *Indriyas* (sense-organs) and the mind by threefold *Prāṇāyāma* (breath-control consisting of *Pūraka*, *Kumbhaka* and *Recaka*). With a steady and a concentrated mind, you should meditate upon Lord Hari.

45. Hari is disposed to show his grace. His face and eyes are ever graciously cheerful. He has a well-shaped nose, beautiful brows and charming cheeks. He is the most beautiful of all gods.

46. He is ever youthful with beautiful limbs, red lips and reddish eyes. He is the only resort of all suppliants (devotees), the dispenser of infinite happiness (or the reservoir of all *Puruṣārthas*, the protector and the ocean of mercy.

47. He is distinguished by the mark called Śrī-Vatsa. He possesses all the characteristics of the Supreme Man. He is dark blue like a cloud, and wears a Vanamālā (about his neck); and his four arms are distinguished with *Śaṅkha* (a conch), *Cakra* (a discus), *gadā* (a mace) and *Padma* (a lotus).

48. He is adorned with a crown, (a pair of) ear-rings, armlets and bracelets. His neck adds to the beauty of the *Kaustubha* gem. He wears yellow silken garments.

49. He wears a girdle furnished with small tinkling bells round his waist, and is adorned with anklets of burnished gold. He is extremely beautiful, serene, and enhancer of the delight of the mind and the eyes.

50. Having occupied the pericarp of the lotus in the form of his devotees' heart, with his feet beautified by a row of gemlike nails, he presents himself to the mind of his worshippers.

51. With a steady, concentrated mind, one should con-

template Hari, the formost among the bestowers of boons, as (having a) smiling (face) and looking with affection (to the devotees).

52. The mind which contemplates the extremely auspicious form of the Lord in this way, is soon filled with highest bliss[35] and does not revert (to *saṁsāra*).

53. Oh Prince, hear from me the most secret *mantra* (mystic formula to be continuously repeated mentally during meditation). Any person who repeats it for seven days (and nights) can see the heavenly beings (moving through the skies).

54. The Mantra is *Oṁ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya* (salutation to venerable Vāsudeva who is the embodiment of *OM* or *praṇava*). Judging the appropriateness of the articles of worship with due regard to time and place, a wise man should perform the worship of the Lord with various material substances, repeating all the while this *Mantra*.

55. He should worship the Lord with sacred waters, garland of flowers, roots, fruits etc. found in forests, sprouts approved for worship (e.g. *durvā*-grass-blades), garments and leaves etc. of *Tulasī* so dear to the Lord.

56. Having secured an image of substances like stone or through the medium of the earth, water etc. as a substitute for the image, the sage should perform the worship of the Lord. He should be controlled in mind[36] and speech; should be serene and should subsist on moderate quantity of forest products (life fruit, roots etc.).

57. He should meditate upon the glorious deeds which the Lord of hallowing fame, will perform in the incarnations which He assumes at his will and pleasure, by the force of his incomprehensible Māyā.

58. Whatever articles (or forms) of worship are adopted by the ancients for his adoration, should be offered to the

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35. v.l. *nivṛtti* : renunciation. 'The mind is immediately filled with renunciation (of worldly objects)'.

36. v.l. *dḍṛtātmā*—with a devout mind—VR.

dhṛtātmā—One who has controlled his mind by withdrawing it from sensual pleasure.

Lord embodied in the Mantra, by means of repeating the same Mantra (of twelve letters).

59-60. When the Lord is thus being worshipped with body, speech and mind with acts of devotion, he enhances the Divine Love in men who properly perform his devotion sincerely. He confers upon them the bliss cherished by them as beneficial, in the form of Dharma, Artha etc.

61. He (the devotee) should be indifferent to sensual pleasures. With a highly intensive practice of *Bhakti-yoga* (path of devotion) and with his mind exclusively devoted to God, he should worship him directly for Liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

62. The Prince, who was thus advised, circumambulated Nārada. After bowing down to him (Nārada), he went to the holy Madhuvana which was adorned with Hari's footprints.

63. When Dhruva went to the forest for penance, the sage Nārada entered (Uttānapāda's) harem. He was received with due worship by the king. Seating himself comfortably, he spoke to the king.

Nārada said :

64. Oh King, what is it that you think about so long, with a withering face? Is there any deficiency in your *Dharma* (religious duties), *Artha* (wealth and prosperity) and *kāma* (fulfillment of desires)?

The King replied :

65. Oh sage My wise and noble son of five years has been exiled along with his mother by me, who became heartless due to my submissiveness to (her) co-wife.

66. Oh Sage May not the wolves prey upon my helpless child lying in the forest, fatigued and famished, with his lotus-like face faded.

67. What a pity! Look at the wickedness of a fellow like me who am under the thumb of a women. I am an extremely vile fellow, I did not welcome him while he affectionately wished to climb my lap.

Nārada said :

68. Oh King ! Do not worry about your child at all. He is protected by the Lord. You do not know his greatness. His glory will spread over the whole world.

69. Oh King! After achieving a feat difficult even for the Protectors of the world, your powerful son will soon return enhancing your glory.

Maitreya said:

70. Having thus heard the speech of the divine sage Nārada, the King Uttānapāda discarded his royal fortune and anxiously brooded over his son only.

71. There (in Madhuvana), Dhruva had his bath in the Yamunā. Remaining self-controlled, he fasted that night. With a concentrated mind, he worshipped the Supreme Man according to the instructions of the sage.

72. He passed one month in the worship of Hari, eating at the end of every third night fruits called *kapittha* (wood-apple) and *badara* (jujub), just enough to maintain his life.

73. The second month also he continued the worship of the Lord, eating every sixth day withered blades of grass, leaves etc.

74. He spent the third month in propitiating the Lord of hallowing fame, with perfectly concentrated mind, drinking water only, on every ninth day.

75. With perfect control over his breath, he passed the fourth month in contemplating the Lord, subsisting on the air, on every twelfth day.

76. When the fifth month arrived, the Prince controlled his life-breath and meditating upon Brahman (the Supreme being) stood motionless like a post.

77. He withdrew his mind which is the basis of the sense-organs and their objects from every side(external objects). He meditated upon the form of the Lord in his heart and perceived nothing else.

78. While he was having the *Dhāraṇā* (steadfast fixation of mind on the Supreme Brahman, the support of Mahat and other principles and the controller of Pradhāna and Puruṣa, all the three worlds began to shake.

79. When the child of the King (i.e. Dhruva) stood on one leg, the earth, being pressed down by his great toe, became semi-inclined to one side, as a ferry-boat carrying a big elephant does at every step, according as he raises his right or left leg.

80. Dhruva controlled his life-breath and the (working) of) his senses and began to meditate on Hari, the Soul of the universe as not being different from himself. While he was contemplating thus, the worlds along with their protecting deities became greatly distressed at the stoppage of their breath, and they resorted to Hari for refuge.

Gods said :

81. We do not know the reason of this sudden and simultaneous stoppage of breath of all beings, mobile and immobile. We have sought refuge under you who alone can afford shelter to us. Therefore save us from this calamity.

The Lord said :

82. Do not be afraid. I shall dissuade the child (Dhruva) from this austere penance. You return to your respective abodes. The son of King Uttānapāda has identified his Self with me (as the Soul of the universe). This has led to the stoppage of your breath.

CHAPTER NINE

Viṣṇu's boon and Dhruvā's Coronation.

Maitreya continued :

1. Gods, whose fears were thus dispelled, bowed down to Viṣṇu (God of very great valour or God of long strides in His Trivikrama form). When they returned to heaven, even Lord Viṣṇu (the Cosmic Man of thousand heads), being eager to see His devotee, sped to Madhu-vana riding on Garuḍa.

2. Verily, Dhruva found that the lightening-like brilliant form of the Lord which he visualized as manifested in the

lotus of his heart, due to his intellect sharpened by his intense yoga, suddenly disappeared. (Opening his eyes) he saw him standing outside in the same state (form).

3. Awed at his presence (lit. sight), the child bowed to him, bending down his body and prostrating himself before him like a stick. While looking at him, he was as if drinking him (with his eyes). He was, as if, kissing him with his mouth, and embracing, as it were, with his arms.

4. Hari who dwells in the heart of Dhruva as well as those of others, knew that the child which folded its palms before him, desired to praise him, but did not know how to express himself. Out of grace, He touched him on the cheek with his conch, the embodiment of the Veda.

5. Immediately (at the touch of Visnu's conch) Dhruva whose eternal abode was reserved, was inspired, with the divine speech and realized decisively the real nature of the Supreme Soul (*Brahman*) and the *jīva*. Being full of devotion and love, he calmly (and without faltering) began to praise the Lord whose great glory is heard everywhere.

Dhruva said :

6. Salutations to you, Venerable Lord, the *antaryāmin* of all. You are the Lord of all powers. Having entered into me by your power of intelligence, you reactivate the power of my speech which was lying dormant, and enliven the activities of my (cognitive and conative) sense organs like hands, feet, ears, tactile sense and others.

7. Oh Lord! You are really only one. Having created the entire universe consisting of *Mahat* and other principles by your power called Māyā consisting of *guṇas* of infinite varieties, you enter as *an antaryāmin* (Inner[38] Controller) in it, and appear as many in the apparent *guṇas* of Māyā (in the

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37. *sva-dhāmnā*—(i) By your will power and knowledge—VR.
(ii) By your being *antar-yāmin*
v.l. *sva-dhāmnaḥ*—VR.'s Text. : Prāṇas and sense-organs wherein Paramātman abides.

38. *Puruṣa—antaryāmin* (Inner Controller)—ŚR., VC., GD.
Jīva-śarīrakaḥ/ God dwelling in *Jīva*—VR.
One who abides in the body—VJ.

form of the presiding deities of organs of senses), just as the fire (though one) appears of different forms in relation to the different shapes and sizes of the wood (fuel).

8. Oh Lord! God Brahmā has completely submitted to you for refuge. By the knowledge conferred by you, he saw (i.e. created this universe like a man awakened from sleep. Oh friend of the distressed? How can your feet which are the shelter of the liberated persons, be forgotten by one who is grateful to your benevolent acts (such as resuscitating all the sense-organs etc.).

9. Your Māyā has really deluded their intelligence who worship you—a veritable wish-yielding tree (capable of) liberating persons from the cycle of births and deaths—for other purpose, and desire physical pleasures enjoyable by this body which is as good as a corpse—pleasures which men can get even in the hell.

10. Oh Lord! The bliss that embodied beings enjoy from meditating upon your lotus-like feet, or from listening to the stories of your devotees, is not available in the Brahman who is essentially blissful. How can it be enjoyed by beings who fall from the celestial cars struck down by the sword of Death.

11. Oh Infinite Lord! Bless me with the intimate companionship of those great persons, who bear constant devotion to you, and are of pure (desireless) heart. Thereby, being intoxicated with drinking the nectar in the form of stories about your honour's excellent attributers, I shall easily cross[39] the terrible ocean of *saṁsāra*, teeming with great calamities.

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* VJ. construes differently: The bliss is not enjoyable by the *Jīva* who is in contact with Brahman by meditation etc.—Brahman whose greatness lies in its absolute independence. There is no need to speak of persons who, having attained the heaven (*Svarga*), move in the celestial cars, for the heaven is subject to destruction by the impending sword of Kāla or death.

39. *negye* : (i) VJ. notes a pun here (1) Cross over and (II) shall not return to (*na+igye*).

(ii) VC. & VD. : defeat, overcome. Just as the god of death cannot touch a person who has drunk nectar, the ocean of *saṁsāra* dare not affect me who am drunk with your nectarlike stories.

12.* Oh Lord with a lotus in the navel! Those who closely associate themselves with (your devotees) whose hearts are longing for the fragrance (excellent attributes) of Your lotuslike feet, do not remember (even) their mortal frame which is extremely dear to them, much less their sons, friends houses, wealth and wives which are connected with it.

13.* Oh unborn Lord! I know only your grossest form (the *Virāṭ rūpa*) consisting of the world teeming with beasts, trees, birds, reptiles, gods, demons human beings etc.—the world characterised by *sat* and *asat* and produced by a number of principles like *Mahat*. I do not know, Oh Supreme Lord, your other form which is beyond this, where speech and mind cannot reach.

14. I bow to that glorious Lord, the Supreme Man, who at the end of Kalpa (at the time of the dissolution of the universe) withdraws this entire universe in his stomach. He, the friend of Ananta (the serpent Śeṣa) turns his eyes (inwards) upon him self (in *Yoga-nidrā—Yogic* sleep), and lies (asleep) on his coils. It is in the interior part of the gold lotus (comprising all worlds) which sprouted in the oceanlike navel of the Lord, that the resplendent god Brahmā appeared.

15. (As contrasted with the *jīva*) you are the eternally free, absolutely pure, omniscient, intelligent spirit, essentially unchangeable, First Person (existing before the creation and

* VJ. construes the first half differently :

Those who think of their own sons, friends, house, wealth, and wives, do not remember you who are (really) the dearest of all and who are the First Being.

* VR. takes objection to ŚR's interpretation as he is knowable by Śāstras. He combines *na-yatra-vādaḥ*, and separates *param-a-vedmina*, and interprets : 'Not that I cannot, by your grace, comprehend your subtle form about which there is a controversy. . .' VR. gives another interpretation of *na-yatra-vādaḥ*—'The controversy whether it is *prākṛta* (produced of *Prakṛti*) does dot arise'.

(ii) VJ. adopts the v.l. *na-yatra-vācaḥ* and explains :

It is not possible for me to know your subtle form which the goddess of speech (which implies Lakṣmī, Brahmā and other divinities) who sees him everyday, cannot comprehend due to his infiniteness.

SD. states : I do not know fully even your gross form. Need it be said that I cannot comprehend your subtle form ?

after the dissolution of the universe), possessor of divine attributes, and the controller of the triad (of guṇas or worlds or Vedas or divisions of time.). For you are the seer of the different states of the mind by your unobstructed vision. For the maintenance of the universe, you stay as (Viṣṇu) the presiding deity of sacrifices. You are thus totally distinct from *jīva*

16.* I take resort to you who are that *Para Brahman* in whom various powers of contradictory character, such as knowledge and others, incessantly yet causelessly manifest themselves in succession—that *Para Brahman* who is the cause of the universe, the indivisible whole[40], infinite, beginningless and endless, of purely blissful nature and unchangeable.

17. Oh Lord! You are the embodiment of the highest bliss. To those who are devoted to you that way (without cherishing any desires), your lotuslike feet themselves are the real blessings which are far superior to other worldly boons such as sovereignty and others. Oh noble Lord, you are however, so eager to confer your grace that like a mother-cow which nourishes and protects (against wolves etc.) its newly born calf, Your Lor hip protects us, your miserable devotees, who cherish worldly desire.

Maitreya said :

18. Verily, on being thus highly extolled by the intelligent (Dhruva) of noble heart (intent), the Lord who loves his devotees, applauded him and spoke thus.

The Lord said :

19. Oh Young prince, I know what you cherish in your heart. You are a strict observer of religious vows. May you

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* (i) Mutually contradictory potencies exist in their qualitative capacity in the Lord, and they *carry out* their different functions in proper order—JG.

(ii) The lord is the receptacle of mutually exclusive powers. But they manifest themselves *in due succession* for the maintenance of world order (e.g. creation, sustenance, dissolution etc.)—VR.

40. *sham*—who is both the material and efficient cause, the protector and destroyer of the universe—VR.

be blessed. I bestow on you your cherished object even though it is unattainable (to others).

20. Oh blessed one, (I confer to you) that resplendent eternal place which is not attained to by anyone else. On it is based the entire circle of stellar luminaries like planets, stars and constellations of stars.

21. The circle of luminous bodies like stars etc. are fastened to the eternal post offered to Dhruva like a team of oxen to the central post in the threshing ground. The place given to Dhruva will survive even the destruction of three worlds in intermediate *Kalpas*. The stars presided over by Dharma, Agni and others and those by seven sages (*Ursa Major*) revolve round it (always) keeping it to their right.

22. When, at the time of his retirement to the forest, your father makes over (the kingdom of) the earth to you, you who are firmly established in *Raja-Dharma*, and with your senses (faculties) unimpaired, will protect the earth for a period of thirty-six thousand years.

23. When your brother Uttama is missing in a hunting expedition, his mother, brooding over him in mind, will enter a forest-conflagration while in search for him in the jungle.

24. As you know it, Sacrifice is my beloved form. Having, worshipped me by performance of a number of sacrifices with liberal *dakṣiṇas* (sacrificial fees), and having enjoyed here the real blessings, you will fix your heart on me, at the end.

25. Then, you will attain to my place which is bowed to by all the worlds and which is above that of the sages (*Ursa Major*)—a place from which there is no return (*to saṁsāra*).

Maitreya said :

26. Lord Viṣṇu (whose banner is Garuḍa), who was

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* It (this eternal place) continues to exist even after the destruction of those who live for a Kalpa. Just as a team of oxen employed to thrash out corn by trampling over it, is fastened to a post in the middle of the thrashing ground, and the bulls go round it, the stars presided over by Dharma, Agni, Kaśyapa, Śukra (Venus) and the forest dwelling sages (*Ursa Major*) along with stars and constellations, revolve round it, keeping it to their right. (SD).

worshipped (by Dhruva) promised to give his own realm (to him), and returned to his own abode, while the boy stood gazing in wonder.

27. Although he got his wishes gratified by obtaining his cherished object through the service of the feet of god Viṣṇu, Dhruva was not very much pleased. He also returned to the city (his father's capital).

Vidura asked :

28. How is it that Dhruva, who knew the real (value of) *Puruṣārthas*, regarded himself as unsuccessful in obtaining them even when, within (the period of) a single birth he secured the promise of the supreme abode of Hari, by worshipping his feet—a place extremely difficult to attain to by persons actuated with desires.

Maitreya replied :

29. Dhruva whose heart was pierced with sharp arrow-like words of his step-mother, (pointedly), remembered those words, and did not desire to attain the Final beatitude from the Lord who confers *Mukti* (Liberation). Hence, he became full of regrets (as the bitterness about his step-mother disappeared at the Lord's blissful presence.)

Dhruva said (*to himself*) :

30. I attained within a period of six months the asylum of the Lord's feet which life-long celibates like Sananda and others could realize by Yogic meditation extending over a span of many lives (i.e. births). Alas ! I, whose mind was fixed on diversity (or on worldly pleasures), have receded from them.

31. Oh ! Look at the folly of a luckless fellow like me. Alas ! Having reached the feet of the Lord who can terminate *saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths), I begged for what was ephemeral.

32. My judgment was possibly deluded by jealous gods who attain to positions lower than mine[41]. Hence, I, the

41. Or : who are to fall from their position as gods.

wicked-most fellow, did not follow the true and salutary advice of Nārada.

33* I became deluded by Divine Māyā. Like sleeping man experiencing (fear at the sight of tigers etc. in) dreams while (in reality) there is nobody else (except the dreamer), I entertained a perverted view—a notion of difference[42], even though the second is non-existent (i.e. only the *ātman* exists everywhere—one, without a second), and mistaking my brother as an enemy, I got afflicted at heart with jealousy.

34. In vain have I solicited this kingdom of the world or eternal astral position, (as it is) like the medical treatment administered to a person whose life has ended. Having propitiated by penance, the Soul of the Universe who is so very difficult to propitiate, and who alone is capable of terminating the *saṁsāra*, I, a luckless fellow, begged of him *saṁsāra* only.

35. Alas ! From the Supreme Lord who offered his own blissful state, I, whose fund of good merits is exhausted, stupidly begged for pride (i.e. sovereignty etc. the cause of pride), just as a penniless fellow begs unhusked grains from an emperor.

36. Oh Vidura, people like you who are devoted to the pollen dust in the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and whose hearts are satisfied with whatever they get by chance (or by

* Other interpretations :

(i) Like a man in sleep, I am under the influence of the divine Māyā which is difficult to overcome. Due to her influence, I mistake my body for the real Soul (*Ātmnā*) and think that I have got independent existence, even though, in reality, there is nothing which is not under the control of Brahman. Hence, under the misconception that my brother is my enemy, I am afflicted with this heart-burning.—VR.

(ii) I am influenced by Hari's binding power—Māyā, just as a person asleep (steeped in ignorance) fails to see things in correct perspective, but takes a perverted view, I mistakenly look upon brother Uttama as my enemy, and am afflicted at heart by this misconception, even though Hari is the only independent, omnipotent Lord without a second. —VJ.

(iii) From point of *ātman*, I and my brother Uttama are *jīvas* (the *taṭastha-vṛtti* of the Lord), and from physical point of view, our bodies are composed of five *bhūtas*. In spite of this, I am deluded by Māyā to look upon him as an enemy.—VC.

42. *bhinna-dṛk*—who thinks of a *puruṣārtha* other than the Lord.—JG.

his will), do not really seek for any personal objective (*puru-ṣārtha*), except his service.

37. When King Uttānapāda heard that his son Dhruva was coming he did not believe in it, thinking as if it were like the news of the return to life of a dead man, and thought to himself, "How could an unfortunate person like me be so lucky ?"

38. He, however, put faith in the words of the Divine Sage Nārada. He was overwhelmed with joy. Being highly pleased with the person who brought the news, he presented him a costly necklace of pearls.

39-40. He mounted a chariot decked with gold and drawn by excellent horses. Surrounded by Brāhmaṇas, elderly members of his family, ministers and kinsmen, he, being eager to see his son, immediately set out of his capital, while conches were being blown, kettle-drums sounded, Vedic hymns chanted and flutes played upon.

41. Adorned with gold ornaments, his queens, Sunīti and Suruci, accompanied by prince Uttama, went forward in palanquins to receive him.

42-43. The king saw him (Dhruva) coming, near the garden. Being overwhelmed with love, he hurriedly got down from the chariot and quickly approached him. The king, whose heart was full of anxiety for a long time (for his missing son), was heaving deep sighs, and clasped in his arms his son Dhruva who was absolved of all the bonds of sins by the touch of Lord Hari's feet.

44. Then, the king whose most cherished desire (to see Dhruva safe) was fulfilled, smelt again and again the crown of Dhruva's head, and bathed his son with his cool tears (of joy).

45. Dhruva, the foremost among the pious people, respectfully welcomed by all, bowed at his father's feet and was addressed with blessings. He paid respects to his mothers by bowing his head.

46. Suruci (Dhruva's step-mother) lifted up the child that bowed down at her feet. She clasped it to her bosom and with her throat choked with tears, she blessed, 'May you live long'.

47. Just as water automatically flows to a lower level,

all creatures bow to him with whom Lord Hari is pleased, on account of his qualities like universal friendliness and others.

48. Overwhelmed with love, both Uttama and Dhruva embraced each other. With their hair standing on the end at the touch of each other, they constantly shed tears of joy.

49. His mother Sunīti hugged her son (who was) dearer to her than her life. Feeling happy at the touch of his body, she was relieved of her mental anguish.

50. Oh warrior Vidura ! Milk flowed out from her breasts which were then constantly bathed in the tears of joy (flowing) from the eyes of the hero's mother (Sunīti).

51. People praised the queen, "luckily your son, who was missing for a long time, has returned to remove your mental affliction. He will now protect the world (lit. the globe of the earth).

52. You have really propitiated the Lord who removes the afflictions of his suppliants, and by constantly meditating on whom, heroes (wise men) have conquered ,death which is very difficult to overcome".

53. While people were thus caressing Dhruva, the king placed Dhruva along with his brother, on a female elephant, and joyously entered his capital, amidst their cheers (lit. praise).

Description of the decorations in the city

54. There, at different places brilliant alligator-shaped festoons were hung; plaintain-trees and young areca-nut trees, with bunches of fruit were set up.

55. At every door (were placed) vessels full of water with lights burning on them, and decorated with leaves of mango trees, pieces of cloth, wreaths of flowers and strings of pearls hanging round their necks.

56. The ramparts, gates and mansions which beautified the city were decked in gold, and the tops (of the buildings) were shining like the pinnacles of celestial cars.

57. Its quadrangles, royal roads and streets were swept clean, and sprayed over with (scented) sandal-water. It was spread over with fried rice, unbroken rice *akṣatas*, flowers, fruits and other articles of worship.

58-59. Wherever Dhruva was seen on the road, the ladies of the city, out of affection, gave him auspicious benedictions. They showered on him white mustard, unbroken rice, curds, water, blades of *durvā* grass, flowers and fruits. While listening to their sweet strains, he entered his father's palace.

60. Fondly caressed by his father, Dhruva lived in the best of mansions built of most precious stones, like a god in the celestial region.

61.* There that palace was furnished with beds white and soft like the foam of milk, on ivory bed-steads chased with gold. The seats were highly precious and the furniture was made of gold.

62. There, on the walls of crystals and very costly emeralds, were shining jewel-lamps held by statuettes of beautiful damsels made of precious stones.

63. The gardens were beautiful with various species of celestial trees on which couples of birds were warbling and the swarms of intoxicated black-bees were humming sweetly.

64. There, the tanks in the garden had steps of cat's-eye (*Vaidūrya*). They contained white and blue lotuses and lilies, and were resorted to by swarms of swans, ducks, ruddy geese and cranes.

65. The royal sage Uttānapāda was highly wonder-struck at seeing his son's most wonderful prowess, of which he heard (only the reports).

66. Seeing that Dhruva had come of age, and was acceptable to his cabinet of ministers, and was loved by the subject the king coronated him as the Lord of the earth.

67. Realizing that he had grown old, the King, contemplating over the nature of the Soul, became unattached to worldly pleasures, and left for the forest.

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* This verse and the following three verses are repeated. Cf. Supra 3.33. 16-19—the description of Kardama's mansion.

CHAPTER TEN

(*Dhruva invades Alakā*)

Maitreya said :

1. Dhruva married Bhrami, the daughter of Prajāpati Śiśumāra. They had two sons, Kalpa and Vatsara.

2. And by his second wife Ilā, the daughter of Vāyu, the mighty Dhruva begot a son by name Utkala who was covetable to women like a jewel.[43]

3. But Uttama, who was yet unmarried, was killed in a hunting expedition, in the Himālayas, by a more powerful Yakṣa. His mother, Suruci, also followed his course.

4. Having heard of his brother's death, Dhruva was filled with wrath, revenge and sorrow. Mounting his victorious chariot, he marched against the abode of Yakṣas, the city of Alakā.

5. Proceeding to the northern direction, he saw, in a valley of the Himālayas, the city, Alakā, crowded with Yakṣas, and frequented by the followers of Rudra (Such as goblins, spirits).

6. The stout-armed Dhruva blew his conch, resounding the sky and all the quarters. Oh Vidura, thereby the demi-goddesses (women of the *Yakṣa* tribe) became greatly terrified and looked bewildered.

7. Incensed at the blast of the conch, the mighty and great warriors among the *Yakṣas* sallied forth from the city, and with uplifted weapons, fell upon him.

8. While the *Yakṣas* were dashing towards him the great warrior[44] with a formidable bow, simultaneously hit each one of them with three arrows.

9. With those arrows planted on their foreheads, all of

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43. *yoṣid-ratnam*—(he got) a daughter who was like a jewel among women—ŚR. VJ. accepts the v.l. *yogeśvaram*—(the son Utkala) who was the master of *Yoga* and possessed supernatural powers (*siddhis* like *aṇimā*).

44. *mahāratha*—An expert who, riding his chariot, can engage ten thousand archers simultaneously.

eko daśa-sahasrāṇi yodhayed yas tu dhanvinām /
astra-śastra-praviṇas' ca, vijñeyaḥ sa mahārathaḥ //

them felt definitely vanquished, and verily appreciated that heroic deed.

10. Being enraged like serpents trodden under feet, the *Yakṣas* also, desiring to do the double of what he did, simultaneously shot at him double the number of arrows (six each).

11-12. Then fired with anger, and desirous of retaliation those one lakh and thirty-thousand *Yakṣas* showered on him, his chariot and charioteer iron bars, swords, darts, spears, axes, lances, double-edged swords, *bhuśuṇḍi* missile and arrows with variegated feathers.

13. At that time, being covered with the heavy volley of weapons, Dhruva, the son of Uttānapāda, could not be seen, just as a hill is hidden by a thick shower of rain.

14. Immediately arose the cry 'Alas ! Alas' from the Siddhas who were witnessing the fight from the sky. 'This Sun of Manu's race, drowned in the ocean of *Yakṣa*-army, is killed'.

15. While Yakṣas and Rākṣasas (Yātudhānas)[45] were shouting and proclaiming their victory, the chariot of Dhruva came into view, like the Sun from behind the mist.

16. Twanging his divine bow, he struck terror in his enemies. He shattered to pieces their volley of missiles, like strong wind dispersing the army of clouds.

17. Sharp arrows discharged from his bow, pierced through the armours of the Rākṣasas into their bodies, just as thunderbolts (*vajras*) into the mountains.

18-19. When they were mowed down with Dhruva's arrows of *bhalla* type, the battlefield was covered with their heads adorned with beautiful ear-rings; with their thighs resembling golden palms; with arms beautiful with bracelets; with precious necklaces, armlets, crowns and costly turbans, and it appeared attractive to warriors

20. Most of the survivers of the Rākṣasa army who escaped death, got the limbs of their bodies cut off with the arrows of Dhruva, the foremost among the Kṣatriyas, and they

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45. The Bh. P. mixes up Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, as Alakā was inhabited by all kinds of demigods and their army was composed of these.

fled away from the field of battle, like the elephant-leaders discomfited in their fight with a lion (king of beasts).

21. At that time, Dhruva, the best among Manu's race, did not see anyone with a weapon in hand, on the great battle-field. Though he desired to see the city of the enemies, he did not enter it. 'A man cannot know the intentions of those expert in black magic'.

22. Telling this to his charioteer, Dhruva of wonderful chariot, apprehended an attack from the enemies and remained alert. He heard a noise like the roaring of the sea, and saw on all sides dust raised by a strong wind.

23. In a moment, the sky was overcast on all sides by a host of clouds accompanied with flashes of lightening and terrible thunders rattling, in all directions

24. They (the clouds) showered blood, phlegm, puss, excreta, fat and urine. Headless bodies fell down from heaven before him, Oh sinless (Vidura)!

25. Then a mountain appeared in the sky; and from all directions were showered maces, iron clubs, swords, pestles along with a volley of stones.

26. Serpents with thunderous hissing and emitting fire from eyes with rage, rushed at him. Intoxicated elephants, lions and tigers attacked him in multitudes.

27. Terrific like the ocean at the time of deluge, at the end of a Kalpa, a loudly roaring terrible sea, engulfing the earth on all sides with waves, approached him.

28. By means of their special power of black magic, the Asuras (Yakṣas)of cruel disposition, created many kinds of such phenomena which strike terror into unthinking men.

29. Hearing that insuperable type of black magic had been employed against Dhruva by the Asuras, sages assembled there praying for his welfare.

Sages said:

30. Oh Dhruva, son of Uttānapāda ! May the glorious Viṣṇu (wielder of the *Śārṅga* bow), your God who removes afflictions of the suppliants, destroy your enemies—the Lord by

uttering or hearing whose name, people easily overcome death which is so very difficult to conquer.[46]

CHAPTER ELEVEN

(Svāyambhuva Manu Dissuades Dhruva from Fighting)

Maitreya said:

1. Hearing this speech of the sages, Dhruva sipped some water as *ācamana*, and set to his bow the missile created by Nārāyaṇa.

2. Oh Vidura, just as afflictions disappear at the dawn of the (highest) knowledge, the manifestations of the black magic created by Guhyakas, immediately vanished, while the missile was being set on the bow.

3. Even while he was fixing on his bow the missile devised by the sage Nārāyaṇa, shafts with gold-plated heads and feathers resembling the wings of swans, shot forth from it, and penetrated the enemy's forces like peacocks entering a forest, with a terrible cry.

4. Assailed on every side, in the battle, by those sharp-pointed arrows, the Yakṣas (*Puṇyajanas*) got enraged. With their weapons raised, they rushed towards him on all sides, just as cobras with their hoods raised, would attack Garuḍa.

5. Even as they were attacking him in the battle, he cut down their arms, thighs, necks and stomachs, and sent them to that highest region, to which sages with lifelong celibacy attain, penetrating their way through the sphere of the Sun.

6. His grandfather Manu saw that the innocent Yakṣas were being slaughtered in great numbers by Dhruva, of a wonderful chariot. Out of compassion, he, accompanied by

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46. VC. and VD. add : What of dispelling the Māyā of Yakṣas. Hereby, they (sages) suggested him to use the missile *Nārāyaṇāstra*.

sages, approached Dhruva, the son of Uttānapāda and spoke thus:

Manu said:

7. Oh child, enough of this sinful rage which is a gateway to Tama (hell)—rage, (blinded) with which you have killed these innocent Yakṣas.

8. Oh child! This act of slaughtering innocent demigods (Yakṣas) commenced by you, is censured by the good. It is not becoming to our race.

9. Being enraged at the murder of your brother, whom you dearly loved, a great number (of Yakṣas) have been killed by you, for the crime of one (Yakṣa), on your suspicion of their involvement in it.

10. To massacre creatures like beasts, mistaking the gross body for the Soul (*ātman*)—this is not the way of the righteous who are devoted to Hari (the Lord of sense-organs).

11. Having propitiated Hari who dwells within all creatures[47], and who is difficult to be pleased, and looking upon all living beings as (a part of) your own self,[48] you have secured for yourself the highest realm belonging to Lord Viṣṇu.

12. You are constantly remembered by Hari, and are highly respected by his devotees. How is it that you, who should instruct others by your (exemplary) righteous conduct, have committed this censurable act?

13. It is by patience, compassion and friendliness[49] and the attitude of equality[50] to all beings that the glorious Lord, who is the Soul (*ātman*) of all, becomes propitious.

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47. Or : who is the abode of all creatures.

48. *Sarva-bhūtātma-bhāvena* : (i) Looking upon Hari as the indwelling Soul of all creatures. — VR.

(ii) Hari as *antaryāmin* of all creatures abides in all beings.—VJ.

(iii) Identifying yourself with all creatures. — VC.

(iv) Realizing that all creatures, mobile and immobile are your own Self. — GD.

49. GD. thinks that the qualities are to be shown to the superiors, the inferiors and equals respectively. Thus patience to elders etc.

50. *samatvena* — (i) To regard that all beings are essentially equal, as the Lord dwells within each of them. — VR.

(ii) To show enmity to enemies and friendliness to friends is equality. — VJ.

14. When the Lord is thoroughly pleased, a man becomes free from all the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. Liberated from the stage of *Jīvahood* (i.e. his subtle *Liṅga Śarīra*), he attains to the blissful Brahman.[51]

15. The male and the female are the products of the five gross elements developed in the forms of bodies. It is by their cohabitation that the creation of men and women takes place here in this world.

16. Oh king, it is due to the intermingling of *guṇas* caused by the *Māyā* (power) of the Supreme Lord that the creation, preservation and destruction of the world, take place.

17. The Supreme Man who is devoid of all attributes (like *sattva*, *rajas* etc.) is merely an apparent cause—therein that the universe consisting of manifested and unmanifested things, is in a state of flux like iron moved (by the presence of a magnet).

18.* The Supreme Lord whose power and energy is distributed by the disturbance in the equilibrium of *guṇas* caused by his potency called Time, verily creates (the universe) without being its agent, and destroys it himself not being the destroyer. Inscrutable, indeed, is the working of the Almighty.

51. *nirvāṇa* (i) Characterised by the highest bliss. — VR.
(ii) (Brahman) which is free from body or full of bliss — VJ. VJ. strongly objects to the concept of merger with Brahman as Liberation (*mukti*) will be *śūnya*.
(iii) the highest (beyond *atiśayas*)—SD.
(iv) Beyond *saṁsāra* — GD.

* *The first half*:

(i) The Lord's power is differently distributed in different species of beings such as a man, a god etc., and according to the various degrees of happiness or unhappiness to be experienced according to their *Karmas*. His potency is so divided due to His power called Time, which causes commotion among the *guṇas*. — VR.

(ii) OR: For the sake of creating disturbance in the balance of *guṇas* for the creation etc. of the universe, he divides his power, i.e. He assumes the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra. — VR.

(iii) VJ. accepts the v.l. *yogaśaktyā* for *kāla-śaktyā*.

It is by his power of Yoga that the Lord exhibits his power, and carries out the function of creation etc. through his three *guṇas*. Due to his effortlessness in creation he is regarded as non-creator. Though he

19* He is a creator, as he makes men beget men. As he destroys the destroyer (robbers etc.) by means of death (through kings and others), he is called the destroyer—Time. But the Almighty Himself is endless (immortal), beginningless, unchangeable and subject to no dimunition.

20.** The Supreme Lord has nobody as his own or none as his enemy; (for) he enters all beings equally as (i.e. in the form of their) death. Not being their masters (due to their *Karmas*), all creatures follow[52] him in his course, just as particles of dust follow the blast of wind.

21. The All-pervading Lord cuts short or prolongs the life of a creature according to its destiny (previous *karma*), while he himself, being above these changes, abides in his natural state.

22. Oh King (Dhruva)! Some call him Karma; others,

destroys the universe, he has no enmity against anyone. Hence he is not regarded as destroyer. — VJ.

The Lord is the cause of the creation etc. of the universe, but his workings defy our comprehension. The creation etc. of the world is due to the power of Time which creates commotion in *gunas*. — SD.

* Though he himself is endless (immortal), he brings about the end (of the world) as Time. Though he is without a beginning and imperishable, changeless, he brings about the beginning (of all). He is the creator by making men beget men and destroys the destroyers (robbers etc.) through death.

(ii) VR. points out that the Almighty whose form is Time, does not directly create or destroy but does so through the father or death.

** (1) The Lord who is untouched by *saṁsāra* (or whose body is death), enters the bodies of all creatures as *antaryāmin* for controlling them according to their *karmas*. Nobody is his friend or enemy. (All are equal to him). All creatures, not being their masters (but subject to their previous *karmas*) follow the Lord who runs (i.e. controls them according to their *karmas*) just as particles of dust helplessly follow the wind. (The dust particles may fall at any place or pit, the wind is impartial to all the particles) — VR.

(2) Though God enters all beings as Death, creatures get different fruits according to their *karmas* despite God's equality, just as the wind treats all particles of dust equally, though some of them fall in darkness, light, water or fire. — VC.

52. *anudhāvanti*—(i) do the actions — SD.
(ii) take births — GD.

Nature; some, Time-spirit; others, Destiny; while others, the *Kāma* (desire) of men.

23. Verily nobody knows the design (purpose) of the Unmanifest Immeasurable Lord who is the source of innumerable potencies (like *Mahat* etc.). Oh child who can then know the Lord Who is one's own origin?

24. Oh dear son! These Yakṣas (the servants and followers of Kubera) are definitely not the slayers of your brother. For, oh child, it is the Destiny (*daiva*) alone, which brings about the birth or death of men.

25. It is he only who creates the universe. Nobody else but he alone protects and destroys it. In spite of this, he is not affected by *guṇas* (attributes) and *karmas*, as he is free from *ahaṁkāra* (ego).

26. This Soul of created beings, their Lord and creator gets united with his Māyā power and creates, preserves and eats up (i.e. withdraws within him) the created beings.

27. Dear child! Completely submitting all your Self, seek the shelter of the Deity who is the final resort of the world, and who is the death itself (to the unrighteous, non-devotees)—Deity to whom creators of the universe bear offerings, just as bulls controlled by a string passed through their nostrils, carry the loads (of their) masters.

28. Cut to the quick by the (harsh) words of your step-mother, you, as a child of five, went to the forest leaving back your mother. By your penance, you propitiated Lord Viṣṇu who is beyond the ken of senses, and secured (for you) a position at the head of the universe.

29. Oh dear child, with your mind (lit. sight) turned inward (on your self),[53] seek the Supreme Lord who dwells in the heart that is free from enmity[54];—the Lord who is beyond attributes (*guṇas*); one (without a second), imperishable, eternally liberated and in whom this phenomenal world of

53. *ātmadṛk* — Or one who looks upon all as himself.
(ii) With your mind concentrated on the Supreme Self.

54. *mukta-vigrahe* — Adj. qualifying *ātmani*,
(i) the Soul which is indivisible (without parts).
(ii) VJ. reads: *vimukta-vigrahair vyapāśritam* : Who is resorted to by Yogis who have become free from physical bodies.

differences, though unreal, appears to exist[55].

30. (While seeking the Lord), You practise intense devotion to the Almighty Lord who abides in all as *antaryāmin*; who is infinite, pure and absolute bliss, and is possessed of all powers. Then you will gradually cut asunder the knot of *avidyā* (nescience) which has grown very strong by (brooding over the notions that this is) 'I' and 'Mine'.

31. Oh King, by your deep and extensive study of the *śāstras*, control your anger which is a formidable hindrance to attaining to the final beatitude, just as you would control a disease with a medicine. May God bless you!

32. A wise man who wishes to attain the state of fearlessness for himself, should not allow himself to be overpowered by that passion (anger). For people get afraid of a person who is overwhelmed with anger.

33. Inasmuch as you, being enraged, have killed Yakṣas thinking that they were the slayers of your brother, you have committed a grave offence against Kubera, the brother (i.e. friend) of god Śiva (the Lord of the mountains).

34. Oh child, while the wrath of the exalted Souls (like Kubera) does not vanquish our race, you try immediately to propitiate him by paying him obeisance, and offering humble apologies.

35. Having thus admonished his grandson Dhruva, who bowed down to him, Svāyambhuva Manu returned to his city along with the sages.

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55. In the *jīva*, the worldly difference of being a god or a man is not part of his essence, but it is seen on account of meritorious or sinful *karmas*. It is not that way *mithyā*. This difference is unreal (*asat*), as it is always changing—VR..

CHAPTER TWELVE

(Kubera's Boon and Dhruva's Attainment of Viṣṇu's Realm)

Maitreya said:

1. Learning that Dhruva's anger had been appeased and that he had desisted from slaughter, the divine Lord of Wealth (Kubera) who was being eulogised by Cāraṇas, Yakṣas and Kinnaras, arrived there, and spoke to him (Dhruva) who folded his hands (to pay respects to Kubera).

Kubera (the donor of riches) said:

2. Oh sinless Kṣatriya Prince ! I am extremely pleased with you, as at the behest of your grand-father, you have given up the feeling of enmity which is very difficult to renounce.

3. (The fact of the matter is that) neither you have killed the Yakṣas nor did they slay your brother. It is none but *Kāla* (the power of God called Time), which is responsible for the creation and destruction of created beings.

4. Just as a notion in the state of dreaming is false and meaningless, so is the notion of difference as 'I' and 'You' which arises in man due to his ignorance, and on account of continuous thinking of the physical body as the Soul. Bondage of *saṁsāra* and miseries are due to this notion.

5. Oh Dhruva! Please return now. God bless you. For the sake of Liberation from *Saṁsāra*, adore Lord Adhokṣaja (Viṣṇu) who manifests himself in the bodies of all creatures, and consider that he is the *antaryāmin* (indwelling Soul) abiding in all beings[56].

6. For terminating *Saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths), please worship him whose feet are worth resorting, and who destroys *saṁsāra*, and who, though associated with his own *māyā-śakti* constituted of the three *Guṇas* (attributes—*Sattva, Rajas and Tamas*), is yet aloof from it.

7. Oh son of Uttānapāda, we have learnt that you are very close to Viṣṇu's (God with a lotus in His navel) feet. Oh King Dhruva, as you deserve to receive a boon, ask of me freely and without any hesitation, any boon at will, cherished by you in your heart.

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56. Or: considering all beings as your own self.

Maitreya said:

8. The great devotee of the Lord, that highly intelligent Dhruva, who was thus induced by Kubera (the king of Kings) to ask for a boon (from him), sought to be blest with the constant remembrance of Hari, whereby one effortlessly goes beyond the darkness (of ignorance or *saṁsāra*) which is very difficult to cross.

9. With a glad heart, Kubera (the son of Iḍaviḍā), having conferred that boon (on Dhruva), immediately disappeared while Dhruva was gazing. He also repaired to his capital.

10. Thereafter, by performing sacrifices with liberal donations and sacrificial fees, he worshipped the Lord of Sacrifices who is both the donor of the fruit of religious *karmas*, and is himself the reward of the religious duties (sacrifices). He performed them with proper materials as per ritualistic technique and with due offerings to Gods.

11. Bearing an intense flow of devotion to Acyuta (Viṣṇu) who abides in all as their Soul, yet is distinct from them, he visualised the All-pervading Lord as dwelling within himself and in all other beings.

12. The subjects considered him as their father (protector)—him, who was of such noble character, friendly to Brāhmaṇas, compassionate to the afflicted, and the protector of the bounds of religion.

13. Exhausting the fund of his meritorious deeds by enjoyments of pleasures, and the balance of inauspicious deeds by performing sacrifices and other religious acts, he governed the sphere of the earth for thirtysix thousand years.

14-15. In this way, the great-Souled king of perfectly controlled senses, passed a long time in performing a number of sacrifices which result in the attainment of the Trinity—of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*. He then regarded this universe as being illusory—constructed by Māyā on the basis of the Soul, like the dream city of Gandharvas created by *Avidyā* (Māyā or Nescience), and abdicated the throne in favour of his son.

16. Comprehending that his own body, wife, children, friends, army, rich treasury, harem, beautiful places of sport and recreations and the whole sphere of the earth engirdled by

the ocean, are subject to destruction and hence transitory, he proceeded to Viśālā (*Badarikāśrama*).

17. Having performed ablutions in the sacred waters thereof, he purified his mind (by observing *yama* and *niyama*, the code of Yogic discipline). Having steadied himself firmly in a *yogic* posture, and controlled his breath (through *prāṇāyāma*), and restraining his senses by his mind, he concentrated his mind on the gross (Cosmic) form of the Lord, viz. the *Virāṭ-rūpa*. In course of meditation, the consciousness of the distinction between the meditator and the object of meditation, was lost. Being absorbed in meditation, he forgot the thought of that gross (Cosmic) form also.

18. He cherished constant devotion to the venerable Lord Hari. He was now and then overwhelmed with tears of joy. His heart melted (with emotions for the Lord), and his hair stood on their ends all over the body. He detached himself from his gross body, and did not remember that he was so-and-so (Dhruva).

19. Dhruva noticed an excellent heavenly car descending from the heavens, illumining the ten directions like the rising full moon.

20. Later on, in that heavenly car, (he saw) two prominent gods in the prime of their youth. They were four-armed of dark complexion and with eyes (beautiful) like red lotuses. They were richly attired, and were adorned with crowns, pearl necklaces, armlets and beautiful ear-rings. They stood leaning against their maces.

21. Comprehending them to be the attendants of Hari (the God of excellent renown), he stood up (to show respect). Forgetting the due procedure of worship in the hurry of that (agitated) moment, he folded his hands uttering the names of Hari, as he thought them to be the chief attendants of Viṣṇu (the slayer of the demon Madhu).

22. Sunanda and Nanda, the esteemed servants of Viṣṇu (the lotus-navelled god) approached him (Dhruva) who had concentrated his mind on Kṛṣṇa's (Viṣṇu's) feet; had folded his palms and bowed down his neck in humility.

Sunanda and Nanda said :

23. Oh King! May you be extremely blessed! Your honour, who, while yet a child of five, had pleased the Lord by your penance, listen to our speech attentively.

24. We both are the attendants of the God with the Śārṅga bow (Viṣṇu) who is the sustainer of the whole world. Both of us have arrived here for taking you to the Lord's abode.

25. You have successfully attained to the region of Viṣṇu which is extremely difficult to secure, and to which sages, (the *saptarṣis—Ursa Major*) not being able to reach, merely look up from below. Now occupy that place round which (luminous bodies like) the Moon, the Sun (and other luminaries), planets, constellations of stars and (independent) stars go, keeping it to their right.

26. Dear (Dhruva), take your abode in the realm which has never been occupied by your forefathers. That highest region of Viṣṇu is adorable to all worlds.

27. Oh long-lived one, you should now ascend this excellent aerial car, despatched to you by Viṣṇu who is the foremost among persons of meritorious renown.[57]

Maitreya said:

28. Having heard the extremely sweet (honey-dripping) words of the two prominent deputies of Lord Viṣṇu, Dhruva, the beloved devotee of Viṣṇu[58], took his bath, performed his daily auspicious duties, paid his obeisance to sages and received their blessings.

29. Having circumambulated that excellent heavenly car, he worshipped it. He bowed down to both the attendants of Viṣṇu. Assuming a form brilliant like gold, he desired to get into the car.

30. At that time, when the son of Uttānapāda (Dhruva) saw that the god of Death had come, he placed his foot on the head of that god (of Death)[59] and mounted that wonderful aerial mansion.

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57. *uttama-śloka*.

58. *Urukrama* : Viṣṇu, so called because in the Vāmana incarnation he took very long strides to occupy the three worlds from Bali.

59. ŚR. narrates the episode thus: When Dhruva was about to enter that heavenly car, the God of Death arrived there, bowed to him and

31. At the very moment, drums and musical instruments like Paṇava, etc. were sounded. Prominent Gandharvas sang his praise. Showers of flowers fell on him from above.

32. As he was about to fly to the heavenly regions, Dhruva suddenly remembered his mother Sunīti, (saying to himself), 'How am I to proceed to the inaccessible celestial region, leaving my poor mother behind?'

33. Having understood this wish of Dhruva, the two excellent gods showed to him the brilliant queen-mother Sunīti—going ahead of him, in an aerial car.

34. At every stage on way, Dhruva was being showered with flowers and praised by gods seated in their heavenly cars; and he went past planets, one after another.

35. Then he (Dhruva) who was blest with an eternal position, went by the *devayāna* path (or by the celestial car sent to him by the Lord), beyond the three worlds and the astral positions of the seven sages (*Ursa Major*), and reached the abode of Viṣṇu which lies beyond them.

36. It (Viṣṇu's abode) shines brilliant by its own splendour. It illuminates these three worlds (the earth, the heaven etc.) by its light. The people who are not compassionate unto living beings never attain to this realm. Only those who always perform auspicious deeds, reach there.

37. Those who are of tranquil mind, who look upon all beings as equals, whose minds are cleansed of all sins and impurities (like *rajas* and *tamas*), who are pleasing to all beings, who look upon Acyuta (Viṣṇu) as their dear relative—those easily reach the abode of Viṣṇu.

38. In this way, Dhruva, the son of Uttānapāda who was solely devoted to Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), became as if a refulgent crest-jewel of the three worlds.

39. Oh Vidura (descendant of Kuru)! Riveted to this (Dhruva's) post, the whole group of heavenly luminaries revolve round it ceaselessly, just as (pairs of) bullocks tied to a post in the middle of the threshing ground, go round with great speed (for threshing out the corn by trampling).

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requested him to accept him. Dhruva welcomed him, requested him to sit down for a moment; and remembering Lord Viṣṇu placed his foot on the head of that God (Death) and accended into the heavenly car.

40. Having seen the great glory of Dhruva, the venerable sage Nārada, playing on his lute, sang the (following) verses at the sacrificial session of Pracetas:

Nārada said:

41. Despite their knowledge of the means, Brāhmaṇa sages, the expounders of Vedas, are not able to reach the attainment secured by the dint of his austere penance, by Dhruva, the son of Sunīti who looked upon her husband as god. How can then, kings attain to it?

42. As a child of five, he went to the forest with his heart afflicted by being wounded with the arrow-like words of his stepmother. Abiding by my advice, he conquered i.e. won the favour of the unconquerable Lord who is overpowered only by the excellent qualities of his devotees.

43. Can an ordinary Kṣatriya on the earth even imagine to reach after many years to the exalted position occupied by Dhruva who, as a child of five or six years, secured it by propitiating Lord Viṣṇu within a few days?

Maitreya continued:

44. I have narrated to you everything that you asked me here about the life-story of Dhruva of excellent fame—the life story which is held in high regard by the righteous.

45. If heard and recited, it (Dhruva's life story) leads to wealth, glory and longevity; it is meritorious and brings in great auspiciousness; it helps to attain to the celestial region and to reach even the eternal abode; it leads to godhood; it is extremely praiseworthy, and cleanses all sins.

46. By constantly listening with faith and devotion the lifestory of Dhruva who was dear to Lord Acyuta (Viṣṇu), devotion unto the Lord will be engendered, which will lead to the destruction of all miseries.

47. Here this story is a sacred fountain of greatness for those who seek it. When it is heard, virtues like good-naturedness generate in the listeners. Those who desire bravery and splendour get it developed (in them by listening to it). It bestows respectability on the noble-minded (listeners who aspire after it).

48. One should recite both in the morning and in the evening, the glorious life, with a concentrated attention, of Dhruva of sacred glory, in the assembly of the Brāhmaṇas.

49-50. Or one who resorts to the sacred feet of Hari, should narrate to the faithful (audience, the life of Dhruva) on the full-moon day or the new moon day, the twelfth day of a fortnight or when the moon passes by the constellation of stars called Śravaṇa or on *dina-kṣaya* or on (the astronomically inauspicious *yoga* called) the Vyatipāta, or on the Saṅkramaṇa day (when the Sun crosses the sign of the zodiac) or on Sundays. He should cherish no desire and be self-contented; thereby he attains Liberation.

51. Gods bestow favours on the merciful man who is helpful to the afflicted and who imparts this knowledge (which is like) nectar in the pathway to God, to persons who are ignorant of the Truth.

52. Oh Vidura (the foremost descendant of Kuru), I have narrated to you this biography of Dhruva who is well-known for pious deeds, and who, as a child, abandoned his toys and mother's house, and resorted to Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN*

(Dhruva's descendants : King Aṅga's Abdication)

Sūta said:

1. After listening to (the account of) Dhruva's ascension to the Vaikuṇṭha region as described by Maitreya, Vidura

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* Chs. 13-15 give the following genealogy of Dhruva —

Bhrami = Dhruva = Ila

- Kalpa
- Vatsara (Svarvithi)
  - Puṣpārṇa (and others, 6 sons in all)
    - Vyuṣṭa (and others, 6 sons in all)
- Utkala

whose devotion to Lord Viṣṇu (Adhokṣaja) was intensified, proceeded again to make further queries.

Vidura said:

2. Oh strict observer of religious vows (Maitreya)! Who were those Pracetasas? Whose children were they? To whose familyline were they known to belong ? Where did they have the sacrificial session ?

3. I regard Nārada as a great devotee of the Lord, and as one who has directly realized the Almighty. It is he who has expounded (in the Pañcarātra Āgama) the *Kriyā-Yoga* (Yoga of practical devotion), in the form of the detailed procedure of worshipping Hari.

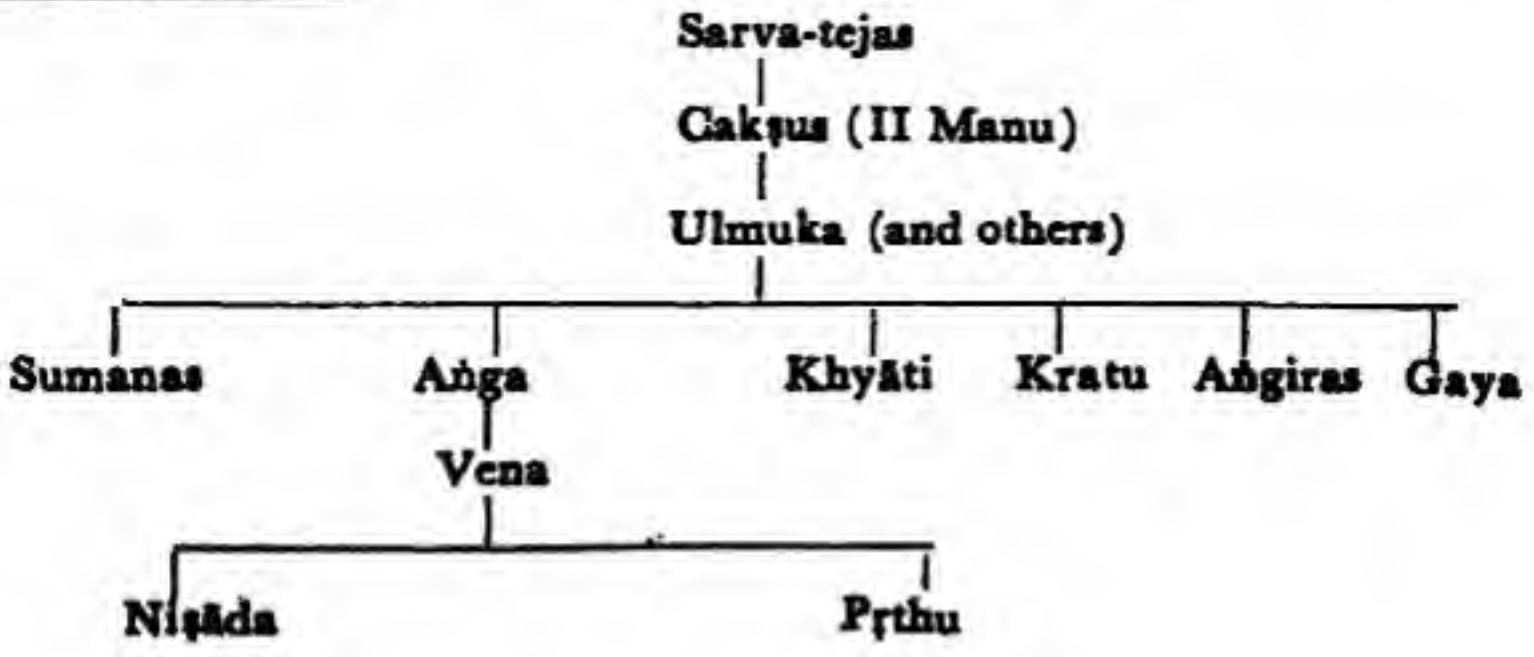
4. They say that while the Lord, the presiding deity of sacrifices, was being worshipped (by performing sacrifice) by men (Pracetasas) who were devoted to their righteous duties, Nārada, who was full of devotion, extolled him.

5. Oh Brahman, you should please narrate to me in details, all the stories of the Lord which have been related there, in that sacrifice by the divine sage (Nārada), as I long to hear them.

Maitreya said :

6. When the father (Dhruva) retired to forest, Dhruva's (eldest) son Utkala did not wish to ascend the imperial throne and to enjoy the imperial glory.

7. From his very birth, he was of tranquil mind, unattached and of impartial outlook. He saw his Soul as pervading the world and the world abiding in his Soul.



8-9. By the fire of the uninterrupted practice of *Yoga*, Utkala had burnt down all the impurities of the past actions in his mind. He realized that the individual Self is the same as the tranquil Brahman in whom all differences dissolve and disappear, and who is the embodiment of the joy of pure knowledge, absolute bliss, existing everywhere. Knowing thus his own real Self, he ceased to perceive anything different from it.

10. To ignorant persons on the road, he (outwardly) appeared to be a stupid, blind, deaf, mad or a dumb man, though (in reality) he was mentally not like any of these. He was like a fire that had ceased to send out flames.

11. Considering him to be a dull idiot, the elders of the family along with the ministers, coronated the younger brother Vatsara, the son of Bhrami, as the ruler of the earth.

12. Svarvīthi, the beloved wife of Vatsara, gave birth to six sons, viz., Puspārṇa. Tigma-ketu, Iṣa, Ūrja, Vasu and Jaya.

13. Puṣpārṇa had two wives—Prabhā (Day-light) and Doṣā (Night). Prātar (morning), Madhyandina (Mid-day) and Sāyam (Evening) were the sons of Prabhā (Day-light).

14. Pradoṣa (night-fall or the first part of night), Niśītha (Midnight) and Vyuṣṭa (Dawn or the late part of the night) were the three sons of Doṣā (Night). Vyuṣṭa begot from (his wife) Puṣkariṇī a son called Sarva-tejas.

15. He got from his wife Ākūti a son, Cakṣus the Manu (after Svāyambhuva Manu). Manu's queen Naḍvalā gave birth to (twelve) simless sons.

16. (They were) Puru, Kutsa, Trita, Dyumna, Satyavat, Ṛta, Vrata, Agniṣṭoma, Atirātra, Pradyumna, Śibi and Ulmuka.

17. Ulmuka begot through his wife Puṣkaraṇī six excellent sons by name Aṅga, Sumanas, Khyāti, Kratu, Aṅgiras and Gaya.

18. Sunīthā, the wife of Aṅga, gave birth to the strong-willed (but wicked) Vena. Disgusted with his (Vena's) wickedness, the royal sage left his capital (and retired to the forest).

19. Oh child (Vidura)! The sage whose words were (destructive) like thunderbolt, got enraged and pronounced

a curse on him. (As a result of the curse he fell dead). They churned again the right hand of his dead body.

20. When there was no King, in that period, the subjects in the world, were troubled by robbers. Then Pṛthu, the first Lord of the earth (so called as he was the first founder of cities, habitations etc.) was born embodying in him an *aṁśa* or portion of Nārāyaṇa.

Vidura said :

21. How is it that the high-souled, pious king, who was a treasure-house of virtues and so friendly to Brāhmaṇas got such wicked progeny, that he had to leave his capital in sadness and grief.

22. Or for what offence did the sages, who were well-versed in Dharma-Śāstra, directed their curse against King Vena, who had vowed to punish the evil-doers.

23. As the king, in the capacity of the protector of his subjects, possesses the energy and the splendour of (Indra and other) world-protectors, in his own superior glory, he should not be disrespected by the subjects, even though he be at fault.

24. Oh Brahman, as you are the foremost among the knowers of *para* and *avara*[60], please narrate to me, a devout devotee, the deeds of the son of Sunīthā.

Maitreya said :

25. The royal sage Aṅga performed a great Horse-Sacrifice (Aśvamedha). But in that sacrifice, the deities though invoked by the priests well-versed in the Vedas, did not turn up (to receive their share of the sacrificial offerings).

26. Then the sacrificial priests who were wonder-struck told the sacrificer (King Aṅga), "the deities do not accept the sacrificial oblations though poured into the fire."

27. "Oh King, the materials for oblations are unpolluted and pure and have been devoutly procured by you. The Vedic incantations are not inefficacious, since they are chanted and used by persons of steadfast vows.

60. *para* and *avara* : Variously interpreted as 'past and future', Parmātaman and products of Prakṛti, etc.

28. We do not know if the slightest disregard is shown to gods here (in this performance of sacrifice) as a result of which gods who witness the performance of this sacrificial act, do not partake of their share of oblations".

Maitreya said :

29. Hearing the words of Brāhmaṇas, the host, the performer of the sacrifices, Aṅga became deeply grieved. With the permission of the members of the assembly, he broke his silence in order to ask them the reason of the non-acceptance of oblations.

30. "Oh Members of the sacrificial assembly ! Here (in this sacrifice) deities even though invoked, do not attend. Nor do they accept their cups of Soma. Be pleased to tell me what censurable act has been committed by me."

The Leaders of the Assembly spoke :

31. Oh King, there is not the slightest sin committed by you so far in this life. There is however one sin of your previous life on account of which you are thus issueless.

32* Oh King, the Lord, the enjoyer of sacrifices, when worshipped, will vouchsafe a son to you who are so desirous to have one. Try that way to have good progeny. May God bless you.

33. If Lord Hari, the presiding god of the sacrifices himself, is directly invoked by you for a child, all sacrificial deities (the residents of heaven) will automatically accept their respective share of oblations.

34. Hari confers upon men (his devotees) whatever desires are cherished (and sought) by them. The attainment of the desired objects, however, depends upon the manner (and devoutness) of the worship (of the Lord)."

35. Thus resolved, the Brāhmaṇas offered *puroḍāśa*[61] to Viṣṇu in the form of *Śipiviṣṭa*[62], for securing progeny to that king.

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* With a view to ensuring that deities should be pleased to accept oblations from you, you should try to secure a child to you. — ŚR.

61. *Puroḍāśa* — a sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in a *kapāla* or vessel. ASD. 341.

62. *Śipiviṣṭa* (i) 'One who has entered the sacrificial animal (the beast to be sacrificed) in the form of Sacrifice'. ŚR. quotes a Śruti

36. From that sacrifice arose a person adorned with gold necklace and clad in immaculate garments, bringing with him in a gold vessel ready made *pāyasa* (rice boiled in milk).

37. With the assent of the Brāhmaṇas the generous-minded King accepted the boiled rice in the hollow of his folded palms, smelt it and gave it to the queen joyfully.

38. Having eaten that food which had the efficacy of creating a male child, the issueless queen varily became pregnant from her husband, and in due course of time gave birth to a son.

39. Since his childhood, the boy was attached to his maternal grandfather Mṛtyu who inherited a portion of Adharma. Hence he became unrighteous.

40. Taking up his bow and wandering as a hunter in the jungle, this wicked boy killed innocent deer. Hence people (after seeing him) would cry out "This is Vena"[63] (the tormentor).

41. This extremely ruthless, hard hearted boy used to slay violently like beasts, boys of his own age playing on the playground.

42. Seeing that his son was so wicked, and finding that he (the king) was not successful in disciplining him in spite of different kinds of punishments, the king became sorely dejected at heart.

43. (He thought) 'Most probably the householders who are issueless must have worshipped god for they are spared the unbearable agony caused by a wicked child.

44-45. Indeed what wise man will think highly of the embarrassing bondage called (his own) son if he brings evil reputation (to his father) among men and implicates him in serious unrighteousness, if he creates conflicts with all and causes unending mental torture (to his father) making his home-life full of distress.

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which means that Viṣṇu resides in the sacrificial animal as the spirit of the sacrifice. This form of Viṣṇu is invoked in the sacrifice specifically performed to get a son. (Putra-kāmeṣṭi).

(ii) Or: from whom rays are emanating—VR.

63. ŚR. derives the name from *vyā* — 'to harass' or 'to make others full of anxiety.'

46. (In a way) I regard a bad child preferable to a good child as it is a cause of many sorrows. And a man gets disgusted with his home which is full of troubles.

47. The king who was thus dejected at heart, could not get any sleep. At midnight he got up and leaving Vena's mother asleep[64] and unnoticed by other men, he departed from the palace abounding in prosperity.

48. When the subjects, royal priests, ministers, friends and relatives of the king learnt that the king had departed in disgust, they became overwhelmed with excessive grief. They searched for him all over the world (without success), just as Yogins on the wrong path do in search of the unmanifest Supreme Man hidden in their heart[65].

49. Being unable to trace any trail of the king and having thus failed in their attempts to do so, the subjects returned to the capital. Bowing to assembled sages, they reported with tearful eyes the disappearance of their king, oh Vidura (discendant of Puru).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(*The Story of Vena : Pṛthu's Birth*)

Maitreya said :

1-2. Bhṛgu and other sages who were solicitous about the well-being of the people, saw that men are reduced to brute-level at the time of anarchy. Those sages, well versed in the Vedas, invited Sunīthā, the mother of the hero (Vena), and coronated Vena as the Lord of the Earth, even though he was not approved by ministers or people.

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64. ŚR. thinks that the king disguised himself while Vena's mother was sleeping.

65. ŚR. states that the king was somewhere in the town while they were searching for him outside all over the world.

3. Having heard that Vena, the very high-handed iron ruler, had ascended the throne, robbers hid themselves immediately like rats afraid of a serpent.

4. After occupying the king's place he who became proud and self-conceited, regarded himself invested with the powers of the eight protectors of the world automatically, and contemptuously treated the great sages.

5. He, who thus became blind with pride, and haughty like an elephant uncontrolled by goads, mounted his chariot and wandered over the earth shaking heaven and earth.

6. With the sound of drums, he promulgated everywhere, "Oh Dvijas, you shall never perform worship, and shall give no donations and shall not perform sacrifices". Thus he prohibited religion everywhere.

7. The sages, seeing the ill-behaved conduct of Vena, and considering the public calamity, assembled at a sacrificial session and said.

8. "A great danger has arisen to people from both sides—from robbers and the king, like (that to ants who find themselves in the middle of) a piece of wood burning from both sides.

9. This unworthy prince was made a king on account of the fear of anarchy. But today danger has arisen even from him. How can the welfare of beings be ensured ?

10-11. Vena who is born from the womb of Sunīthā, is hereditarily wicked. Just as the nourishing of a snake with milk is dangerous even to the man who so feeds it, Vena who has been appointed as the protector of the subjects verily desires to destroy them. Let us (however) persuade him (to behave properly) so that his sin may not touch us.

12-13. Despite our full knowledge of Vena's wicked conduct and sinfulness, we made him the king. If, in spite of our gentle persuasions, that unrighteous fellow does not abide by our words of advice, let us burn him by our spiritual power, although he is already burnt by the reproach of the people". Having decided thus, the sages, concealing their anger, approached that Vena, and pacifying him with conciliatory words, spoke.

Sages said :

14. "Oh Great King ! Please note that what we propose to urge for your consideration will, Oh child, increase your longevity, prosperity, power and glory.

15. Righteous duty (*Dharma*) practised in thought, word, deed and understanding, bestows on ordinary people worlds which are free from sorrows and the eternal abode (*Mokṣa*) to those who perform it without any attachment (to its fruits).

16. Oh brave king, let not your *Dharma* (duty) of ensuring security and well being of the subjects, be neglected (and lost) by you. For when it is lost (disregarded), the king falls from his rulership.

17. Oh king, a king who protects his subjects from wicked ministers and from thieves (and other miscreants) and takes revenue (from them as prescribed in *Śāstras*), leads a happy life.

18-19. Oh illustrious King ! The Lord creator of all beings, the Soul of the universe is pleased with the king who obeys his commands, and in whose kingdom and capital city, the glorious presiding deity of the sacrifice is worshipped according to their *dharma*, by persons who follow the duties of their respective *Varṇa* (social class) and *āśrama* (stage of life).

20. What is unattainable, when the Lord of the rulers of the worlds (e.g. god Brahmā etc.) is pleased ? For all the worlds along with their protecting deities devoutly offer worship to him.

21* Oh King ! It behoves you to approve of, and be

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* VR.: The Lord controls all worlds, their presiding deities and sacrifices which lead to the attainment of godhood. He is the embodiment of hree Vedas which explain what .is and is not the righteous duty (*dharma*). The Vedas prescribe both the ways of sacrifices and of penance. It is for the sake of your Liberation or prosperity that the inhabitants of your country perform different kinds of sacrifices. You should therefore follow their example.

SD.: You should direct the inhabitants of your country to perform their respective duties—the inhabitants who according to their abilities of the *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* type, worship the Lord who protects all the worlds, gods and sacrifices, and who is the embodiment of three Vedas which give the knowledge of sacrifice, and who is the sacrificial materials and the penance, the knowledge leading to Liberation. It is thus that you will get prosperity here and Liberation hereafter.

conciliatory to the inhabitants of your country[66] who, for your prosperity, worship, by performance of various sacrifices, the Lord who is the Controller of all worlds, gods and sacrifices—the Lord who is the embodiment of three Vedas and of all sacrificial materials, and who is the object of penance.

22. Oh brave king, if gods who are parts (*aṁśas*) of Hari, are properly worshipped and well-propitiated by performance of sacrificial sessions by the twice-born Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas and Vaiśyas, they will confer whatever is desired by you. It is not, therefore, proper to disrespect them (by prohibiting sacrificial and religious performances).

Vena said :

23. Verily, all of you are foolish. You regard non-righteousness (*adharma*) as righteousness (*dharma*). What a pity ! Abandoning the husband who gives you means of subsistence, you wait upon a paramour.

24. Those fools who disregard the supreme Lord in the form of a king, do not obtain any good either here or hereafter.

25. Who is this *Yajña-puruṣa* (the presiding deity of sacrifices) for whom you cherish such (intense) devotion like characterless women who, being absolutely devoid of love for their husbands, cherish it for their gallants.

26-27. Gods like Viṣṇu (the protector of the universe), Brahmā (the creator of the world), Śiva (the destroyer of the universe), Indra, Vāyu (Wind), Yama (god of death), the Sun (-god), the rain-god, the god of Wealth (Kubera), the Moon (-god), the (presiding deity of the) Earth, the Fire (-god) and Varuṇa (the Lord of Waters)—these and other gods who are competent to confer boons or pronounce curses reside in the person of the sovereign ruler. The Monarch is thus the embodiment of all gods.

28. Therefore, Oh Brāhmaṇas ! Being free from jealousy, you worship me with your religious rites. Give me all

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66. *svadeśān* : (i) The persons whom you command — the sacrificers. VR. (ii) The Brāhmaṇas on whom donations or gifts are conferred —VJ.

your offerings (taxes etc.). What other person than me, deserves to be propitiated (honoured) for it ?

Maitreya said :

29. Even though so humbly entreated, the wretched sinner was of such a perverted mind and had gone so astray on the wrong path, that he did not accede to their supplications, for he had lost all auspiciousness.

30. Oh Vidura ! When he, priding himself as very learned, insulted these twice-born (Brāhmaṇas), and spurned their request made in the interest of the public good, the Brāhmaṇas got angry with him.

31. "Let him be slain; let this wicked fellow of terrible nature be killed. If he lives (any longer), he will soon reduce the world to ashes.

32. This shameless fellow vilifies Viṣṇu, the Supreme Deity of Sacrifices. This man of wicked conduct does not deserve the exalted seat of a monarch.

33. Or who else other than this base unlucky Vena alone, will revile Viṣṇu after attaining to such sovereignty over world through His grace."

34. With their rage flared up, the sages who thus decided to slay him, killed by their hissing (*huṃ*) sound, Vena who was already dead by his vilification of god Viṣṇu (Acyuta).

35. When the sages departed to their hermitages, Sunīthā who was full of grief, preserved the dead body of her son by means of incantations (mantras) and medicines.

36. Once upon a time, those sages, having performed ablutions in the Sarasvatī, and after offering oblations to the sacrificial fire, were sitting on the bank of the river, talking about the stories of the Lord.

37. Observing the appearance of terrible ill omens striking terror into the world, they (wishfully) said : "May no evil befall the protectionless earth from robbers".

38. While sages were thinking thus, there arose in all directions clouds of dust from the rushing of the thieves and miscreants who ran amuck plundering (wherever they went).

39. They came to know that the serious trouble to the

world was caused by those free booters who plundered the wealth of the people, and by those who tried to kill each other, as the king (Vena) was dead.

40. When anarchy prevails, the state becomes weak and the country is infested with robbers. Though they (sages) were powerful enough to control, they did not check the people as they saw the evil (involved therein).

41. "Even if a Brāhmaṇa who should view all beings equally and should be tranquil, neglects (to protect) the afflicted, his penance leaks away like water filled in a pot with a hole.

42. The race of the royal sage Aṅga should not come to an end, as it is in this family that there were many kings of unfailing prowess, yet completely dependent on Keśava (Viṣṇu)".

43. Having resolved thus, the sages churned forcibly the thigh of the deceased king. Therefrom appeared a dwarf-fish man.

44. He was black as crow, had very short limbs and small arms, protruding chin, short legs, flat nose and blood-red eyes and red hair.

45. To him who bowed to them, and meekly asked them, "What I should do", they asked him to sit down (*niṣīda*). Therefore, Oh Vidura, he became *niṣāda* (by tribe).

46. As soon as he was born, he took upon himself the heinous sins of Vena. His descendants the *naiṣādas* took refuge in mountains, jungles, etc.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(Birth of Pṛthu and his Coronation)

Maitreya said :

1. Thereupon, a couple (a boy and a girl) was born from the arms of the sonless king, when they (the arms) were being churned by the Brāhmaṇas.

2. Having seen the birth of the couple, the sages who were well-versed in the Vedas, became highly pleased to know that it was an *aṁśa* (portion or digit) of the glorious Lord and spoke.

Sages said :

3. This (Pṛthu) is a manifestation of that *aṁśa* (portion) of Lord Viṣṇu which protects the world[67]. This (girl) is the portion and incarnation of Goddess Lakṣmī who is never disunited from the Supreme Man (Viṣṇu)*.

4. As to this male child, he will be the first and foremost among kings, the enhancer of their glory. As his fame will spread far and wide, he will be known as Pṛthu, the great king.

5. And this beautiful, resplendent lady with finely set teeth who is the ornament of ornaments and virtues, will be called Arcis and will be Pṛthu's consort.

6. It is with the object of protecting the world that this *aṁśa* (portion) of direct Hari himself, is born. And this is verily the Goddess Lakṣmī who is inseparable from him and ever (absolutely) devoted to him.

Maitreya said :

7. Brāhmaṇas eulogised him; the foremost among the Gandharvas sang (his glory); Siddhas poured down showers of (heavenly) flowers; the celestial damsels danced.

8. The heavens were reverberating with sounds of musical instruments like conchs, trumpets, timbrels and drums. There assembled all the gods, sages and *pitṛs* (manes) of all grades.

9-10. With gods and kings of gods, Brahmā, the father of all the worlds, arrived there. Observing the mark of Viṣṇu (the wielder of the mace) on (Pṛthu's) right palm, and the lotus-mark on the soles of Pṛthu's feet he concluded that he (Pṛthu) is verily the part (*kalā*) of Viṣṇu; for he on whose

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67. *Viṣṇoḥ kalā* : (i) The special *āveśa* type of *avatāra* — VR.
(ii) Who was filled with the presence of Viṣṇu.—VJ

* Here ends Ch. 14 of the Bh.P. as per VJ.'s text. Some texts omit ses 2 and 3.

palm the *cakra* (discus) mark is uncrossed by any other line, is the *aṁśa* (portion) of the Lord.

11. His coronation ceremony was commenced by Brāhmaṇas who were well-versed in Vedas (and expert in the Vedic rites and rituals of the ceremony). From all directions, people brought all the materials necessary for the coronation ceremony.

12. Rivers, seas, mountains, snakes, cattle, birds, beasts, deer, the sky, the earth and all beings brought tributes to him.

13. When the emperor, arrayed in excellent royal robes, and richly adorned with ornaments, was thus installed, along with the well-adorned queen, consort Arcis, he shone like another Fire-god.

14. Oh warrior, Kubera (the god of wealth) brought to him an excellent throne of gold; Varuṇa (the Lord of Waters), a royal umbrella radiating moon-white rays and dripping with water;

15. Vāyu (the Wind-god) presented him two *chowries* (special types of fans made of the tufts of hair on the tails of particular kinds of wild cows); Dharma, a garland, the very embodiment of glory; Indra (the King of gods), an excellent crown; Yama (the god of death and controller of the world), a sceptre to govern the world.

16. God Brahmā bestowed upon him an armour of Vedic incantations (or Vedic knowledge); the goddess of learning, an excellent necklace; Lord Hari, the Sudarśana disc, and his consort Lakṣmī, undiminishing prosperity and affluence.

17. Rudra gave him a sword engraved with ten moon-like marks, while Pārvatī, gave him a shield bearing the marks of a hundred moons; the Moon-god presented him immortal, indefatigable, undaunted horses made of nectar, while Tvaṣṭṛ gave him extremely artistic and beautiful chariot.

18. The Fire-god gave him a bow made from the horns of goats and oxen; the Sun-god supplied him with his solar-ray-like arrows. The earth presented him sandals with mystic (Yogic) powers; and the sky, an ever fresh flower garland.

19. The demigods that move through the sky bestowed on him the arts of dancing, vocal and instrumental music, and

the mystic power of vanishing. The sages gave him their never-failing efficacious blessings, and the Ocean-god, a conch born from him.

20. The oceans, mountains and rivers gave the high-souled King roads of communications by chariots. Then bards (Sūtas) minstrels (Māgadhas) and heralds (Bandins) began to sing his panygeric.

21. Knowing their intention, Pṛthu, the chivalrous son of Vena, laughed and spoke to them in a voice deep like the thunder of clouds.

Pṛthu said:

22. Oh Sūta ! Oh Māgadha ! Oh gentle *Bandin* ! What is the basis of your panygeric of me whose qualities are yet to be manifested in the world ? You should address it to me when my merits will be acknowledged by the public. Your words of praise in my case should not prove untrue.

23. Oh bards of sweet words ! Therefore, after a lapse of some time (when we perform some exploits worth singing), you may compose as many panygerics about my glory as you like. But when praise-worthy attributes of Lord Hari of excellent glory are there for glorification, good people do not eulogise ordinary (contemptible) men (like me).

24. What man with the capability of acquiring high merits will allow the bards to sing of qualities that are actually non-existent in him ? The dullard who fools himself that those (non-existent) virtues may be manifest in him (later), does not see that he becomes thereby a butt of public ridicule.

25. Really competent persons and illustrious persons abhor the praise, (even though they possess the qualities so praised, and are known for them). Truly modest and noble-minded persons shrink from the praise of their uncomplimentary show of valour.

26. Oh bard ! We are still unknown in this world for the performance of any exploit. (As we have not performed any great deed which can be extolled), how can we, like fools, allow you to sing of our glory.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(The Eulogy of Pṛthu by Bards)

Maitreya said :

1. The bards were satisfied at heart by hearing his nectarlike words. Being urged by sages, they began to extol the king who was speaking thus.

2. We are competent to describe fully your glory as you are the Supreme God who have incarnated in this world by your Māyā (power). The intelligence of even masters of speech (like god Brahmā and others) has been perplexed in describing the exploits of you who are born from the arms of Vena.

3. We are, however, devoutly interested in the nectar-like stories of Pṛthu, of glorious renown, who is an incarnation of an *aṁśa* (part) of Hari. We are instructed by sages. We broadcast far and wide the praiseworthy deeds, according to the instructions of the sages.

4. This (king Pṛthu) is the foremost among the upholders of religion. He makes the people act according to *Dharma* (righteous path). He is the protector of the established institutions of religion and morality. He is the punisher of those who are antagonistic (to religion).

5. (Though) he is one, he bears in his person the bodies (i.e. the powers and functions) of the guardians of the world from time to time, as per needs (of the situation) for the public good, both here and hereafter.

6.* He is impartial to all beings. This mighty monarch collects taxes and tributes at proper times, and releases (the fund) at the opportune time (like famine etc.), just as the bright Sun (evaporates the waters in the summer and returns it as showers of water in the rainy season).

7. The behaviour of the king is like the goddess of the earth. The compassionate son of Vena (i.e. Pṛthu) always bears the faults of the distressed beings, though they may encroach upon him.

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* From this verse onwards the king's execution of the functions of the eight protectors of the world (*lokapālas*), is described.

8. He is veritable Hari who has assumed the body of the king. When the rain-god withholds showers of rain, he would like Indra, easily protect the subjects whose life was in danger.

9. He pleases the world with his moon-like face—the embodiment of nectar—beaming with charming smiles and brightened with affectionate looks.

10. His ways are inscrutable; his acts are secret and unsurmisable; his intentions are too deep to be comprehended; he strictly guards his wealth; he is the sole receptacle of infinite greatness and innumerable excellent attributes; like Varuṇa, the Lord of Waters, Pṛthu's true nature is unfathomable (hidden from the public view).

11. He is (like) the fire born from (the friction of) the *araṇi* (piece of Śamī wood) in the form of Vena (for he was born after churning Vena's arm). He is (even mentally) unapproachable to his enemies. His overwhelming power is irresistible by his enemies. Though he be near, he is as if at a great distance (as he is well-guarded by his security force) It is impossible to overpower him.

12. Though he sees the overt and covert activities of human beings through his intelligence service (spies), he behaves as if he is indifferent (to praise or blame). He is thus like the vital air, the Soul that witnesses, as if unconcerned, the inner and outer activities of all.

13. He is so firmly established in the path of *dharma* (royal duties) that he never punishes anyone if he does not deserve punishment even though he be the son of his personal enemy; and that he would punish his own son, if found guilty (and worth punishing).

14. His unchallenged *cakra* (sway, march of his army or the path of his chariot) extends from the *Mānasottara* mountain[68] to all regions where the Sun-god shines by his rays.

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68. *Mānasottara*. — A hill of Puṣkaradvīpa to the east of Meru. Devadhānī, the city of Indra and other cities are there; like the wheel of an oilmill, the wheel of Sūrya's chariot is said to rotate on the hill as its axis (PI.2. 686), A.B.L. Awasthi's identification of this mount with the northern portion of Mānasādri, the neighbouring hill overlooking Mānasa lake (*Studies in Skanda Purāṇa*, p. 198) is purely conjectural.

15. He will delight and bring happiness to all people by his acts. It is on account of his acts of promoting happiness (and welfare of the people) that his subjects will call him *rājan* (lit. one who pleases, i.e. the king).[69]

16. He is firm in his vows; true to his words; a friend of Brāhmaṇas (who are devoted to the studies of Vedas); a servant of aged people; the shelter of all beings; paying respect (where due) and kind to the afflicted.

17. He shows the same regard and respect to other women as he would to his mother. He treats his wife as if she were half of his own person. He is affectionate to his subjects like a father. He behaves (respectfully) like a servant, to those who are well-versed in the Vedas.

18. He is most beloved to all creatures as if he was their own Self. He enhances the delight of his friends and well-wishers. He is especially attached to the company of those who are free from worldly attachments. He wields his rod of punishment against the evil-minded (miscreants).

18A*. By dint of his great personal power, he will make the good earth produce all the plants (as one milks the cow). He will make this earth flat by the end of his bow.

19. But really he is directly the Supreme Lord himself who has incarnated by his *kalā* (portion, part)—the Supreme Lord who governs the three worlds; is the unchangeable perpetual inner controller of all beings; even the apparent multiplicity created in whom by nescience is rendered subs-tanceless (and unmeaningful) when he is realized.

20. This matchless warrior, the King of kings, is the sole protector of the sphere of the earth, from the *Udaya* mountain with a bow in hand, and seated in his triumphant chariot, he will go round the earth from right to left, just as the Sun does.

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69. Cf. *Yathā prahlādanāccandraḥ pratāpāt tapano yathā |*
Tathaiva so'bhud anvartho rājā Prakṛti-rañjanāt ||

Raghuvaṁśa. 4.12

* This verse is included here, being authenticated by VR., VJ., SD. and BP. who have commented on it. It is found in the Southern recension of the Bh. P. But ŚR., RR., VD. GS. and GD. have ignored it in their comments.

21. Kings, as well as the guardians to the quarters of the world, will certainly pay tribute to him at every place. Their queens will regard this first king as Lord Viṣṇu (the god whose weapon is *cakra*—discus), and sing of his glory.

22. This King of kings, the protector of subjects with a view to providing means of livelihood to his subjects, will milk the earth in the form of a cow. Like Indra, he will break down the mountains with the point of his bow, and level the earth as if in a sport.

23. Twanging his irresistible *ājagava* bow in the battle, when he, like a lion with his tail erected, traverses the earth, the evil-doers will hide themselves in all directions.

24. He will perform a hundred horse-sacrifices (*aśvamedha*) at the source of the river Sarasvatī. While the last sacrifice will be performed, Indra (the performer of hundred *aśvamedha* sacrifices) will steal away his sacrificial horse.

25. He will meet the venerable Sanatkumāra alone in the garden of his palace. He will propitiate him (Sanatkumāra) with devotion. He will get from him the pure knowledge which leads one to attain to the Supreme Brahman.

26. Wherever he will go, Pṛthu, of celebrated glory and enormous prowess, will hear various songs and ballads and praise based on his[70] exploits.

27. His *cakra* (sway, army, wheels of his chariot) will be unobstructed and unchallenged. After conquering all the quarters of the earth, he will remove the evil-doers of the world by his heroic lustre. He will be the supreme master of the world whose great glories will be sung by the chiefs of gods and demons."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(Pṛthu subjugates the Earth)

Maitreya said:

1. King Pṛthu, the illustrious son of Vena, who was thus eulogised for his excellent attributes and exploits, satisfied

70. *ātmāśrita* : pertaining to Viṣṇu (ŚR.).

those bards by honouring them with gifts as desired by them and by appreciating them.

2. He honoured all the classes of people of whom the Brāhmaṇas were foremost, and also his servants, ministers and family priests, the citizens as well as the rural public, various trade guilds and other prominent subjects.

Vidura asked :

3. Why did the goddess of the earth who can assume multifarious forms assume the form of a cow? When Pṛthu milched her who became the calf and what was the milk-pail ?

4. How is it that he levelled the goddess of the earth who was by nature uneven ? For what purpose did the god Indra carry off his sacrificial horse ?

5. Oh Brāhmaṇa (Maitreya) ! To what state did the royal-sage attain after getting initiated in the knowledge of the Brahman and its personal experience[71] from the venerable Sanatkumāra, the best among the knowers of Brahman ?

6-7. I am a votary devoted to you as well as to Lord Kṛṣṇa (Adhokṣaja). Your honour should narrate to me many other deeds of Lord Kṛṣṇa of sanctifying glory, connected with the account of his former manifestation as Pṛthu. Kṛṣṇa in the form of Pṛthu has milched this cow in the form of the earth.

Sūta said :

8. When he was thus urged by Vidura to narrate the story of Vāsudeva, Maitreya, who was pleased with him in mind, praised him and replied.

Maitreya said :

9. Dear child (Vidura) ! When Pṛthu was coronated and was called as the protector of the public, the subjects with their bodies emaciated with hunger due to barrenness of the earth, approached Pṛthu, the protector and appealed.

10. "Oh King ! We are oppressed by the gastric fire

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71. *Jñānaṁ savijñānam* — In B.G. III. 41, Śaṅkara explains *jñāna* as 'knowledge of the self and other things acquired from the scriptures and the teachers' and *vijñāna* as 'the personal experience—*anubhava* of things so taught'.

just like the wood with fire in its hollow. Today we have approached you for shelter, as you are installed as our king who will provide us with means of livelihood, and are worthy of seeking asylum.

11. Oh King of kings! You are verily the protector of the people and the bestower of the means of livelihood. Therefore, while we have not perished from starvation, Your Majesty should endeavour to supply food to us who are famished with hunger."

Maitreya said :

12. Oh great Kuru ! Having listened to the heart-rending lamentations of his subjects, Pṛthu contemplated deeply for a long time, and at last came to perceive the cause of the scarcity.

13. By his reasoning power he came to the conclusion (that the earth had held up the seeds of herbs, plants and food-grains within herself). Being indignant, he took up his bow and fitted an arrow on it aiming at the earth, just as the enraged destroyer of Tripura (Śiva, did against Tripura).

14. When the earth saw the king with his weapon uplifted, she began to tremble. She assumed the form of a cow and in terror began to run fast like a terrified female deer chased by a hunter.

15. The enraged son of Vena, with eyes blood-red with wrath, and with the arrow fitted to his bow, chased after her whithersoever she ran (for shelter).

16. Running to all the directions (cardinal points) and intermediate directions (e.g. South-east, South-west etc.), to the heaven and the earth and in the space between them, the goddess Earth saw him chasing her everywhere with uplifted weapon.

17. Just as people do not get protection from death, she did not get any asylum in the world against Pṛthu, the son of Vena. Terrified, she returned with a troubled heart.

18. And she spoke to the illustrious king, "Oh Knower of Dharma ! you are kind to the afflicted. Determined as your majesty is on the protection of creatures, protect me as well.

19. Such as you are, why do you intend to kill me who am afflicted and innocent ? How could a person who is regarded as expert in (the niceties of) Dharma, strike women ?

20. Oh King ! Beings (people) do not at all strike the females even though they have committed an offence. Much less would persons like you who are merciful and compassionate to the helpless, do so, Oh King.

21. How can you support yourself and these subjects of yours on the surface of (cosmic) waters after destroying me—a strong boat wherein the whole universe is established ?"

Pṛthu said :

22. "Oh Earth ! I want to kill you as you disobey my commands—You partake of your share in the sacrifices, but you do not yield us wealth.

23. It is not that punishment is disapproved in the case of a wicked cow which every day eats fodder but does not yield milk from her udders.

24. You are dull-witted. You have confined in yourself the seeds of plants etc. created already by god Brahmā. You do not allow them to grow, thus you set me at nought.

25. I shall pacify the afflictions of these subjects who are famished with hunger and are distressed, with your flesh cut down by my arrows.

26. To kill a vile self-conceited fellow—whether a man, a woman or an impotent person—who is merciless to others, is no killing at all, in the case of kings.

27. You are obstinate, arrogant and have assumed a false form of a cow. Having shattered you to sesamum seed like pieces with my arrows, I shall support these subjects by the dint of my Yogic power."

28. The earth began to tremble. She bowed to him who like the god of death[72] bore a form which was wrath incarnate, and spoke to him with folded hands.

The Earth-goddess said :

29. "I pay my obeisance again and again to the Supreme Man who manifested his various forms by his Māyā (power),

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72. ŚR. explains that the body of the god of death is not made of anger.

and appears to be composed of the (three) *guṇas*, though (in reality) by the realization of his essential nature; he has been ever free from the waves of love, hate (etc.) born of *ahaṁkāra* (his false identification) with regard to matter (*adhibhūta*), action (*adhyātma*) and the agent (*adhidaiva*).

30. That Supreme Being, the very Creator who created me as the abode of all *jīvas* (living beings) and as the support of the four classes of creatures composed of the *guṇas* of Prakṛti, has come, with uplifted arm, to strike me down! To whom else can I resort now for shelter?

31. He who, at the beginning of creation, created this world of mobiles and immobiles by his supra-logical Māyā Power which rests on him (for support) is said to be now ready to protect it by dint of the same Power. Devcted to righteousness (and its promotion) as he is, how does he desire to kill me?

32. The Almighty, though one, appears as many on account of the other, i.e. the Māyā Power. He created god Brahmā and made him evolve the universe. Alas, the intention of the Lord cannot at all be fathomed by people whose minds are distracted by the invincible Māyā.

33. I bow to the Highest Person, the Creator (of the world) who manifests and withdraws his powers (suitable for the occasion or purpose), and who brings about the creation (preservation and destruction) of the universe by means of his potencies in the form of substance (i.e. five gross elements—*mahābhūtas*), action (senses and deities presiding over sense-organs), the principle of intelligence (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahaṁkāra*).

34. Oh birthless Almighty! It is Your Majesty who as the primeval Boar verily lifted me up from the waters of *Rasātala*, with the intention of establishing the world created by you and consisting of five gross-elements, sense-organs and the inner organ (the heart).

35. Today that very Boar (the upholder of the earth) has appeared as the hero (Pṛthu) who desires to protect his subjects who have resorted to me as on board a ship on the surface of the waters. Your Majesty whose arrows are terrible, certainly desires to kill me for the sake of milk.

36. Oh Warrior! The intention of sovereign rulers (like

you) is certainly not comprehended by people like us, whose paths of minds are deluded by the Māyā which creates the universe consisting of three *guṇas*. I pay my respects to those kings who bring glories to all."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(*Milking of the Earth (in the form of a Cow)*

Maitreya said :

1. Having thus praised Pṛthu whose lips were quivering through rage, the goddess of the earth steadied her mind herself (by her reasoning and will power) and addressed the king again, although she was afraid (of him).

2. "Oh King ! Please control your wrath completely.[73] Please consider what I tell you. For like a bee, a wise man takes the essence from everything.

3. Expedients for the accomplishments of the welfare of men in this world as well as in the next, have been discovered and employed by the sages who have realized the truth.

4. Anyone belonging to the later periods, who properly and with faith adopts the measures demonstrated by the ancients, easily accomplishes his objectives.

5. Even if a learned person,[74] disregarding those expedients adopted and tested successfully by the ancients, tries to accomplish those objectives in his own (independent) ways, his objects are never realized, despite his frequent efforts and experiments.

6. Oh King ! It has been observed by me that the herbs and plants which were produced by god Brahmā formerly, were being enjoyed by the wicked who did not undertake religious observances.

7. When I was left unprotected and uncared for by rulers of the people like you (i.e. Vena and other ordinary kings), and when the world was infested with thieves, I swallowed up those herbs and plants (to preserve them within me) for the performance of sacrifices.

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73. Restrain your anger so as to offer me protection (ŚR.).
74. If the text is read as *avidvān*, 'one who in his ignorance' etc. (ŚR.).

8. Due to a lapse of a long period, those plants and herbs within me have become diminished and weak. You should, therefore, try to take them out by some expedient known to be effective in such matters.

9-10. Oh mighty-armed hero ! Oh protector of creatures ! If Your Lordship desires (to provide) nutritious food coveted by creatures, please arrange for a calf, a suitable vessel (milk-pot) and a milk-man competent to draw (my) milk, so that, being full of affection, I shall yield for you all your desired objects in the form of milk, Oh warrior.

11. Oh mighty king ! Make me a level plain so that the waters showered by god Indra may stand on me, even after the rainy season is over. God may bless you."

12. Accepting the agreeable and wholesome words of advice of the goddess of the earth, the king made (Svāyambhuva) Manu as the calf, and milked all the herbs and plants (such as cereals etc.), in his own hand.

13. Similarly, other wise men also extracted essence of everything everywhere. Then others (fifteen including sages) drew out their desired objects from the cow (earth) tamed by Pṛthu.

14. Oh most righteous Vidura ! Then the sages made Bṛhaspati, the calf and drew from the goddess (earth) milk in the form of the holy Vedas, into their own sense-organs (viz. ears, speech and mind).

15. The gods made Indra a calf, and extracted in a vessel of gold Soma-juice, and (nectarine) milk giving mental vigour, splendour, energy and physical strength.

16. (The demonic tribes) Daityas and Dānavas made Prahlāda, the foremost among the Asuras, as the calf, and milked from her wine and decoction (spirituous liquors) in a vessel of iron.

17. (The celestial *artistes*), Gandharvas (heavenly musicians) and Apsaras (heavenly nymphs) made Viśvāvasu the calf, and extracted the milk in the cup of lotus-flower and it became the special Gāndharva honey giving sweetness of voice and beauty.

18. The venerable manes (Pitṛs), the presiding deities of the Śrāddha ceremony performed in memory of the departed

souls, made Aryaman (the head of the Pitṛs) as the calf, and reverentially drew milk in an unbaked earthen vessel and it became *Kavya* (food for the manes).

19. The Siddhas (Semi-divine beings) made Kapila the calf, and extracted in the vessel of the sky the eight superhuman powers (*Siddhis*) exercisable by mere will. The Vidyādharas (a tribe of demigods) drew the milk in the form of the art of moving through the sky (in the same vessel with Kapila as the calf).

20. Others (such as *Kimpuruṣas*, a semi-divine tribe) noted for their power of conjuring tricks (*māyins*) made Maya the calf and got from her, magical powers possessed by wonderful beings who can become invisible at will.

21. The Yakṣas and Rākṣasas (demonic beings), Bhūtas and Piśācas (ghosts and fiends) who feed upon raw flesh made the Lord of ghosts (Rudra) as the calf, and extracted in a skull the wine of blood.

22. In the same way, hoodless reptiles, scorpions, serpents and snakes made Takṣaka (the chief of Nāgas) a calf, and drew poison as the milk, in their mouths as the vessels.

23-24. Herbivorous beasts made the bull of Rudra the calf and drew grass as their milk, in the vessel in the form of the jungle. The carnivorous beasts with big tusks and feeding upon raw meat, with the lion (the king of beasts) as the calf, drew in (the vessel in the form of) their body flesh (as their milk). The birds who used Garuḍa (the chief of birds) as the calf, had mobiles (like worms and insects) and immobiles (life fruits) for their milk.

25. With the Banyan tree as the calf, the trees extracted their own respective juices as the milk. Mountains had the highest (mountain) Himālaya as the calf and milked various minerals (as their milk) in (the vessels in the form of) their ridges.

26. All species of beings used their own chiefs as the calf and extracted severally in their own vessels the milk specifically useful as food to their own species, from the earth which yielded all desired objects when she was tamed by Pṛthu.

27. Oh Vidura (son of the Kuru family)! In this way, Pṛthu and others who subsisted on food obtained from the earth

different kinds of milk in the form of their specific food, using different kinds of calfs and milk-pots.

28. Thereafter Pṛthu, the lord of the earth, was highly pleased with the earth-goddess who yielded all desired objects, and affectionate as he was to daughters, he regarded her as his daughter, out of paternal affection.

29. The mighty son of Vena, the king of kings, crushed to pieces mountain-peaks with the ends of his bow and made the surface of the globe of earth almost level.

30. The illustrious son of Vena was a father unto his subjects, as he provided them with means of livelihood. He then constructed on the earth, at different places, suitable houses for them.

31. He founded a number of villages, towns, cities, forts and castles of different types. He built abodes for cowherds and cowpens and planned camping grounds, quarries. He provided agricultural habitations and hamlets on hillsides.

32. Before the time of Pṛthu, there was no such planning and construction of cities, towns etc. in this world. During his reign subjects began to live comfortably at various places (in rural and urban areas) with a sense of security.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

(Pṛthu's Conquest)

(Pṛthu's Horse-sacrifices and Conflict with Indra)

Maitreya said:

1. The king (Pṛthu), thereupon, consecrated himself with the intention of performing one hundred horse-sacrifices at Brahmāvarta, the land of Manu, where the Sarasvatī flows towards the east.

2. Anticipating that Pṛthu would excel his record performance of sacrifices, glorious Indra grew jealous of Pṛthu's grand festival of sacrifices.

3. In that festival of sacrifices, the glorious Lord Hari, the Soul of all beings, the revered father of all the world, and

the ruler of the universe, was perceived directly as the Lord of the sacrifices by all.

4. He was accompanied by Brahmā, Śiva and protectors of the world along with their followers. His glories were being sung by Gandharvas (celestial musicians), sages and troupes of Apsaras (heavenly nymphs).

5-6. Semidivine beings like Siddhas and Vidyādharas, Daityas, Dānavas, Guhyakas and others and Lord Hari's prominent attendants headed by Sunanda and Nanda, Kapila, Nārada, Datta and the great masters of Yoga like Sanaka and others—all devotees of the Lord who were eager to serve the Lord, accompanied him.

7. Oh descendant of Bharata (Vidura)! In that sacrifice the earth which supplies the materials for oblations in the sacrifice acted as a wish-yielding heavenly cow, and gave as milk, all the objects desired and required by the sacrificer Pṛthu.

8. The rivers flowed flooded with all kinds of sweet juices like those of sugarcane, grapes etc. as well as with milk, curds, food, ghee and butter-milk. Trees of gigantic dimensions which oozed out plentiful honey bore fruits abundantly.

9. The oceans brought to him heaps of precious stones as tributes; mountains, four kinds of food; all people along with their protectors[75] paid tributes to him.

10. The mighty Indra grew jealous of this great prosperity of Pṛthu who regarded god Viṣṇu as his Master, and created obstacles in his way (to sabotage his scheme of hundred horse-sacrifices).

11. While Pṛthu, the son of Vena, was propitiating Viṣṇu, the Lord of Sacrifices, with the last (hundredth) horse-sacrifice, the jealous Indra carried away the sacrificial horse, himself remaining invisible.

12. The venerable sage Atri noticed him hurrying through the sky in the disguise of a heretic who mistakes unrighteousness for righteousness and the guise served him like an armour.

13. As directed by Atri, the son of Pṛthu, who was a great warrior, pursued Indra to kill him, and shouted to him in rage "Halt ! Halt".

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75. *lokapālāḥ*—Protectors of the world like Indra—GD.

14. Seeing Indra in that sage-like form with matted hair and body besmeared with sacred ashes, the son of Pṛthu thought him to be Dharma (piousness, religion) incarnate, and did not (feel disposed to) shoot an arrow at him.

15. When the Prince returned without killing Indra, Atri urged him again to slay him, saying, "Oh child, kill this great Indra, who is the meanest of gods as he had obstructed your father's sacrifice".

16. Thus incited (by Atri), the son of Pṛthu, got furious and chased Indra who was fleeing through the sky as Jaṭāyu[76] (the king of vultures) pursued Rāvaṇa.

17. The King of the Heaven (Indra) gave up his own form and the sacrificial horse and disappeared. Taking with him his own sacrificial horse, the hero (Pṛthu's son) returned to (the place of) his father's sacrifice.

18. Witnessing his miraculous deed, the great sages conferred on him the (significant) epithet *Vijitāśva* (conqueror of the horse), Oh Lord (Vidura) !

19. The mighty Indra created very thick darkness under the cover of which he stole again the horse tied with a gold chain from the sacrificial post with the circular wooden ring called *caṣāla* on its top.

20. Atri (again) pointed out Indra hurrying through the sky. But the warrior (Pṛthu's son) did not molest him as he was carrying a human skull and *Khaṭvāṅga* (a club with a skull at the top) in his hands (like a Kāpālaka).

21. Being urged by Atri, however, he indignantly fixed an arrow (on the bow) aiming it at Indra. The king of heaven (Indra) gave up the sacrificial horse, and his guise (as Kāpālika) and stayed invisible.

22. Taking the horse with him, the hero (Pṛthu's son) returned to (the place of) his father's sacrifice, while people of poor understanding accepted the censurable guise assumed (and left) by Indra.

23. Whatever forms were assumed by Indra with the in-

76. *Jaṭāyu*—A son of Aruṇa and Gṛdhrī; king of vultures and younger brother of Sampāti. He tried to prevent the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa, and was killed by Rāvaṇa's treachery. His funeral was performed by Rāma.

tention of carrying away the consecrated horse, were the marks of sins. Here the word *khaṇḍa* is used in the sense of "mark".

24-25. In this way while carrying away the horse with the intention of interrupting Pṛthu's sacrifice, Indra assumed and abandoned deceitful disguise of nude ascetics (Digambara Jainas), red-robed ascetics (Buddhists) and others (such as Kāpālakas). Minds of men, through their misapprehension (of the true teachings of the Vedas), are generally attracted to these pseudo-religious sects as the true religion, as they are charmingly presented with excellent eloquence.

26. When the illustrious king Pṛthu of great prowess learnt this, he got infuriated. He took up his bow and aimed an arrow at Indra.

27. Finding that Pṛthu was determined to kill Indra and appeared of irresistible vehemence and terrible to look at, the sacrificial priests prevented him urging, "Oh highly intelligent and wise king, it is not proper to kill anything else here (at the sacrifice) except the consecrated beast (as enjoined by Vedas).

28. By the force of Vedic incantation of undiminished power, we shall now invoke (and forcibly bring) Indra, the Lord of Maruts who has interrupted your object (of performing this sacrifice) and has lost his glory by your high reputation. Oh King, we shall then forcibly offer your enemy as an oblation to fire."

29. Oh Vidura ! Having thus addressed Pṛthu, the master of the sacrifice, his sacrificial priests, with the ladle (*Sruc*) in their hands, indignantly proceeded to pour oblations in the sacrificial fire, when the self-born god Brahmā appeared and prevented them (from doing so saying).

30. "Indra whom you wish to kill by means of the sacrifice, should not be killed. For Indra designated as Yajña is the manifestation of the Almighty Lord (himself), and gods whom you offered oblations are (mere) forms of Indra."

31. Oh Brāhmaṇas ! consider this great violation of Dharma (leading to propagation of heretic sects) perpetrated by Indra who desires to interrupt the king's performance of the sacrifice. (He may again encourage heretic doctrines to the detriment of the world.)

32. Therefore may Pṛthu who has performed ninety-nine sacrifices be more famous than Indra" (Brahmā then addressed to Pṛthu) : "As Your honour knows the path leading to Liberation, the sacrifices which you have so magnificently performed are enough.

33. May you be blessed (despite the non-completion of this sacrifice). Both you and Indra are the embodiments of Viṣṇu of excellent renown. Hence, it is not proper to cherish anger against the great Indra who is your own self.

34. Oh great king ! Please do not worry about this (interruption or non-completion of the sacrifice). Listen to our words with respectful attention. The mind of the person who contemplates to accomplish what has been frustrated by the Fate, certainly gets extremely infuriated and enters blinding darkness of delusion[77] (and does not get peace).

35. Let this sacrifice be stopped now for there is obstinacy in gods.[78] It is here (due to this sacrifice) that Dharma was violated by heretics created by Indra.

36. Have a look at these people who are being enticed away by attractive heretical doctrines propagated by Indra who maliciously plotted against your sacrifice and stole away the sacrificial horse.

37. Oh son of Vena ! You are a part of Viṣṇu incarnated on this earth now from Vena's body to protect the religion[79] of the people suitable to the present times—religion that declined by the misdeeds of Vena.

38.* Oh sovereign ruler of the people ! Such a ray of

77. v.l. *mano'ti-kaṣṭam* : The mind falls into the darkest hell. This suggests both the reason and undesirable consequences of such attempts against the gods.—VJ.

78. You should give up your prejudice against gods, for the gods, if enraged, will obstruct rainfall and famine will devastate the land.—VJ.

79. Religious tenets based on Vedas and orthodox philosophic systems like Sāṁkhya, Yoga etc.—ŚR.

* VJ. differs : As you have incarnated yourself for the protection of religion, you should consider that your performance of the intended hundredth sacrifice will be an insult to Indra (Prajāpati) and as such you should not perform it. You should completely fulfil the desire of Indra that you should not complete the hundredth horse-sacrifice. Taking into account the all-round auspicious effects of not opposing Indra's will, you

Viṣṇu as you are, you consider the origination of the universe[80] and fulfil the purpose of the proginators of the world (like Bhṛgu and others who created you.) Oh Lord ! destroy the formidable heretic path—the illusion created by Indra which is the source of pseudo-religious sects".

Maitreya said:

39. Being thus advised by Brahmā, the creator of the world gave up his insistance on the performance of the hundredth sacrifice, adopted a friendly policy to Indra, and made peace with him.

40. Those gods who were propitiated in the sacrifice and were disposed to confer blessings bestowed boons upon Pṛthu who had performed many auspicious deeds including the concluding ablution (*avabhṛtha*) at the end of the sacrificial session.

41. Oh Vidura ! The Brāhmaṇas whose blessings were efficacious, and who were faithfully paid the sacrificial money and honoured, became satisfied and pronounced their blessings on the first monarch (Pṛthu).

42. Oh mighty-armed king ! All the manes (*Pitṛs*), gods and sages who were invited by you, have attended and have been worshipped by you paying proper respects and gifts."

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obey the desire of the creator of the universe (viz. myself) that you should perform only ninety-nine sacrifices. By this sacrifice or religious conduct you should destroy the formidable heretic path which is the illusion created by Indra—a source of pseudo-religious creeds.

80. VC. and SD. interpret *bhava* as the 'good' of the universe.

CHAPTER TWENTY

(Pṛthu initiated by Viṣṇu)

Maitreya continued :

1. Even the glorious Lord Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu), the all-pervasive Master and Enjoyer of sacrifices, was highly pleased with sacrifices (performed by Pṛthu). (Manifesting himself) along with Indra, he addressed Pṛthu as follows :

The Lord said :

2 This (Indra) has verily caused obstruction to your hundredth sacrifice. (As) he is begging apology for the same, you should (now) pardon him.

3. Oh King ! The best ones among men who are highly intelligent and righteous, cherish no illwill against creatures (even though) they have offended them, inasmuch as the physical body (so offended) is not the Soul (Hence the irrelevance of retaliation).

4. If persons like you are deluded by divine Māyā, service of elderly people (rendered by you) for a long period, has turned out to be mere fruitless labour.

5. A wise man who has realised that this body is the product of *avidyā* (ignorance about the real nature of the Self), *kāma* (desire) and *karma* (actions of the previous life), cherishes no attachment for it.

6. What wise man who has no attachment to his body will cherish a feeling of mineness to house, offspring or even wealth produced by the body?

7*. The Self (*ātman*) is a changeless one, pure, self-luminous, free from *guṇas*, the substratum of the attributes (of

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* GD. draws a clear contrast between Self (*ātman*) and the body in his com. as follows:

This Soul is different and distinct from the physical body. The Soul is one while bodies are many. The Soul is pure while the body being composed of five elements (*bhūtas*) is impure. The Soul is self-effulgent, self-luminous, while the body is dull, dead. The Soul is beyond *guṇas* but the body is the product of *guṇas* and hence dependent on them. The Soul is the substratum of *guṇas*. The Soul is all-pervasive while the body is limited (by spatio-temporal relations). Due to its all-pervasiveness the

knowledge, bliss etc.), omnipresent (and hence) unveiled by anything, (a detached) witness, and possessing no other Soul,[81] and distinct from the body[82] (which, in contrast with the Soul, changes with childhood, youth and age; is impure, unintelligent; is constituted of *guṇas* and dependent on *guṇas* which produce it; is limited, covered over by houses etc., and is an object of sight; and possesses a Soul distinct from it).

8. The man who thus knows the Soul abiding in him, is established in me. Though he dwells within (the domain of) Prakṛti, he is not affected by its attributes.

9. Oh King! He who, possessed of deep faith (in me) and with no desire of any fruit, always worships me according to his prescribed religious duties (according to his *Varṇa* and *āśrama*) gets his mind gradually purified.

10. When he gets serenity of mind, he becomes unassociated with *guṇas* (worldly objects), and attains pure vision (true knowledge). He enjoys eternal peace, and the absolute Brahmahood which is a state of unconcernedness and equipoise like me.

11. He who realizes this Supreme unchangeable Soul to be quite unconcerned though presiding over the material body,

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Soul is uncovered while the body being of limited dimensions can be covered with dress. The Soul being consciousness by nature and witness to all, is a seer, but the body being a dead material is subject to perception. The Soul is void of another Soul, mind (inner organ), while the body is the receptacle of the Soul. In this way the knowledge of the identity of *jīva* (individual Soul) and *Īśvara* (God)—knowledge which is a means to liberation is explained.

(2) VR. explains the concept of Soul held in the *Viśiṣṭādvaita School*:

The Soul which resides in different types of celestial human or subhuman bodies is one, due to his inherent knowledge which is one (common). He is pure while the body is filthy. He is self-luminous, free from qualities like love, hate, the Seat (substratum) of attributes like knowledge, bliss. Though he is atomic he is all-pervasive due to his knowledge of *dharma* etc. He is not covered by environments such as house, dress etc. He is a direct seer (of his own body, sense-organs) but the body is an object of perception possessing qualities like love, hate, coverable (by clothes etc.). The Soul enters the body and sustains it and while the body is the object to be so sustained. Hence it is distinct from the body.

81. *nirātmā*—Having no controller superior to him.—VJ.

82. *anātmanaḥ paraḥ*—Superior to and distinct from *jīvas* who are devoid of good attributes—VJ.

the sense organs of cognition and action and the mind, attains the highest bliss.[83]

12. *Saṁsāra* (cycle of birth and death) which is a product of the *guṇas* (of *Prakṛti*) pertains to the *liṅga śarīra* (subtle body) which consists of subtle elements, subtle conative and cognitive sense-organs and their presiding deities and the mind —the reflection of *ātman*. That body is distinct from the Soul. Learned persons who are deeply attached to me are not affected by pleasure or pain, while experiencing prosperity or adversity.

13. Oh valiant King ! Being equally undisturbed by pleasure or pain, looking upon the excellent, the middling and the vilest as equals, and having subdued all the sense-organs and the mind, you carry out the duty of protection of all the world with the cooperation of all the people (ministers etc.) appointed by me.

14. Protection of the subjects is the only way to the final beatitude in the case of a king, as he obtains in the next world one sixth of the meritorious acts performed by his subjects. But if he collects only taxes and does not protect his subjects he loses his own merits and becomes responsible for the sins of his subjects.

15. (Considering this) if you are mainly devoted to the righteous duty (*dharma*) as approved by the foremost Brāhmaṇas and handed down by tradition and if you are completely detached from (the *puruṣārthas* like) *dharma* (*artha* and *kāma*) you will protect this earth and will be their beloved king. In a short while, you will see Siddhas (like Sanaka, Sanandana) who will come to visit you.

16. Oh ruler of men ! Ask for whatever boon you like from me. I am bound to you on account of your virtues and character. I am not easily available by the performance of sacrifices, austere penances or by *Yoga*, as by nature I like to dwell with those who are even-minded and look upon all as equals."

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83. v.l. *abhayam*—Liberation (*Mokṣa*).

Maitreya said :

17. Thus advised by the All-pervading god Viṣṇu, the preceptor and the Lord of the universe, Pṛthu, the conqueror of the world respectfully received Hari's command with his head.

18. He affectionately embraced Indra (the performer of hundred sacrifices) who, being ashamed of his own act, was touching his (Pṛthu's) feet (to beg his pardon), and gave up enmity with Indra.

19. Thereupon the venerable Lord (Viṣṇu), the Soul of the universe, was offered worship by Pṛthu who clasped his lotus-like feet with overflowing devotion.

20 The god whose eyes were like petals of lotus and who is a well-wisher and friend of pious saints, was about to leave. But looking at him (Pṛthu), he lingered on to confer his grace, and did not depart.

21. The first monarch (Pṛthu) could not see Hari as his eyes were full of tears. Nor could he speak as his throat was choked with tears. With folded hands he stood, embracing Hari in his heart.

22. Then wiping out his tears, he beheld with unsatisfied eyes the Supreme Man who stood before him touching the ground with his feet[84] and placing His palm on the elevated shoulder of Garuḍa (the enemy of serpents). Pṛthu spoke to him (as follows).

Pṛthu said:

23. Oh Omnipresent Lord ! From you—the Supreme Lord of gods like Brahmā who can confer boons on others—what wise man would seek for boons craved after by persons dominated by ego (*ahaṁkāra*), the product of *guṇas* (or enjoyable to those who regard the material body as Self). Oh bestower of Mokṣa (Liberation), I do not seek them as they are available even to embodied beings in Hell, Oh Lord.

24. Oh Lord ! I do not desire even that Mokṣa (final

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84. Normally gods do not touch the earth with their feet. This action of Hari indicates that he was so overwhelmed to shower his grace on Prthu that he forgot himself and touched the ground with his feet—ŚR.

beatitude) (if there be no opportunity to taste) the honey from your lotus-feet, which surges from within hearts of great saints and oozes out of their mouths. Bless me with ten thousand ears for hearing your glory. This is the boon (I seek).

25. Oh Lord of excellent fame! The breath laden with small drops of the nectar of your lotus-like feet which issues from the mouth of great saints, restores the knowledge of the Self to false Yogins who have forgotten the Path of Truth. Hence enough of boons to us (as there is absolutely no possibility of us—devotees being affected by passions like love, hate etc. Bhakti comprises within it the bliss of liberation).

26. Oh Lord of excellent renown! If, by a lucky chance, one happens to listen even once, to your auspicious glory in the assembly of noble saints, how can an appreciator of virtues forget it—unless he is a brute. For the goddess Lakṣmī earnestly seeks your glory with a desire of assimilating those virtues (or concentrating in her all *puruṣārthas* or objectives of man's life).

27. Hence, being full of ardent desire, I would, like Lakṣmī (the lotus-handed goddess) be eagerly devoted to you, the Supreme most Person, the receptacle of all excellent attributes. May there be no jealousy[85] between us who are vieing with each other for the service of one and the same Lord, and have concentrated our minds on your feet alone.

28.* Oh Lord of the World! There may arise jealousy in the mind of Lakṣmī, the mother of the worlds, as we have

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85. As there was between Indra and myself for the performance of sacrifices—ŚR.

* (i) VR. gives an additional interpretation :

Oh Lord of the world! The fruit of sacred duties like sacrifices bestowed on us by Prakṛti the mother of the universe is unimportant and disastrous as it leads to Saṁsāra. But you are so magnanimous and kind to the poor and distressed that you do not see any wrong in it and you elevate that insignificant act of sacrifice yielding ordinary commonplace fruit to the dignity of the means leading to Mokṣa (Liberation). For such commonplace fruits are trifles to one who is satisfied in one's natural Self.

(ii) VJ. differs. The gist is as follows :

The danger that there would arise a quarrel between Pṛthu and Lakṣmī

a desire to share her work (of rendering service to you). However you who are compassionate to the poor and distressed, magnify (the value of) our insignificant services. Of what account (importance) is she (Lakṣmī) to you who are satisfied in your own natural Self.

29. (As you are kind to the poor and pitiable) pious persons (who are free from attachment) resort to you (even after attainment of knowledge). You are above the deluding effects of the *guṇas* of Māyā.[86] We do not know whether the righteous souls cherish any ulterior motive other than the act of remembrance and contemplation of the feet of the Lord.

30. That you addressed the words, "Seek a boon" to me who am your devotee, your words are, I think, deluding to the world. If the world is not bound by the cords of Your speech (Vedic injunctions) who could be so deluded again as to perform the usual (ritualistic) actions.

31.* Oh Supreme Lord ! An ignorant[87] man is indeed

(as is natural in common rivals) is not possible as both of them were devotees of the Lord :

Oh Lord of the universe ! There will be naturally an injurious rivalry among persons under ordinary kings. But there is no cause for such rivalry amongst us (Lakṣmī and myself). In our actions, viz. your worship, what we do is very little. You magnify it as you are compassionate to the poor. Conferring blessings even for a small act does not however mean that you change an atom-like insignificant act into a mountain.

(iii) VC. regards this a characteristic of a warrior-devotee. I shall face opposition with mother Lakṣmī. We desire to perform her work, viz. service of your feet. Let her rest on your bosom. As a son, I shall serve your feet. I am not afraid that Lakṣmī, as compared with me, is more ancient and great. But as you are kind to the weak and meek, you magnify our insignificant service. As I am confident of my power, I am not concerned with Lakṣmī's pleasure or displeasure.

86. From the minds of your devotees, you dispel the delusion caused by the *guṇas* of *Māyā*.—VR. and VD.

* (i) VR. : Being deluded by your Māyā, a person becomes devoid of true knowledge. If such ignorant person fortunately adores you and requests you for *artha, kāma* etc.—objects other than you,—he remains separate from you. This means, Oh Lord, you have compromised your own greatness. Just as a father guards the interests of his minor and ignorant child, you should do what is good for him (even without his request to do so).

(ii) VC. : You should not test your devotee by asking him to select a boon, for people are likely to select other material things. You should therefore, yourself do what is good for us according to you.

(iii) GD. : Oh Lord ! This ignorant person is separated from your real Self by your powerful Māyā. Hence he seeks from you son's property and other things. You further entice him by telling him to choose a boon, just as a father etc.

87. *abudhaḥ* : If the word be taken as *budhaḥ* the verse means : It is indeed by your Māyā that man is separated from you, his real Self.

separated from you—his real Self—by your Māyā. Hence he covets after something else (like *artha, kāma* etc.). Just as a father, of his own accord (without being requested by the child to look after his interests), looks after the good of his child, you yourself also should do what is good for us.

*Maitreya said** :

32. The Omniscient Lord who was thus eulogised by Pṛthu, (the first monarch of the earth) said, "Oh King ! May your devotion in me remain (constant). Fortunately, you have such a (firmly devoted) mind towards me, as would enable one to get over my Māyā which is so difficult to cross.

33. Therefore, Oh Protector of the People, you carry out my commands carefully. People who abide by my commands are blessed with happiness here and hereafter."

Maitreya said :

34. Having thus gladly received the deeply significant compliments of the royal sage Pṛthu (the son of Vena), and being worshipped by him, Acyuta (the imperishable Lord) blessed him (with his grace) and thought of departing.

35-36. Gods, sages, manes (Pitṛs), Gandharvas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Serpents, Kinnaras, Apsaras, men, birds and various creatures and the attendants and followers of Viṣṇu were regarded as Viṣṇu (The Lord of Sacrifices) and were honoured with devotion by respectful address, donation of wealth, folding of palms by the king—after which they departed.

37. Carrying away (as it were) the mind of the royal sage as well as that of his preceptor, Lord Acyuta (Viṣṇu) also returned to his own abode (Vaikuṇṭha).

38. Having paid obeisance to the Lord, the god of gods, who though unmanifest by his nature, (out of grace) revealed himself to Pṛthu and became invisible again, Pṛthu returned to his capital.

Hence even though he be wise or learned, he longs for other things (such as sons etc.).

* Verses 32 and 33 are not commented by ŚR but are annotated by VR., GD. and others.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

(Pṛthu explains Dharma to his subjects)

Maitreya said :

1-3. (Pṛthu retired to his capital city)—the city was decorated everywhere with wreaths of pearls and garlands of flowers, with silk drapery and decorative arches of gold, and with extremely fragrant incense (burning). Its streets and squares were besprinkled with water scented with sandal and *agaru* (agallochum). They were beautified with flowers, *akṣatas* (unbroken rice pigmented with red *kuṁkuma*), fruits, tender barley-shoots, parched grains of rice, and illuminated with lamps. It was adorned with plantain trees as well as with young arica plants laden with fruits and flowers, and was beautified with wreaths of tender leaves of (mango and other) trees.

4. His subjects, along with beautiful girls wearing bright gold earrings, went forward to greet him with lamps, materials of worship, and all other auspicious articles (such as curds) prepared (for the occasion).

5. In the midst of blowing of conchs and sounding of kettledrums and chanting of Vedic hymns (by Brāhmaṇas), the warrior who was untouched by pride, in spite of the singing of his eulogies, entered his palace.

6. The highly renowned king was honoured everywhere on his way. He (in return) honoured the residents of his city as well as his subjects from rural areas. He was pleased with them, and granted them the boons they liked.

7. Performing many such and other achievements, the most adorable king of great virtues and pious conduct, governed this globe of the earth. After establishing his pure reputation, he ascended to the highest abode (Vaikuṇṭha).

Sūta said :

8. Oh Śaunaka (Leader of the sacrificial assembly in the Naimiṣa forest)! Vidura, the great devotee of the Lord respectfully adored Maitreya, (the son of Kuṣīrava), who was eulogising the primal king's (Pṛthu's) worldwide renown of all excellent attributes which was glorified by highly virtuous people. He spoke to him (Maitreya, as follows):

9. Pṛthu who received adorations from all gods, and who bore in his arms the mighty and heroic lustre of god Viṣṇu wherewith he milked the earth (in the form of a cow), was coronated by Brāhmaṇas.

10. What wise man will not listen to the glories of Pṛthu on the remnants of whose valorous achievements, all the rulers of the world, the guardian deities and the people, still subsist to their hearts' content—Please, therefore, narrate to me in details his pious deeds.

Maitreya said :

11. Dwelling in the land (*doāb*) lying between the rivers—the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, Pṛthu enjoyed only those pleasures which came to his lot, as a result of the fruition of his past deeds, as he desired to exhaust (the stock of) his merit (and not due to addiction to pleasures).

12. His writ ran unobstructed everywhere. He wielded his sceptre (sovereignty) over seven island-continents[88]—with the exception of Brāhmaṇas and devotees of Hari (who was like their progenitor).

13. Once upon a time, he was consecrated for the performance of a great sacrifice. There assembled, Oh Vidura, a congregation of gods, Brāhmaṇa sages and royal sages.

14. When all the respectable persons were duly honoured according to their merits and positions, he (Pṛthu) stood up in that assembly, like the moon in the midst of stars.

15. He was tall with muscular long arms; he was fair in complcxion; his eyes were reddish like a red lotus; his nose was shapely; his countenance, beautiful. He was gentle in appearance; his shoulders were rounded. His rows of teeth and smiles were beautiful.

16. That powerful monarch had a broad chest, full, bulky loins, stomach shaped like a *pipal* leaf and beautified with three folds; his navel was deep and circular like a whirlpool, his thighs were like pillars of gold, and the fore part of his feet was slightly plump (elevated) and prominent.

88. They are : Jambu, Plakṣa, Śālmali, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka and Puṣkara.

17. He had fine, curly, dark and glossy hair on the head. His throat was (marked with three spiral lines) like a conch. He wore two costly silk garments, one around his waist and one around his upper part of the body.

18. Due to his sacrificial vow, he laid aside his ornaments. So the natural splendour of the limbs of his body became manifest. He looked dignified with (upper part of) his body covered with the skin of a black-antelope, and with Kuśa grass in his hand he had completed the prescribed religious acts (of that time).

19-20. He looked around with his calm, soothing, affectionate eyes. With a view to thrilling the assembly with joy, the Lord of the earth delivered the following address which was pleasant to hear, couched in beautiful figurative expressions, polished, deep in significance, unagitated and calm. He was, as if, briefly narrating, at that time, his own experiences for the benefit of all.

The King said :

21. "Oh members of this assembly, please listen to me. May auspiciousness betide you all righteous people who have come here. Persons desirous of knowing (the true nature of) Dharma—righteousness—should state (fully) their concept (of Dharma) before the righteous people. (Hence I speak out to you my concept.)

22. I have been installed here as a king to govern and dispense punishment (to anti-social elements), to protect the people, to provide them their means of livelihood, to control them severally within their respective spheres of duties.

23. May those regions which yield whatever one desires and which are reached—according to the knowers of the Vedas—by persons with whom (Lord Hari), the Witness of the previous deeds of all persons, is pleased, be attainable to me, by my performance of this duty.

24. The monarch who collects taxes without imparting instruction to his subjects in their respective religious duties, shares their sins only, and forgoes his own good luck.

25. My dear subjects ! You should, therefore, (continue to) perform your own righteous duties, fixing your mind on

god Viṣṇu, and remain free from jealousy. It will be in the interest of the subsistence of your king hereafter, as well as in your own. You would thereby be rendering a great favour to me.

26. Oh purehearted and sinless *Pitṛs* (manes), gods and sages, kindly give your hearty approval (to my request): 'May the doer, the preceptor and the consenter of any action share equally its fruit in the next world.'

27. Oh most worthy men, Mīmāṁsakas ! According to some (believers in God), there exists the Lord of sacrifices (the dispenser of the fruit of *karmas*). For here and in the next world, there are seen some rare regions full of moonlight (meant for enjoying pleasures), as well as bodies brilliant like moonlight (which are the mediums for enjoying worldly pleasures as a result of *karmas*).

28-29.* In the opinion of Svāyambhuva Manu, Uttānapāda, even of king Dhruva, the royal sage Priyavrata, my paternal grandfather Aṅga and such others, as well as that of god Brahmā and Lord Śiva, as also that of Prahlāda and even of Bali (whom Viṣṇu pushed down to subterranean regions), Gadādhara (Lord Viṣṇu) must necessarily be postulated as the dispenser of the fruit of *karmas*.

30.* With the exception of Mṛtyu's daughter's son (i.e. Vena) and others who are deluded about religion, and deserve to be pitied (lamented), others believe that there must be one common cause (i.e. God) who mainly dispenses the three *puruṣārthas* (viz. *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*), heavenly bliss and Liberation.

31. The relish and 'desire of serving the Lord's feet, increase with the passing of each day. Like the river (Gaṅgā) flowing out from his (Viṣṇu's) toe, this ever-increasing desire

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* These verses refute the view of Pūrva-mīmāṁsā (and that of other heretic doctrines attributed to Indra's Māyā) about the non-existence of God. The *karma* doctrine must be accepted to explain the variety and inequality in the world. Karma, by itself, is inert (*jaḍa*) and deities like Indra, Varuṇa are themselves dependent (*paratantra*). For the dispensation of the fruits of *karma* and for explaining inequality in the world, we must postulate an independent God possessing powers of doing, undoing and changing differently : *ataḥ svatantryeṇa kartum akartum anyathā-kartuṁ samarthena Paramaśvarena bhāvyam* /—SR.

to serve, washes off instantaneously the sins, accumulated through all the past lives, in the minds of people who are tormented with pains and afflictions.

32. A person who takes shelter at His feet, gets all the impurities in his mind washed off, develops special powers of non-attachment and self-realization, and does not return to *saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths) which brings with it all miseries.

33. With faith in sure achievement of your goal (Liberation) according to your capacity and merit, and without any hypocrisy, you worship him only—whose lotus-like feet yield all your desires—with (i.e. dedicating to him) all duties pertaining to your vocations, and with all the powers of mind, speech and body (i.e. performance of meditation, prayer and worship), and with duties (of your respective caste and stage of life—*varṇa* and *āśrama*).

34.* Though, by nature, he is pure knowledge and consciousness, and devoid of any attribute, he manifests himself here as sacrifice possessing innumerable attributes (or essential requirements etc. of sacrifice), such as rice (and other sacrificial materials), qualities (of things such as whiteness, blackness), actions (such as threshing, winnowing of grains), words (*mantras* used in sacrifices), purpose (for which acts are meant), the

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* (i) VC. : Verses 34 and 35 state that *karma* is essentially impure, inert (*jaḍa*) and *rājasa* (characterised by the *guṇa*, *rajas*). But if it is, devoutly dedicated to God, it is transformed into pure *sāttvic* nature, and yields fruit. Hence the author advises *karma* mixed with *bhakti* (devotion).

(ii) VJ.: This verse illustrates the term *Svakarmabhiḥ* in the previous verse (33). Nārāyaṇa described in *Ait. Up.* 1.1. is attained to by a righteous person who performs sacrifices of many kinds, and of many attributes (or requirements), such as materials (*puroḍāśa* etc.), qualifications viz. good heredity or birth from particular parents (of the sacrificer), actions i.e. Vedic incantations for gods like Indra, Agni, by the sacrificial priests, the interest of these gods in the sacrificer, and the characteristics of gods, e.g. Indra, holdidg a *Vajra* (or god Nārāyaṇa, the wielder of Sudarśana disc). By this sacrificial act, the mind gets purified, and the higher knowledge which terminates the *saṁsāra*, dawns on the sacrificer. It is by such deeds that Janaka and others attained final beatitude (B.G. 3.20).

(iii) SD : *Karmas* dedicated to God lead to God-realisation. God is devoid of bad attributes (*aguṇa*) and possesses innumerable auspicious attributes (*aneka-guṇaḥ*).

intention or object (of performing the sacrifice), the efficacy (of sacrificial materials so used), and means (by which the sacrifice is known, e.g. *agniṣṭoma*).

35.* Just as fire in (a piece of) wood appears as possessing all the characteristics (e.g. size, shape etc.) of the (piece of) wood, the Omniscient Lord (though essentially the Highest Bliss itself) appears as intellect or consciousness (which identifies itself with the external objects) in the body, which is a product of *Pradhāna* (Prakṛti or Primordial Nature), *Kāla* (the Principle of Time which sets in commotion or agitation the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*), *Vāsanā* (impressions unconsciously left on the mind by the past actions which give rise to pleasure or pain) and *dharma* (merit or demerit constituting the fate or *adṛṣṭa* of an individual) and manifests himself as the fruit of religious acts (e.g. a sacrifice).

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* (i) The previous verse identifies God with sacrifice. In this verse, the fruit of sacrifice is stated to be the manifestation of the Lord—ŚR.

(ii) **VR.** : This verse identifies the Lord with Jīva, the enjoyer of the fruit of *karma*, as well as the fruit of the act itself (*atha karma-bhoktṛ-jīva-rūpatvaṁ tat-phala-rūpatvaṁ cāha*). The Lord is the innerdweller (*antaryāmin*) of *jīvas*. As such, through the medium of *jīva*, he gets the experiences of external objects in relation to body (due to *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*, the theory of attributive consciousness of the Self). The body is the product of *Pradhāna*, *Kāla*, *Vāsanā* and *adṛṣṭa*. The Lord is hence regarded as the fruit of sacrifice, (such as Svarga). But despite these experiences, the Lord is not contaminated by the blemishes etc. of the *karmas*, just as fire appears to share the characteristics (e.g. length, curvature etc.) of the burning wood, (and yet actually it shares none of them).

(iii) **VJ.** : Nārāyaṇa, the Omniscient Lord enters Jīva who, having renounced everything, retains a formal relation with Jīva. The pious persons (*jīvas*) know that Nārāyaṇa is the fruit of the righteous acts, and the dispenser of the fruits as well, according to *Brahma Sūtra—phalam ata upapatteḥ* (3.2.39 acc. to *Madhva bhāṣya*).

(iv) **VG.** : God realization is the fruit of *karmas* dedicated to God. After such dedication of *karmas*, God, out of his grace, manifests himself. But this degree of god-realization varies directly with the intensity of faith, devotion, knowledge in the dedicated one's acts to the Lord, even as the fire differs with the quality of the wood like *sandal*, *agaru*, *khadira*. (The first two give out sweet fragrance while the last does not.)

(v) **GD.** : This All-pervading Lord who enjoys the experience of happiness of intellect—due to contacts of the objects to the body, is also realized to be the fruit of acts (such as sacrifice etc.)

36.* Oh! How blessed I am that my subjects of firm vows, always worship Hari by perfotming their prescribed religious duties in this world—God Hari who is the preceptor (or Father) and the Supreme Lord of divinities who receive oblations in sacrifices. These (subjects) render me great favour.

37.** At no time may the martial lustre of the ruling princely families, born of great military power and effluence, dominate over the race of Vaiṣṇavas, the votaries of the unconquerable god (Viṣṇu) and that of the Brāhmanas who (though lacking in opulence) are resplendent on account of their forbearance, austere penance and learning.

38. Even Lord Hari, the most ancient person, the foremost among the greatest (of gods like Brahmā) is gracious unto Brāhmaṇas. It is by paying obeisance to their feet that he got Lakṣmī (the goddess of wealth) who never forsakes him and great glory that hallows the world.

39. The Absolutely independent Supreme God who resides in the hearts of all and to whom Brāhmaṇas are dear is certainly pleased by service rendered to them (Brāhmaṇas). Therefore, may the Brāhmaṇa race be served sincerely, and with all your hearts, by persons who are self-controlled, disciplined and devoted to the righteous duties (prescribed in the Bhāgavata way of life) pleasing to him.

40.*** By constant association with and service of the

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* Pṛthu hereby confirms the religious tendencies of his subjects who with a firm resolve worship the Lord (ŚR. and others) but VJ. treats this as a compliment to Brāhmaṇas who as teachers and pupils are born from Hari's mouth, and always conduct their religious duties, and as such, they should be worshipped.

**(i) VR. : The verse indicates that Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas should mutually respect and favour each other : 'May not the votaries of Viṣṇu, the Brāhmaṇa caste which stands resplendent with its forbearance, austerities and such other virtues, be provoked by the Princely houses puffed up with pride in their power and affluence'. VJ. endorses the same view.

(ii) VC. : For firm establishment of devotion to god, this verse prohibits the insubordination to Vaiṣṇavas and Brāhmaṇas.

***ŚR. : This verse removes the following doubt :

(i) If one always serves Brāhmanas, the performance of sacrifices—offering oblations to gods in sacrificial fires—will be neglected. This laxity in religious duties will not lead to purity of mind and the final beatitude which depends on it.

Brāhmaṇa (caste), the mind soon attains purity and serenity, (and consequently) the person, automatically (without any effort to get knowledge or Yogic practice) attains the highest bliss and final emancipation. Is there any better mouth of gods who receive oblations through fire than the Brāhmaṇa race ? (The fruit of sacrifices and of knowledge is obtained by service of Brāhmaṇas).

41. The infinite Lord who is essentially knowledge incarnate and the indweller of all creatures, does not verily relish so much the oblations offered to the sacrificial fire which is devoid of consciousness, as certainly those offered with faith, into the mouths of the Brāhmaṇas in the names of adorable divinities (like Indra, Varuṇa) to be invoked in sacrifices, by the knowers of the Truth.

42. With a view to understanding the true import of the Vedas in which the universe is clearly reflected as in a clean mirror, they (Brāhmaṇas) bear (in their memories) the pure and eternal Vedas with faith, austere penance, auspicious conduct, control of speech unrelated to Vedic studies, self-control and concentration of mind. (Hence Brāhmaṇas are superior to fire due to their knowledge of Vedas).

43. I would like to bear on my crown the dust from the lotus-like feet of those (Brāhmaṇas), for, the sin of the man who wears this dust, immediately disappears, and all excellent attributes abide in him, Oh noble ones.

44. Affluence (in every respect) and accomplishments of desires seek to follow a man who is the receptacle of excellent qualities, looks upon character as his wealth, is full of gratitude, and resorts to wise elderly people. May the race of Brāhmaṇas, and that of cows, Lord Viṣṇu, along with his votaries (and followers) be gracious unto me."

(ii) VR. : By service of Brāhmaṇas, the deities to be propitiated by performance of sacrifices are served.

(iii) VJ. : The Brāhmaṇa caste is in constant contact with the Lord. By serving them, one obtains serenity of mind and immediately attains to the highest bliss, the final beatitude (Mokṣa). By service of Brāhmaṇas, one gets the fruit of performance of sacrifices, knowledge.

Maitreya said:

45. All *Pitṛs* (manes), gods and Brāhmaṇas felt highly pleased at heart with the king who spoke thus. Those pious souls expressed their approbation and praised him.

46. True is the Vedic text that a man attains to the higher worlds by means of a son. For the sinful Vena (Pṛthu's father) who was killed by Brahmanical curse, has crossed over the dark Hell (through Pṛthu).

47. And Hiraṇyakaśipu also was about to enter the dark hell for reviling the Lord, but crossed over it through the power of piety of Prahlāda (his son).

48. Oh foremost warrior, father of the earth ! May you live long for eternal years, as you cherish such devotion to Lord Viṣṇu, the sole ruler of all worlds.

49. Oh King of holy fame! With you as our ruler, we regard ourselves as having today Lord Viṣṇu as our ruler, as you reveal to us the narratives of Viṣṇu whose renown saves others from infernal regions and who is favourable to Brāhmaṇas.

50. Oh Lord! It is the nature of the great, whose hearts are full of pity, to love their subjects. Hence, it is no wonder that you exhort your dependants this way.

51. Oh King ! You have brought us today across the hell—we who, losing their insight due to our past deeds designated as Fate,—have been wandering in Saṁsāra.

52. Salutation to you, the most powerful Person with dominant Sāttvic attributes, who inspiring the Brāhmaṇa race by your force support the Kṣattriya race and *vice versa*, and inspiring both Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas support the universe by virtue of your own power.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

(Sanatkumāra's Sermon to Pṛthu)

Maitreya said :

1. While people were thus extolling Pṛthu of mighty prowess, there approached four sages, brilliant like the Sun.

2. Attended upon by his servants, the king saw those lords of sages descending from the heavens. They were recognized to be Sanaka and others by their lustre which absolved the worlds of sins.

3. Just as the lord of sense-organs (*jiva*) rushes forth to the objects of senses, Pṛthu, the son of Vena, along with the courtiers and attendants, immediately stood up (and went forth to the sages), as if to recover his vital breaths which sprang forth at their sight.[89]

4. When the sages accepted preliminary reception (*arghya*)[90] and occupied the seats (offered to them), the courteous king, who was hypnotised with their august presence, bowed down his head out of modesty, and worshipped them with due formalities.

5. (To purify himself) he sprinkled the hair on his head with (the sanctifying drops of) water with which he washed their feet. He, thereby, observed the course of conduct of the virtuous, to show respect to them.

6. The king was endowed with deep faith and self-discipline, and was full of joy. He addressed those elder brothers of Lord Śiva, who occupied seats of gold, and were looking like sacrificial fires in their respective altars.

Pṛthu said :

7. "Oh! What meritorious deeds I must have performed that I have the privilege of seeing you, the abodes of auspicious-

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89. As ŚR. explains, it is the belief that when an elderly person comes, the vital breaths of young people immediately go forth to receive them. The youth catches back his vital breath, by immediately standing up to show respect, and by bowing down before the elders.

90. *arghya*—Water and other articles respectfully offered to gods or venerable persons. ASD. 51.

ness, who are very difficult to be perceived even by masters of *Yoga*.

8. What is very difficult to attain here and hereafter to a person unto whom Brāhmaṇas (like you), and gods Śiva and Viṣṇu along with their attendants are gracious!

9. Just as *Mahat* and other principles (or Brahmā, Manu and other makers of the world)—which are the causes of the universe, do not visualize the Omniscient *ātman* (Soul), people do not at all see you even though you roam over the world (to help them to attain their *puruṣārthas*).

10. Verily, blessed are those saintly householders who, though penniless, have in their houses materials for worship such as water, mat of (*darbha*) grass, accommodation (or floor), the master of the household and his dependants ready (for receiving) the worthies.

11. (Unwelcome) like the trees which are haunted by poisonous serpents, are the houses which, though fully furnished with all kinds of riches, are not hallowed by the holy water used for washing the feet of Viṣṇu's devotees.

12. Welcome is your arrival, Oh preeminent Brāhmaṇas who, determined to secure liberation, have been faithfully and with resolute mind, observing great vows (like lifelong celebacy) since your very childhood. (Or.....Brāhmaṇas whose course of observances of vows is followed by other ignorant persons desirous of Liberation).

13. Oh spiritual Masters! Is there any hope of good for us who regard the (achievement of) objects of senses as the goal of life and who, by our own deeds, have fallen into the *saṁsāra*, the bed of miseries.

14. The etiquette of enquiring after welfare of the guests is not applicable (or desirable) in the case of your honours, who are absorbed in the bliss of the *ātman* (Soul), and who are above the thoughts of welfare or otherwise.

15. You are the friends and well-wishers of the distressed. With full faith in you, I, therefore, wish to enquire of you how one can speedily achieve the *Summum bonum* (Mokṣa) in this *Saṁsāra* ?

16. It is obviously certain that the unborn Lord Nārāyaṇa who shines as the Soul of the self-knowing sages, and

who manifests himself (in the heart of the devotees), goes about in the world, in the form of Siddhas (like you), for showering his grace upon his votaries."

Maitreya said :

17. Having heard Pṛthu's beautifully worded, logical, deeply significant, brief, melodious speech, Sanatkumāra slightly smiled, and verily replied with pleasure.

Sanatkumāra said :

18. "With the welfare of all beings at your heart, a good enquiry has been made by Your Majesty, even though you know its answer, Oh great King! For such is the nature of the righteous.

19. The meeting of the righteous is highly approved by both (the speakers and the members of the audience) for, their dialogues and enquiries increase the happiness of all.

20. Oh King! Your honour has definitely a constant and abiding love for eulogizing the excellent attributes of the lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the enemy of demon Madhu). Such constancy of love is difficult to be found in others. Such love (if generated) completely shakes off the sticky dirt of inner passions and desires in the heart (which is difficult to remove).

21. In the Śāstric texts which have made a thorough enquiry (about the good of beings), it has been positively decided that perfect non-attachment to things other than the Soul (e.g. one's own body), firm and constant love of attributeless Brahman and the Self—these constitute the means of the final beatitude of men.

22-25. Attachment for attributeless Brahman and non-attachment to the entire non-self material world (*un-ātman*), both effect and cause are easily generated by intense faith, performance of righteous duties towards the Lord,[91] the desire

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91. *Bhagavad-dharma-caryayā*—In the case of all (even uninitiated ones) : (i) By performing the five *mahāyajñas* and other round of religious duties for propitiating the Lord—VR.

(ii) By religious duties according to one's own caste and stage of life (*varṇāśrama*)—VJ.

(iii) GD. emphasizes the dedication of these religious duties to the Lord.

to know (the details about the Truth), firm faith in the spiritual path of *Yoga*,[92] meditation about the Lord of *Yoga*,[93] and constant listening to the holy stories of the Lord of hallowed renown; by cessation of desire to associate with the *tāmasa* people who take pleasure in wealth, and with the *rājasa* people who revel in the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, and by non-attachment to the filthy lucre and to sense-gratification which are highly valued by them, through love of seclusion[94] for enjoying the blissfulness of the Self (*ātman*) except on occasions when the drink of the nectar of Hari's excellent glories is available;[95] by practising non-violence, by following the course of conduct prescribed for the highest ascetic order called the *paramahaṁsas*, by drinking the highest form of nectar in the form of Lord Hari's stories, by eschewing desires and by observing rules of self-discipline called *yama* (abstention) and *niyama* (observance),[96] by refraining from slandering (and condemning other paths of God-realization prescribed in scriptures), by desirelessness, and by endurance of

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92. *ādhyātmika-yoga-niṣṭhayā*—In the case of the initiated ones : With faith in the meditation as a part of adoration of the Lord as enunciated by the spiritual preceptor —VR.

93. Service of great Yogis like Kapila—GD.

94. *vivikta-rucyā*—Taste limited to food uncontaminated by the touch of other caste; by the delight and satisfaction one gets in the realisation of the Soul—VR.

95. By attending the congregations when Hari's *līlās* are sung—VC.
*By renunciation of objects of sensual enjoyment which are as if the pleasure-garden to the body and sense-organs, by non-acceptance of flower-garlands, cosmetics, women which are agreeable to them, by the sense of enoughness (*alaṁ-buddhi*) about carnal pleasures enjoyable by the body —VJ.

96. Patañjali gives the following list of *Yamas* and *niyamas* :
(i) *Yamas* (abstentions)—Abstinence from injuries, from falsehood, from theft, from incontinence and from acceptance of gifts (VSP. ii. 30).
(ii) *niyama* (observance) : Cleanliness, Contentment, Self-castigation, Study and Devotion to Īśvara (VSP. ii.32).
VJ. quotes from *Yājñavalkya Yoga Sāstra* 10 *Yamas* but as given in ASD 455 the lists include 10 or 12 Yamas according to different authors. ASD 290 quotes the following 10 *niyamās* :

Śaucam ijyā tapo dānaṁ svādhyāyo 'pastha-nigrahaḥ/
Vrata-mauno'pavāsaṁ ca snānaṁ ca niyamā daśa//

opposite states (such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain); by devotion to Hari that blossomed for the constantly glorifying Lord Hari's excellences which form the ornaments to the ears of his devotees through faith and deep devotion.

26.* When his attachment and delight in Brahman becomes firmly established, a man seeks a spiritual preceptor. Just as fire ignited from *araṇi* (a piece of wood of the Śamī tree used for kindling fire by friction) consumes its own source (the piece of wood from which it arose), the man, by force of his knowledge and non-attachment burns down his subtle body consisting of five subtle elements[97] and enveloping his Soul, in such a way as to render it unrevivable.

27**. When the screen or sheath (of the subtle body enveloping the Soul) which, till then intervened between the Super-Soul (*Paramātman*) and the Soul, is destroyed,[98] the

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97. *Pañcātmakam* : (i) Consisting of five *kleśas* viz. *avidyā* (nescience), *ahaṁkāra* (ego), *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (hatred) and *abhiniveśa* (instinctive clinging to worldly life and bodily enjoyment and the fear of being deprived of this—ASD.39) ŚR. and GD. VC. endorses this view while SD. supports the first interpretation given.

(ii) Consisting of five Kośas (sheaths) which lying one within the other make the body enshrining the Soul. They are : (1) *annamaya*, (2) *manomaya*, (3) *Prāṇamaya*, (4) *Vijñānamaya* and (5) *ānandamaya*. *Sarvopaniṣatsāra*, however, gives *Prāṇamaya Kośa* the 2nd place before *Manomaya Kośa*.

* According to VR., firm fixation of love in Brahman leads to the grace of spiritual preceptor (and not vice versa). With the force of knowledge, renunciation and the love or delight in Brahman, a man burns down the seed of *karmas* (both merit and sin) which is the cause of the body (and *Saṁsāra*).

VJ. explains that the heart is an external *upādhi* (condition or attribute) and its burning does not harm and not the Soul or seed so enveloped by the external sheath.

98. What interrupted the knowledge of the relations between the Supreme Soul and the *jīva*.

** VJ. differs: When the 'heart' and its attributes e.g. knowledge, disappear, the *jīva* does not perceive any difference—within and without like a blind person. When in the Saṁsāra, there is a screen between the Supreme Lord and the *jīva*, there exists a semblance of knowledge like doubt, as in a dream. But when the subtle body is lost, the *jīva* also will disappear. And the Saṁsāra with its modicum of knowledge is preferable to the vanishing of the *jīva*. Who would then bother about Liberation (Mukti)?

person becomes freed from all the attributes[99] pertaining to the subtle body which has been burnt down. (Thenceforth) he does not perceive (his subjective states of pleasure, pain etc.) which are within him,[100] nor objects (e.g. a pot, a piece of cloth) which are external to him, just as a man awakened from a dream does not see the objects he had been perceiving in his dream.[101]

28. (It is in the state of wakefulness and dream) while this *upādhi* (conditioning) of mind continues, that man can perceive himself (the seer), objects of senses and what is beyond them both (viz. *ahaṁkāra* which establishes relation between them—the seer and the seen), and not otherwise (as in sleep).

29. (For example), if, anywhere, (reflecting) condition —*upādhi* like water,[102] mirror or such other condition is present, a man can see the difference between himself (the object of reflection) and the other thing (his own reflection) and not in the absence of the reflecting medium.

30. The mind of those who brood over objects of worldly enjoyment is distracted by their senses which are attracted to objects of worldly pleasure, and thereby the in-

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99. The attributes like love, hate which deserve to be shed off (heya-guṇāḥ)—VR.

100. All internal blemishes, e.g. love, hate etc.—VR.

101. ŚR. explains: Just as a person who in a dream sees himself to be a king attended upon by an army of soldiers, sees no more his kingship and the army when the dream is over.

S.D.: In the dream the externals are friend, foe etc. and the internals are the honour, dishonour etc. meted out by them. These disappear when the dream is over.

102. *jalādau*—But VR. reads *jaḍādau* and interprets: *jaḍa* is the inert body. When the limiting condition like this inert body continues as interruption, the *jīva* experiences separateness from his Self and the Supreme Soul. But in Liberated stage this limitation of the body ceases, he sees no such difference between the two.

VC. thinks that this *upādhi* (limiting condition) is destroyed by knowledge and the *jīva*, by his powerful love of God enjoys the blissful nature of the Lord.

SD. thinks that the extreme difference between the Soul (*ātman*) and Brahman is due to ignorance. When real knowledge dawns, he realizes the Brahmahood in *ātman* (*ātmano Brahmātmakatvam paśyati*).

tellect loses its power of thinking and discrimination, just as the water from a pool is (imperceptibly) sucked up by the roots of a clump of grass.[103]

31. As a consequence of the loss of the reasoning capacity memory is lost. The loss of memory[104] results in loss of knowledge and wisdom. The wise people call this loss of wisdom as the covering of the Self through one's own Self.

32. In this world, there is no worse loss of his self-interest to a man than the loss of his own Self (through himself) for whose sake every other thing in the world becomes dear (lit. on whom depends the dearness of every other thing in the world).[105]

33. Constantly brooding over wealth and objects of senses leads to the loss of all *puruṣārthas* (goals to be achieved in life). Having thus lost knowledge of Brahman and worldly knowledge, he enters (= is born in) immobile *yonis*—births e.g. a vegetable).

34. A person who desires to cross the dense darkness (of *Saṁsāra*), should not entertain attachment to anything whatever. For that attachment is extremely harmful to *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mokṣa* (the four *puruṣārthas*).

35. Even among these objectives of life, *Mokṣa* (Liberation) is acknowledged as the highest goal of life. For, the remaining goals of life, are always subject to the fear of death.

36. For the *jīvas* of the higher order (like Brahmā) and lower order like us who are created after the equilibrium of the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* was disturbed (at the time of creation), there is no security and happiness, as all their blessings and hopes (of attaining their objectives) are ruined by the All-powerful Time.*

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103. *stamba*—The canal or outlet from a tank—VJ.

104. *bhraśyatyanu smṛtiś cittam* / VR. connects the words *anu-smṛtis* and interprets it as 'the sense of the proper time for *upāsanā* or *Yoga* (*anusmṛtir upāsanam, Yoga-kālānusandhānam* /)

105. Cf. *ātmanas tu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati* /

—*Bṛhad. Upa.*4.5.6.

* After verse 36, VJ. gives the commentary on 3 verses which are not noted by other commentators. The Bhāgavata Vidyā Peeth, Ahmedabad edition does not give the text of those verses but only the commentary. Hence they are not included here.

37. Therefore, Oh King, you realize that you are (the same as) the Lord (the only existing reality)—the Lord who manifests himself and directly shines everywhere in the Self as *antaryāmin* (the inner controller) in the hearts of all mobile and immobile *jīvas* who are covered (i.e. invested) with body, sense-organs, vital airs, intellect and ego (*ahaṁkāra*).

38.* I take shelter with the Supreme Soul who is eternally free, extremely pure, highly enlightened, Reality itself and who has overpowered the *Prakṛti* (primordial nature) contaminated by Karmas (of various *jīvas*), and in whom appears this universe of superior and inferior things (or of cause and effect) as Māyā, which disappears due to (the dawn of) discriminating wisdom like (the dispelling of) the misapprehension of a garland of flowers as a serpent.

39.** You (therefore) take resort to Lord Vāsudeva as your asylum[106]—Lord Vāsudeva, through devotion (and concentration) on the splendour[107] of petal like toes of whose lotus-feet the saintly devotees so easily cut the knot of the egotism (*ahaṁkāra*) formed at the heart by *karmas*, that even recluses and ascetics who have cleared their mind[108] (of all worldly thoughts and kept it vacant) and have controlled their senses, are unable to do so.

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* VR. emphasizes the point that the Lord is not directly affected by Karmas, ignorance etc., but it is through the *jīva* (*kṣetrajña*) which is his body (as he is the *antaryāmin*) that he experiences these.

106. *araṇam*. VD. treats this as a pun : *a-raṇam* who is beyond fight; If you do not resort to Vāsudeva, you will have to battle with your sense-organs which by their brute majority will defeat you.

107. *vilāsa*—beauty which increases every moment—VC., VD.

108. *rikta-matayaḥ*—Whose minds have no support of the Lord—GD.

** (i) The above verses expound the path of knowledge which is difficult. Hence these two (39 and 40) verses describe *bhakti* (the path of devotion)—ŚR., VC.

(ii) VR. treats the last two lines of the verse as qualifying the saintly devotees who meditate on nothing else but the Lord and who control themselves.

(iii) VC.—*Vilāsa-bhaktyā*—through the devotion to the ever-increasing beauty of petal-like toes of the lotus feet of Vāsudeva and *bhakti* i.e. devotion, is both the means and the end.

OR : Through worshipping in a rich way; or
Trough meditation over or memory of his toes.

40. There is a great trouble here to those who have not resorted to the Lord as a boat for crossing the ocean of *saṁsāra* which is infested with crocodiles in the form of sixfold [passions viz. *kāma* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (avarice), *mada* (conceit), *moha* (delusion), *matsara* (jealousy) or the mind and five senses]. For they desire to cross it (*saṁsāra*) by painful means (e.g. practice of Yoga). You should therefore make the adorable feet of Lord Hari as a boat and reach the other end of this impassable ocean of *saṁsāra* easily without any difficulty."

Maitreya said :

41. The king to whom the real nature of *ātman* (Soul) was thus expounded by Sanatkumāra, the son of god Brahmā, the knower of Brahman, praised him appropriately and enquired.

The king said :

42. Oh venerable Brāhmaṇa! Lord Hari is compassionate to the afflicted. He had formerly conferred his grace upon me. You all have now come to consummate it.

43. Your venerable Selves, merciful as you are, you have translated into reality the blessing in its entirety. Everything that I possess, including my own self, belongs to the saintly souls who have graciously returned it to me as a favour. What can I give to you?

44. My life, wife, sons, houses with all their furnishings, kingdom, army, earth, treasury—everything is offered to you although it already belongs to you.

45. And a person who is well-versed in Vedas and Śāstras really deserves to command an army, (to rule over) a kingdom, to direct military operations and to govern all the world.

The duties pertaining to God being the reverse of *saṁsāra*, the knot of *ahaṁkāra* formed by *karmas* is very easily cut asunder, while the recluses control their senses—an impossible task, an evidence of their dull-wittedness. It it easy for the righteous *Bhaktas* to destroy *ahaṁkāra* but it is not possible for *sannyāsins* to achieve, for they being vacant-minded are 'intellectless' while the *bhaktas* have their mind filled with God. Bhaktas enjoy the beauty etc. of God to the full.

46. A Brāhmaṇa eats his own food, wears the clothes belonging to him and offers his own belongings. It is through his (Brāhmaṇa's) grace that Kṣattriyas and others enjoy their own food.

47. You are past-masters in the Vedic lores. In your discourse about *ātman* (and other spiritual matters), you have succinctly and definitely explained to us the nature of the Lord as above. Abounding in mercy as you are, may you be forever pleased with your action of redeeming the afflicted. Who can return your obligations except by folding his palms in reverence or (become an object of ridicule in his supposed attempts to repay your kindness)."

Maitreya said :

48. Those masters of *ātma-yoga* (the Yogic path of self-realization) were worshipped by the first monarch Pṛthu. They appreciated his righteous character and rose up to the heavens while people were looking on (agape).

49. Pṛthu (the son of Vena), the foremost among great Souls, became firmly established in his Soul due to concentration achieved by their instruction in the spiritual lore. He felt as if[109] he had achieved all his desires in life.

50. It was as an offering to Brahman that he performed all his actions at the proper time, at the proper place, to the best of his ability, according to proper formalities, according to his means and property.

51. Thus with concentrated mind, he consigned the fruit (of his deeds) to Brahman. He remained unattached by regarding his Self as distinct and beyond Prakṛti, a mere witness to all actions.

52. Just as the Sun (remains unattached and unsoiled by the objects on which it shines), the king, though leading the life of a householder and endowed with imperial majesty and splendour, remained free from egotism (*ahaṁkāra*), and hence unattached to the objects of the senses.

53-56. While he was, in this way, doing his prescribed duties properly and in time, with his heart fixed on his *ātman*

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109. *iva*—Being a true devotee, his real satisfaction was in devotion. This is implied by *iva*—VD.

(Self), he begot through his queen Arcis five sons who were resembling and agreeable to him. They were Vijitāśva, Dhūmrakeśa, Haryakṣa, Draviṇa and Vṛka. But Pṛthu was a part of Lord Viṣṇu. For the protection of the created world, only Pṛthu combined in him (and manifested) powers of all *lokapālas* (protectors of worlds like Indra, Varuṇa), from time to time as was necessary (according to the exigency of the situation). He bore significantly the title *Rājā* by delighting his subjects with his thoughts, words and deeds, and pleasing Soma-like (*saumya*) qualities as if he was another king Soma (the Moon or the Soma—juice—which has *rājā* as its epithet). Like the Sun (evaporating water from the earth and collecting it in clouds), he levied taxes from the world only to give it back to the people (for their welfare) and governed them (as the Sun gives light and heat to them).

57. By his majestic splendour he was unassailable like Agni (Fire-god); he was unconquerable like the great Indra; in forebearance he was like the earth; he was like the heaven (*Svarga*) in granting desired objects to his subjects.

58. Like the rain-god he showered to the satisfaction (of his subjects) all that they desired; like the (unfathomable) sea, he was too deep to be understood; in his firmness he was like Meru, the king of mountains.

59. He was comparable to Yama-dharma, in dispensing punishment; in marvellousness (in scenes, findings of ores etc.), he was like the Himālayas. He had rich treasure like Kubera (The god of wealth). He possessed immense undivulged treasures like Varuṇa.

60. In physical strength, force and energy and in his ability to move anywhere he was like Vāyu. In his irresistibility he was comparable to god Śiva.

61. He was a compeer of the god of Love in beauty; in spiritedness he was like a lion; in fatherly affectionateness he was like Manu; while in his lordship over man, he was like god Brahmā.

62. He was Bṛhaspati in his knowledge of Vedas, while in self-control he was like Lord Hari himself. (While he was comparable to himself only in his devotion to cows, Brāhmaṇas, preceptor, votaries of Hari and in qualities like modesty, humility, good nature and work for the benefit of others.

63. As his glory was loudly sung by people everywhere in the three worlds, he reached the ears of women just as Rāma entered the ears of the saintly people.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Pṛthu's penance and ascension to Heaven

Maitreya said :

1-3. The self-controlled son of Vena, (Pṛthu), the protector of subjects, had made the arrangement of fostering his creation, (viz. by founding of agriculture, and of human habitation like cities, villages etc.). He provided for the livelihood of the mobile and immobile creatures. He supported the practice of religion (*dharma*) by pious people. He carried out the mission of the Lord for which he was created in this world. One day, finding himself to have grown very old, he entrusted to his sons his daugther-like earth which was as if crying due to separation from him. Unattended by any one (servant), he retired to the penance-forest along with his queen while the subjects became depressed in mind and disspirited.

4. Without any interruption in the observance of rules of self-discipline, there too he began to practice a course of austere penance, highly approved by *Vānaprasthas* with the same zeal and determination which he showed formerly in the conquest of the world.

5. He lived upon bulbous and ordinary roots and fruits, and occasionally on dry leaves. For some fortnights, he took water only, and thereafter, he subsisted on air (only).

6. In the summer, the warrior-sage practised *pañcāgni sādhana* (in which one has to sit in the Sun and in the midst of four burning fires in four directions around). In the rainy season, he exposed himself to the downpour of rain. In the winter he stood immersed in cold water upto the neck and slept on the bare-ground (all through the year).

7. He practised endurance, controlled his speech and sense-organs, he observed celibacy and mastered *prāṇāyāma*

(breath-control). He practised the most austere type of penance with a desire to propitiate Lord Kṛṣṇa.

8. Due to the practice of that austere penance, which gradually reached perfection, his balance of Karmas became exhausted and he became pure in mind. By means of *Prāṇāyāma* (breath-control), all the six passions were completely subdued and the bondage (of *vāsanā*) was cut asunder.

9. Pṛthu, that prominent person, worshipped the Supreme Man by that very highest Yoga which venerable Sanatakumāra explained to him as the best path to *ātman*.

10. As the righteous king was performing the duties sacred to the Lord and was unceasingly exerting himself with faith, he developed complete devotion to the glorious Brahman exclusively.

11. His (Pṛthu's) mind became purely Sāttvic (without any admixture of other guṇas like *rajas* and *tamas*) through adoration and service of the Lord. He attained to knowledge combined with renunciation—knowledge which became sharpened by his devotion which went on increasing continuously through constant remembrance and comprehensive realization of the Lord's greatness. It is with such knowledge that he tore off the sheath called *jīva*[110]—the knot of egotism (*ahaṁkāra*) in the heart—which is the basis of doubts and misapprehensions.

12. When his concept of self-body identification was dispelled and he realized the real nature of his Soul, he became desireless and disinterested even in the mystic *yogic* powers (like *aṇimā*, *laghimā* etc.) that were acquired by him. He gave up the attempt to attain the knowledge wherewith he

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110. *Jīvakośa*—the subtle body (*liṅga śarīra*) with its internal and external organ —VJ.

VC.: To Pṛthu, whose mind became purely *Sāttvic* by service of the Lord, the knowledge of the science of Brahman (*Brahma vidyā*) combined with non-attachment, manifested itself. Real votaries of God are so much attracted by the sweetness of *Bhakti* that they discard *Brahma vidyā* which automatically comes to them, and they destroy without any effort their subtle body (*liṅga deha*) through their intense devotion. It was the impatience of Pṛthu to go to Lord's region to serve him directly that he accepted *Brahma vidyā* to destroy his *upādhi* (limiting condition) of *jīva kośa*.

tore off his sheath (called *jīva* or egotism which is source of doubt). For so long even a recluse (exerting on the path of *Yoga*) does not feel devotion and attachment for the stories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he will not cease to be attracted by the Yogic discipline (and mystic powers attained by *Yoga*).

13. Thus at the time of the end of his life,[111] the great hero concentrated his mind firmly in the Supreme Soul and stabilising himself in Brahman,[112] he cast off his mortal coil.

14. He closely pressed both his heels on his anus. He slowly forced up his vital airs (from the *mūlādhāra cakra*).[113] He held vital airs up (progressively) at the navel and then at heart, chest, the throat and the head, i.e. the place between the eyebrows, (i.e. through the following *cakras* or mystical plexuses : *Maṇipūra*, *manas* or Solar plexus, *anāhata*, *viśuddha* and *ājñā*).[114]

15-16. By degrees he conducted up his breath upto the crown of his head and made it occupy *Brahma-randhra* (the aperture in the crown of the head through which the Soul escapes on its leaving the body). Freeing himself from all desires, he merged the wind element in the body with the outer Vāyu element, the earth element (solidity in the body) with the Pṛthvī (earth) element, the vacuum (in the apertures constituting sense-organ) with the cosmic element *ākāśa* (ether) and the liquid in the body with the element water—each in its own source. (For his own knowledge) he then contemplated the merger of cosmic elements (as follows:)—earth into water, water into fire, fire into wind and wind into the cosmic *ākāśa* (which is the product of *Tāmasa ahaṁkāra*—ego of *Tāmasa* type). This process is called *Laya-cintana* contemplation of (the happening of) the process of absorption.

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111. *kāle*—When the fund of his *karmas*—Prārabdha—was exhausted —VR., VJ.

112. *Brahmabhūtaḥ*—(i) He became like Brahman by the manifestation of eight attributes—VR.

(ii) He realised that he depended on Brahman—VJ.

113. A mystical plexus situated between the anus and the organ of generation.

114. For details about these *cakras* vide : Sir John Woodroff—*Serpent Power*; and Leadbeater—*The Chakras*.

17.* He absorbed the mind (implying presiding deities as well) into the senses,[115] the senses into the subtle elements from which they severally emerged. These (the ether, the senses and mind merged into subtle elements as described above) he carried higher still and he contemplated the above objects along with *ahaṁkāra* (I-ness) as merged in the Mahat *tattva* (the principle of cosmic intelligence).

18.** He (Pṛthu) merged the Mahat, the ground of all *guṇas* (evolutes) into *jīva* conditioned by Māyā. By the power of his knowledge and renunciation, Pṛthu—still a *jīva* conditioned by Māyā—became established in the pure Brahmahood and cast off the conditioning Māyā attached to the Self.

19. His wife, the great queen Arcis, though too delicate to touch the bare ground with her feet, followed him to the penance-forest.

20. Though she (queen Arcis). became extremely emaciated due to her intense devotion in participating in the austere observances (such as sleeping on the bare ground) and religious duties of her husband, by rendering personal services

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115. For the mind is drawn by the senses in the world of varied experiences and hence it is said to be absorbed in them.

* VJ. interprets this according to the general law of merger (*laya*) viz. the effects are to be absorbed into the cause. Thus the senses are merged into the *Taijasa-ahaṁkāra*. Its presiding deities in those of the presiding deities of *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra* and their bodies into the *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra*. The elements *Pṛthvī* etc. along with their qualities like smell, touch etc. are absorbed in the *Tāmasa ahaṁkāra* (*bhūtādi*). These three types of *ahaṁkāras* (along with senses etc.) merge into the *Mahattattva* (Principle of cosmic intelligence). And Rudra, the presiding deity of *ahaṁkāra*, is absorbed into god Brahmā, who presides over the *Mahat*.

** VR: (The last two lines): Pṛthu who was practically free from the effects of the *karmas*, realised the Supreme Being in himself. By dint of his knowledge and renunciation, he became free from the remaining *karmas*. He thus became liberated, established in his own essential nature.

VJ. refutes the idea of Liberation of *advaitins*. The process of Pṛthu's liberation was as follows: Pṛthu merged Brahmā, the presiding deity of the *Mahat* into Lakṣmī and the principle *Mahat* into unintelligent Prakṛti. Lakṣmī with Prakṛti was absorbed into Hari. By force of his knowledge and dispassionateness, Pṛthu did this and attained the *Sāyujja* form of Liberation.

VC. : Pṛthu became a Pārṣada (attendant) of the Lord in Vaikuṇṭha.

GD. : Pṛthu was able to abandon his subtle body (*Liṅga-śarīra*).

to him and by leading the sage's way of life (such as subsisting on roots, fruits etc.). She did not feel any affliction, as she was satisfied with the loving regard and affectionate touch of her beloved husband's hand.

21. Having observed that the body of the protector of the earth, her own beloved husband, became completely devoid of consciousness, life etc., the pious lady wept for a while and got it placed on the funeral pyre on the ridge of the mountain.

22. She bathed in the waters of the river, performed the prescribed rites. Having given libations of water to the departed Soul of her husband, the performer of noble deeds, she paid obeisance to the celestial gods who had assembled there to witness her self-immolation, she went round the fire three times and meditating on the feet of her husband, entered the burning funeral pyre.

23. Seeing the chaste lady perform self-immolation after her husband, Pṛthu, the great hero, thousands of goddesses who were competent to confer boons, began to praise her, along with their consorts.

24. They showered flowers on that peak of the mount Mandara. While the celestial trumpets were blowing, they spoke (in praise of her) to each other.

Goddesses said :

25. "Oh ! What a blessed wife is this who, with all her heart, served her husband, the king of kings, just as Lakṣmī does to the Lord of Sacrifices (Nārāyaṇa).

26. Following her husband Pṛthu, this chaste lady really proceeds to regions higher than ours. Look ! Arcis is going up beyond us, by virtue of her noble deed incomprehensible to the unrighteous.

27. What is verily difficult to be achieved by those mortals who, though the span of their life on the earth is uncertain, attain to spiritual knowledge (of actionlessness) leading to the region of the Lord (Liberation).

28. He is definitely deceived—a veritable enemy of his own Self who after great difficulty attains to the life as a human being, capable of leading to Liberation (Mokṣa), is attached to objects of pleasure."

Maitreya said :

29. While the heavenly damsels (goddesses) were praising her, Arcis (the queen of Pṛthu) reached the region of her husband—the region which Pṛthu (the son of Vena) whose mind was concentrated on Lord Viṣṇu (Acyuta), and who was the foremost amongst those who realized the Soul, attained.

30. Of such glory and prowess was king Pṛthu, the Supreme most mighty monarch. I have described to you the history of the king of noble deeds.

31. He who, with faithful and attentive mind, reads, listens to or recounts this extremely holy life of Pṛthu, would attain to the region of Pṛthu.

32. By reading this, a Brāhmaṇa would become preeminent in Brahmanic lore, a Kṣattriya, the ruler of the world, a Vaiśya, the leader of his guild and a Śūdra (listening to it) would attain the most preeminent position (like a man of Sūta community).

33-34. After hearing this account thrice with faith and reverence, a man or a woman, if devoid of issue, becomes blessed with the best progeny, and if penniless, he/she becomes the wealthiest; An obscure person, attains good renown; a dull-witted one would become a scholar; this is a means of securing prosperity to men, averting evils and inauspiciousness.

35. It blesses with wealth, glory, longevity, heavenly blessings and removes the impurities of the Kali-age. Those who aspire after full achievement of the four *puruṣārthas* (goals of life) viz. Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth,) Kāma (enjoyment of life) and Mokṣa (Liberation), should regularly and with faith listen to this story of Pṛthu which is the best means of securing *puruṣārthas*.

36. A king intending to undertake the conquest of the world starts his expedition after listening to this, the kings against whom he marches will receive him with tributes as was done to Pṛthu.

37. Even though one gets auspicious fruits mentioned above from listening to Pṛthu's life, one who gives up all desires and bears pure, motiveless devotions to the Lord, should listen, narrate and read this holy life of Pṛthu, the son of Vena.

38. Oh Vidura (the son of Vicitravīrya), the story of Pṛthu which reveals the greatness of the Venerable Lord has been narrated to you. A mortal who devotes his mind to it, attains to the goal achieved by Pṛthu.

39. A person who devoutly listens to or narrates the story of Pṛthu everyday, becomes free from attachment and develops intense love and devotion to the Lord whose feet serve as a boat to cross the sea of worldly existence (*saṁsāra*).

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

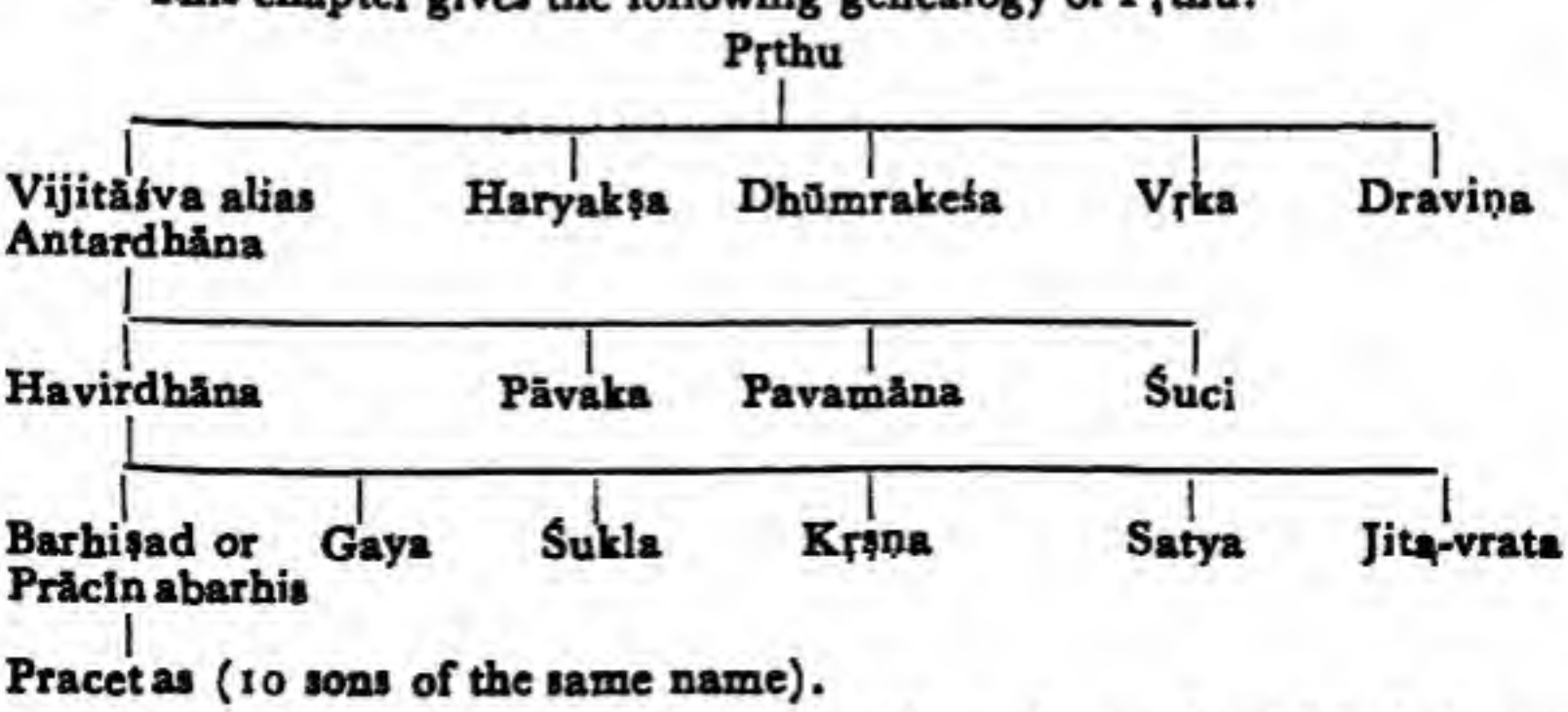
(*Pṛthu's Descendants and the Hymn of Rudra**)

Maitreya said :

1. Vijitāśva, the son of Pṛthu, was an emperor of great renown. He was affectionate to his brothers. He distributed to each of his younger brothers each direction (of his kingdom to rule).

2. The sovereign gave the eastern quarter to Haryakṣa; assigned the southern direction to Dhūmrakeśa; he appointed

* This chapter gives the following genealogy of Pṛthu.



V.P. confirms this genealogy except about the number of Pṛthu's sons According to V.P. 1.14.1, Pṛthu had only two sons Antardhāna and Vādin. Vṛja and Ajina instead of Satya and Jita-vrata are the brothers of Prācīnabarhis (V.P. 1.14.2). The hymn of Rudra is a new contribution in the Bh.P. and it is not in V.P.

(his) brother named Vṛka to the western quarter, and gave the fourth direction (the North) to Draviṇa.

3. Vijatāśva obtained from Indra the power of making invisible movements and came to be designated as Antardhāna. He had three sons by (his queen) Śikhaṇḍinī who were highly beloved by all.

4. They were former firegods by name Pāvaka, Pavamāna and Śuci who were born (as human beings) by the curse of Vasiṣṭha, and who subsequently regained their godly status by practice of Yoga.

5. Antardhāna who did not kill Indra even though he knew that Indra stole the sacrificial horse,[116] got Havirdhāna (a son) by his (another wife) Nabhasvatī.

6. Looking upon kingly duties, such as exacting tributes, inflicting punishment, levying taxes, as harsh and ruthless, he relinquished them under the pretext of undertaking a long sacrificial session.

7. Even there (while engaged in the sacrificial session), the king who realized his Self, worshipped the Supreme Soul who is perfect and annihilates the afflictions of his devotees, and attained to His region, by pure and perfect meditation.

8. From Havirdhāna, (his queen) Havirdhānī begot six sons viz., Barhiṣad, Gaya, Śukla, Kṛṣṇa, Satya and Jitavrata.

9. Oh descendant Kuru (Vidura) ! Barhiṣad, the eldest son of Havirdhāna, the most fortunate lord of men (*Prajā-pati*) was a pastmaster in sacrificial lore as well as in the science and practice of Yoga.

10. (He was called Prācīnabarhis as) the surface of the whole earth was covered over with Kuśa grass with their ends pointing to the east, for he went on performing sacrifices (successively) one after another, each close to the place reserved (used) for the previous sacrifice.

11. On the advice of Brahmā, the god of gods, he married Śatadruti, the daughter of the presiding deity of Seas. She was still a girl but beautiful in every part of the body. In the marriage ceremony, when she went round the fire, beauti-

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116. Vide Supra IV. 19-20.

fully decorated with ornaments, the firegod (himself) became enamoured of her, as he did in the case of Śukī.[117]

12. Gods, demons, celestial singers (Gandharvas), sages, Siddhas (a tribe of demigods), men and serpents were captivated by the young married girl, with the melodious jingling of her anklets ringing in all directions (while she walked).

13. Prācīnabarhis had ten sons called Pracetas, from Śatadruti. All of them bore the same name, observed the same vows and were equally well-versed in religion (or Dharmaśāstra).

14-15. When ordered by their father to beget children, they entered the ocean to perform penance. They propitiated the Lord of Penances (Hari), by undergoing austere penance for ten thousand years. With perfect self-control, they (all the while) meditated on and worshipped him, repeating (to themselves) what was imparted to them by Lord Śiva, whom they saw (revealed to them) on the way, conferring his grace on them.

Vidura said :

16. Please narrate to us, Oh Brāhmaṇa, how the meeting between the Pracetasas and Lord Śiva took place on the road, and tell us what advice of deep import was he pleased to impart to them (out of his grace).

17 Sages, freeing themselves from all attachments have been meditating on Lord Śiva as their coveted goal. Hence contact with the Lord is very difficult, for embodied beings in this world, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage.

18. Though finding delight in his Self, Venerable Lord Śiva accompanied with his terrible Śakti (power of destruc-

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117. v.l. *stukīm*—A slender continuous stream of ghee poured into the fire.

Śukī—According to all commentators, except VJ., this refers to the episode when the seven Sages were conducting a sacrificial session, Fire-god was overcome with passion at the sight of their wife. Svāhā, the wife of Agni (Fire-god) assumed the form of that lady and satisfied him. She then assumed the form of a female parrot (*Śukī*) and deposited his semen in a clump of grass. VJ. thinks that Śukī was a princess who was abducted by the Fire-god through lust, while she was going round the fire. In the case of Śatadruti, he could not physically do so. Hence he loved her on the mental plane only.

tion) moves about in the world for the proper maintenance of the world-order.

Maitreya said :

19. Receiving their father's command reverentially (lit. on their heads), the pious Pracetasas set their minds zealously on practising penance and proceeded towards the West.

20. They saw a very big lake, slightly smaller than the sea in expanse. It was crystal-clean like the mind of the noble Souls, and abounded in happy acquatic beings.

21. It was (as it were) a rich mine of blue and red lilis, lotuses that blossom by night, by day and by twilight and blue lotuses (*indīvara*). It was resounded with the warblings and notes of (waterbirds like) swans, cranes, ruddy geese and ducks (Kāraṇḍava).

22. It was surrounded by lush growth of trees and creepers which were thrilled with[118] the sweet musical humming of intoxicated bees. It presented (as if) a festive occasion (celebrated) by the winds, by scattering of the pollen from lotuses, in all directions.

23. The Princes were wonderstruck to listen to the celestial, classical[119] vocal music of Gandharvas ravishing the mind—music which followed[120] the playing of instrumental music of tabors (*mṛdaṅga*) and Paṇava.

24-25. At that very moment, they noticed Śiva, the foremost among gods, coming out of that lake, along with his attendants. His complexion was like a mass of red-hot gold. His throat was blue-coloured. He had three eyes. His smiling countenance showed his inclination to shower his grace (on his devotees). His glory was being sung by the followers of gods (like Gandharvas and Kinnaras). As curiosity was

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118. VR. thinks that the ends of creepers intertwining trees were the hair standing on their ends in the case of the trees which heard the music. While VC. and GD. regard the thick clusters of buds on them as the result of the thrill of the music.

119. *mārga* and *deśī* are styles of singing. *mārga* is the classical style (cf. Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa I.4.36 *agāyatāṁ mārgavidhānasaṁpadā*).

120. v.l. *mṛdaṅga-paṇavādyavat*—accompanied by playing on *mṛdaṅga* and *paṇava*.

aroused in them, the Princess bowed down to him as soon as they saw him.

26. The Venerable Lord (Śiva) who removes the afflictions of his devotees (seeking his shelter), and who loves righteousness, was pleased with those (Princes) who were experts in religion, possessed high moral characters and who were happy (to see him). He spoke to them.

Śrī Rudra said :

27. You are the sons of Vediṣad (Barhiṣad). I know what you intend to do. May you be blessed. (It is) for conferring grace on you that I have revealed myself to you.

28. He is certainly dear to Me, who, completely submitting himself, has directly resorted to Venerable Lord Vāsudeva who is beyond the subtle Prakṛti consisting of the three attributes (*Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and also the entity called *jīva*.[121]

29.* A person conscientiously and firmly devoted to his own righteous duties, attains to the position of god Brahmā after hundred births, and reaches me if possessed of still more excessive merits. But a votary of Lord Viṣṇu, after the end of this mundane body, attains to the region of Lord Viṣṇu which is beyond *saṁsāra*, just as we (Rudra and other divinities) do after the termination of our office (and dissolution of our subtle bodies).

30. You, votaries of the Venerable Lord (Viṣṇu), are as dear to me as the Lord himself. And to the devotees of the Lord, no body else than me, is more dear anywhere.

31.** This is a sacred and highly auspicious hymn leading to the Final Beatitude. This should be constantly repeated

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121. : He is superior to the principle known as Lakṣmī designated here as *jīva* and *tamas*.

*VJ. differs :...after enjoyment of the status or region of Brahmā, the *jīva* goes to Lakṣmī which is not subject to change. It is in the *Pralaya* stage that all come to the Omniscient Lord.

** Please listen to what I tell you. It should constantly be repeated (to oneself). It explains how the Supreme Soul is distinct from Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Hence it is sacred and auspicious inasmuch as it secures the *Puruṣārthas* (Dharma, Artha, Kāma) and is a means to Liberation. Hence I am narrating it to you—VR.

secretly (in strict privacy). I shall now relate it to you. Please listen (attentively)

Maitreya said :

32. Lord Śiva whose heart is full of compassion and who is fully devoted to Nārāyaṇa, spoke (the following words) to the Princes who were standing with folded palms before him.

33. "Victory to you, Oh Lord! Your victory is for the attainment of the blessedness of the Self, by the pre-eminent ones among those who have realized the Soul. May I too (thereby) attain to the state of blessedness! You eternally abide in the highest blissful nature. Hence I bow to you, Supreme Soul who is immanent in all.

34.* Salutation to the Lord who has a lotus (constituting the universe) springing up in his navel; who is the controller (lit. Soul) of the subtle elements (*tanmātras*) and the sense-organs; who is (the first and foremost *Vyūha* or manifestation of the Lord called) Vāsudeva,[122] (the presiding principle or the ruler of *citta*—Reason); who is absolutely tranquil, self-refulgent, the unchangeable Supreme Soul abiding in (and controlling) all beings.

35.** Obeisance to Saṅkarṣaṇa (the second *Vyūha*, the presiding deity of *ahaṁkāra* or ego) who is unmanifest, infinite, the destroyer of the universe (by fire emanating from his

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* VC : Oh Lord with a lotus in his navel; My physical body is born of Brahmā who was created from the lotus springing up from your navel. Make me inclined to your devotion. Oh Vāsudeva, the presiding deity of *citta* (mind), make my mind serene and tranquil. Fill it with your light and urge it on to your devotion.

122. *Vāsudevāya*—To the Principle that abides in all and yet is unsoiled by their defects.

** VR: (I) bow to Saṅkarṣaṇa who withdraws within himself the universe; Who consumes the world by fire blowing out of his mouth; who is too subtle to be distinguished by name and form but who is unmanifest and hence is himself unwithdrawable. Salute to Pradyumna (the 3rd *Vyūha*-Manifestation of the Lord), who enlightens the world by instruction in the *Śāstra* called *Vedas* which teach the means to all the Puruṣārthas (objectives in human life); who controls all the beings by abiding in them simultaneously.

mouth at the time of *Pralaya*—the dissolution of the universe); (I) bow to Pradyumna (the third *Vyūha*) who awakens the universe (to the highest knowledge),[123] and who presides over Buddhi (intelligence).

36.* I pay my respects again and again to (the fourth *Vyūha*) Aniruddha who is the ruler of the mind which controls the sense-organs (e.g. the eye, the ear etc.).[124] I bow to him (i.e. You) who as the Sun god[125] pervades the universe with his light[126] and who is unaffected by increase and decrease.[127]

37.** I bow to him who is the gateway to the heaven as well as to the Liberation (Mokṣa); who ever abides in pure hearts.[128] I pay obeisance to the Fire-god (whose energy is gold), who is the means of performing sacrificial activities (for which services of four sacrificial priests, viz., *Hotā*, *Adhvaryu*, *Udgātā* and *Brahmā* are essential) and who promotes the continuity of the (tradition of the) sacrifice.[129]

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123. *Viśva-prabodhāya*—Who is perfect in wisdom or who 'awakens' the universe—VJ.

124. *Hṛṣikeśendriyātmane*—Master of sense-organs and whatever belongs to Indra who presides over the mind and senses—VJ.

125. *paramahaṁsāya* : (i) One who destroys from himself as well from his devotees the impurities of Karmas whether merit or sin—VR.

(ii) One who completely removes the doubt of his devotees like Sanaka and others by imparting real knowledge to them—SD.

126. *pūrṇāya*—(i) Who pervades (everything) both internally and externally—VR.

(ii) Who assumed full-fledged incarnations like Nṛsiṁha, Rāma—SD.

127. *nibhṛtātmane*—One whose all desires are fulfilled or achieved —VR.

VR. records a v.l. —*nirvṛtātmane*—One who is unaffected by sorrow.

* VC. (2nd half) : Oh Lord, the Soul of the Sun-god! Direct my eyesight to the beauty of your (the Lord's) personality. May the inherent light of this Sun purify me. I bow to you. Cf. supra III 26.28.

** Just as you direct others to the path of *karma*, direct my power of speech for performing your *kirtana* form of devotion.

128. *Śuciṣad*—(i) Hence is called *haṁsa*—ŚR.

cf. *Haṁsaḥ śuciṣad/Katha Up.* 5.2 also *Mahānārāyaṇa* 9.3; 17.8 and *Nṛsiṁha-Pūrva-Tāpinī Upa* 3.1, vide Jacob's UVK (*Upaniṣad Vākya Koṣa* p. 1067).

(ii) Who dwells in the pure hearts of Yogis—VR.

(iii) One who abides in the Fire—VJ.

129. *tantave*—(i) Who is of the form of or identical with *Yajña*—VR.

(ii) Who secures the continuity of the race, or All-pervading—VJ.

38.* Salutation to him who, as Soma is the food of manes (*pitṛs*) and gods, is the Lord of Three Vedas (viz. *Ṛg*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*), and is the semen (essence) of sacrifice. My obeisance to you who in the form of water, give satisfaction to all *jīvas*.

39.** I bow to him who is the body of all the Souls (*ātmans*) or living beings; who is in the form of the earth; who forms the Cosmic Body (Virāṭ); who, as the Vāyu—the deity of vital airs and wind—sustains the three worlds, and forms the power of the mind, senses and body.

40.*** I pay obeisance to him who as ether (through its attribute called Sound) serves as an index (to the existence)

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* (i) VR. : I bow to him who as an Inner Controller dispenses fruits of *karmas*; who as the food of Pitṛs and gods brings satisfaction to them; who is the protector of three Vedas and is the fruit (seed) of sacrifices; thus he reveals the means of attaining to heaven (*Svarga*—including worldly pleasures on the earth) and *Mokṣa*; who is the giver of pleasures to *jīvas* from the contact with objects of senses and all kinds of tastes.

(ii) VC: Oh Lord in the form of Soma, the food of *Pitṛs* and gods ! By repaying the debt (obligations) to gods, sages and *Pitṛs*, please fix up my heart in devotion (to you) and may the lustre of Soma purify me Oh Lord in the form of fluids! Please develop in me taste for your essential sweetness. May my tongue and humids in my body be purified. I pay obeisance to you.

(iii) GD : The Lord, in the form of *rasa* (fluids) is bowed to create proper ability in the tongue to taste the sweetness of divine grace.

** (i) VR : Salutations to him whom everything insentient and all sentient beings serve as a body; who is gross (*Virāṭ*) and of the form of Pṛthivī and its characteristic quality—fragrance.

(ii) VJ : Obeisance to him who abides in everyone as the Soul, thumb-like in stature; and who staying within the earth makes her most important.

(iii) VC : Oh Hari in the form of the Earth ! Direct my sense of smell to your divine fragrance and my body to your service. Oh Hari in the form of Vāyu ! Make my sense of touch appreciative of the tenderness of your person and make my body, senses and mind capable of worshipping you.

*** (i) VJ: Bow to him the correct means of knowing whom is *Śāstra* or *Veda*; or who is the cause or source of *Puruṣārtha* (the highest objective in human life); who is unattached like *ākāśa* (ether); who sanctifies all; who is light itself; who abides in all deities or who gives sacred regions like *Svarga* etc.

of all things and are the basis of the concept of differentiation between the internal and external. I bow to him who forms the regions of great refulgence (called *Svarga* etc. and which are attained by great meritorious acts).

41. I bow to you who are both *Pravṛtti karma* (acts pertaining to worldly activities or *saṁsāra*) leading to the region of manes (Pitṛs), and the *Nivṛtti karma* (the discontinuance of worldly acts) the means of attaining to the region of gods. (Bow to you) who are the god of Death, (which is) the fruit of unrighteousness which causes pain.

42. Salutations to you, Oh Lord! You are the source of all blessings. You are the Manu (or all-knower and the embodiment of *Mantras*). I bow to you in the form of Kṛṣṇa who is the highest righteousness incarnate and whose intelligence is unobstructed (anywhere); who is the ancient-most Puruṣa (person), the master of the path of knowledge (Sāṅkhya) and of Yoga.

43. You are the Lord Rudra who is the presiding deity of *ahaṁkāra* (ego) and who possesses the threefold potencies (of being the doer, the instrument and action). I bow to you (Oh Brahmā!) who are the embodiment of knowledge and action, and who are the source of (four kinds) speech (viz. *parā*, *paśyanti*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*). My obeisance to you.

44. Be pleased to bless us who are earnestly desirous of seeing you, with your vision which is highly adored and esteemed by the devotees of the venerable Lord (i.e. you). Please reveal to us your beautiful form which is so dearest to your votaries, and which, forming the objects of enjoyment of all senses simultaneously, delights them all (*or* which delights all senses by its numerous qualities).

45. Your form is lovely, bluish and resplendent like the rainy cloud. With its four long graceful arms and winsome face with beautiful and well-shaped features, it is as if a synthesis (lit. a treasure-house) of beauty in everything.

46. Your form has eyes (charming) like the inner petals of lotus, beautiful eyebrows and shapely nose, excellent rows

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(ii) VC. : In these verses one's own elements, senses and mind are made prone to the devotion of the Lord. After adoring Lord, the Lord is bowed to as having the form of the Vaikuṇṭha.

of teeth, attractive cheeks and mouth with symmetrical ears beautifying it.

47. With side-long looks as if smiling with love, your form is beautified with flowing locks of hair. It is clad in silken garments, (yellowish) like lotus-filaments, and is adorned with a pair of polished earrings.

48. It is also decorated with a brilliant crown, bracelets, wreaths of pearls, anklets and a girdle. It is extremely magnificent by its conch, discus, mace, lotus, garland of sylvan flowers and excellent jewels (of various kinds).

49. Its shoulders which resembled those of a lion, are shining with lustre of necklace, earrings (and other ornaments). Its neck appears beautiful with the refulgence of the *Kaustubha* gem. Its bosom on which rests permanently the goddess Śrī (in the form of *Śrīvatsa*) far outshines the (dark coloured) touchstone bearing a streak of gold on it.

50. Its belly is like the leaf of an *aśvattha* (Indian fig-tree) in shape, and appears beautiful with its threefold heaving due to his inhalation and exhalation of breath. Its navel is so deep like a whirlpool that it is as if withdrawing again the universe (to its source) through it.

51. On the dark-blue waist (of Your form) the (yellow) silken loin-cloth fastened with a girdle of gold, appears all the more resplendent (by contrast in colours). Your form is extremely handsome to look at due to (its pair of) symmetrical and beautiful feet, shanks, thighs and depressed knees.

52. You dispel the darkness (of ignorance) in our hearts by the rays of light emanating from the nails of your feet (toes) which are beautiful like the petals of autumnal lotus. Pray reveal to us your form, our asylum, which removes the fear (of your devotees). Oh Master! You are the preceptor to guide us who are groping in the dark.

53.* This form of yours should be constantly meditated upon by those who earnestly desire to purify their hearts. For

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* (i) VR. : Pray reveal unto us your form as an object of meditation (and not *sākṣātkāra*—perception). The Yoga of meditation leads to the Yoga of devotion.

(ii) VJ. : Self-purification means liberation from *saṁsāra*. For this mere performance of our righteous duties according to our *varṇa* (caste)

the path of devotion brings fearlessness (or final beatitude) unto those who perform their respective religious duties.

54. You are difficult to be attained by all embodied beings (who are not your devotees). You are sought after and respected by the ruler of heaven—*Svarga*. You are the goal of them who exclusively seek Self-realisation. You are accessible only to them who are full of devotion.

55. You are very difficult to be propitiated. Having propitiated you, with exclusive devotion which is difficult to be found even in the righteous people, who will covet for anything else than an asylum at your feet ?

56. Even though the god of death destroys the universe by the movement of his eyebrow—an index of his majestic power and energy—he does not wish (to exercise his authority on) him who has resorted to your feet as shelter.

57. I do not regard the heaven (*Svarga*) as well as final Beatitude (*Mokṣa*) as equivalent to companionship for the duration of half a moment with the devotees attached to the Lord. What of the blessings of mortals.

58. Now, let this be the favour conferred on us : May we be blest with the association of those who have washed away their sins internally by immersing their Souls in the (stream of the) glory of the Lord, and externally by bathing in the sacred waters of the Gaṅgā flowing from the Lord's holy feet which absolves one of all sins, and who are compassionate to all beings and have their minds free from passions like love, hate etc., and are endowed with virtues like straightforwardness.

59.* The contemplative sage whose mind is completely purified by being blest with the path of devotion (in associa-

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and *āśrama* (stage of life) is not enough. This observance of duties developing into and combining therewith intense devotion leads to Liberation.

(iii) VC.: Mere knowledge of *karmas* is not sufficient. *Bhakti-yoga* is absolutely necessary for those who observe their respective religious duties. A *Sādhaka* desirous of removing his *avidyā*, should meditate upon this form till a gets a vision of it.

* VC.: The mind is specially purified in the association of your devotees. Such pure mind enjoys the beauty of your sports (*līlā*). The ten defects or 'offences' against *bhakti* (devotion) or *nāma* (God's name) do not arise. The goddess of Bhakti confers her blessings and such a contemplative Soul visualises God's sports in his pure heart

tion with such devotees of God) and is neither distracted by external objects nor lost in the dark cave of ignorance,[130] soon perceives your real nature easily and properly.

60.* You are that superbly effulgent *Brahman* in whom this universe is manifested and who appears shining in everything and who is all-pervading (and unaffected or unattached) like the sky.

61. Oh Lord! Your Māyā assumes various numerous forms. By this (Māyā) you create, sustain and again destroy the world as if it were real. But you remain changeless (all the while). Your Māyā creates the notion of difference (in others), but has no control or effect on you, the Supreme Soul. Hence we know you to be absolutely independent.

62. This form of yours is indicated as their controller by the *bhūtas* (five elements e.g. Earth, Water, Fire etc.), (conative and cognitive) sense-organs and the mind. Those (*karma*)—*yogins*[131] (the followers of the Path of Action), who devotedly worship this very form properly, by means of various ritualistic acts, for the attainment of *Siddhi* (final emancipation), are verily the past masters in Vedas and Āgama-Śāstra (Tantric-lore).

63. You are the only One, primeval Person with your potency (called Māyā) lying dormant. When it is activated through her, (the three *guṇas* viz.) *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* become differentiated (and combined). From it are evolved this universe (consisting of) (the principle of cosmic intelligence called) *Mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* (ego), (elements such as) the sky,

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130. VJ. reads differently : Whose mind enters the Soul who abides in cave of the heart.

*VJ: This verse points that Brahman (the support) and the universe are different; that his supreme effulgence shows that he is unaffected by ignorance or nescience and his comparison with the sky indicates his limitlessness.

131. *yoginaḥ*—(i) VR.: For Liberation (*Mokṣa*) the followers of the path of knowledge (*jñāna-yoga*) devoutly worship this form of the Lord, by performance of righteous duties specifically prescribed for their *varṇa* and *āśrama*. They do these properly and without any attachment or longing for the fruit of the action.

(ii) Followers of *Bhakti-yoga*—GD.

wind, fire, water and earth, as well as gods, sages, multitudes of living beings.

64* By a portion of yourself, you have entered the bodies of four types[132] which you have created by your (Māyā) power. It is, therefore, that they call him *Puruṣa* i.e. one who abides in the body. He is the *jīva* who through his senses enjoys the (drops of) honey (insignificant pleasures) collected by bees[132a]. (This shows his negligible nature.)

65. Though you are as described above, your real nature is inferrable (as its direct perception is not possible). (At the time of the dissolution of the world) you exhibit very terrific velocity sweeping off one element by another; You (ultimately) destroy the world just as a hurricane of irresistible force scatters away and sweeps off a multitude of clouds.

66. Just as an alert serpent, licking (its lips) with hunger, suddenly seizes a rat, you, as vigilant Death, suprisingly catch hold of a person who, absorbed in the anxiety of what to do and how to do, has become extremely negligent, is extremely addicted to sensual pleasure and has grown overgreedy.

67. What wise man who regards his life (lit. body) wasted by disregarding (i.e. not remembering) you, will give up your lotus-like feet—feet which my father Brahmā has been

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* VR. : The Lord is known as Puruṣa as he is the *antaryāmin* of *jīva* in whom he enters and controls.

VJ. : By a slight portion he enters the bodies of four kinds (e.g. viviparous, oviparous etc.) and through the senses of the *jīva* he enjoys only the essence of bliss. Hence as he abides in the body, he is known as Puruṣa.

VC.: The word *sāragha* indicates that the so-called pleasure is really pain (the sting of bees).

SD. : He who enjoys the insignificant pleasures of senses, the fruit of actions, is called *jīva* and is bound and he who abides in the body and is free, is the *Puruṣa*.

132. *caturvidham* : ŚR. enumerates them as follows :—(i) *jarāyuja* (viviparous); (ii) *aṇḍaja* (oviparous); (iii) *svedaja* (sweat-born); (iv) *udbhija* (germinating as a plant). According to VR. they are :—(1) gods; (2) men; (3) subhuman beings; (4) immovables.

132a. Cf. *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā*. . ...
tayor anyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvatti etc. —*Muṇḍ. Up.* 3.1.1.
Śvet. Up. 4.6.

adoring through fear (of bondage of *saṁsāra*) and which the fourteen Manus have been worshipping without arguments (with implicit belief).

68. Oh Brahman! Oh Supreme Soul! The whole universe is overwhelmed with the fear of Rudra (the destroyer of the universe). To us who are wise, you are our asylum completely free from fear.

69. Oh Princes! While you carry out your righteous duties with a pure heart and with your mind concentrated on the Lord, you repeat this (hymn). May God bless you!

70. (Please do) worship Hari, extolling and contemplating him again and again, as Hari is the Supreme Soul abiding in you as well as in all other beings.

71. Please commit to memory the hymn called *Yogādeśa* which you have received from me. Observing the vows of a sage's life and concentrating your minds, all of you study this reverentially.

72. With a desire to create the world, the venerable god Brahmā, the Lord of all the progenitors of the universe, formerly taught this (hymn) to us, his sons e.g. Bhṛgu and others who were intent on augmenting procreation.

73. When we, all the progenitors of creatures, were urged to create beings, we dispelled our ignorance by (repeating) this hymn and procreated various species of beings.

74. Hence, if a person who is devoted to Vāsudeva, repeats this hymn with faith and concentrated mind, he would before long obtain blissfulness.

75. Knowledge leading to the final beatitude is the highest of all blessings. It is by the boat of knowledge that one easily crosses the impassable sea of misery (i.e. *saṁsāra*).

76. He who with perfect devotion and concentration, studies this hymn in praise of the Lord sung by me, propitiates Lord Hari himself who is otherwise so very difficult to be pleased.

77. As the Lord is the sole receptacle of all blessings, a man with a steady mind who highly delights the Lord (by praising him) with this hymn sung by me, immediately gets whatever blessings he likes.

78. A man, who, rising up early at dawn, and with a heart full of devotion, hears this or recites this to others with folded palms, is released from the chains of *karmas*.

79. Oh princes! By repeating with concentrated mind this praise of the Highest Person, the Supreme Soul, sung by me, you do perform this great penance at the end of which you will obtain your desired object.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

*(*The Story of Purañjana—Introduction*)

Maitreya said :

1. Having thus instructed Pracetasas, the sons of Barhiṣad, Lord Śiva who was devoutly worshipped by them, immediately disappeared at that very spot, while the Princes were simply looking on.

2. Repeating the hymn in praise of the venerable Lord, as sung by Rudra, all the Pracetasa princes standing in water, practised penance for ten thousand years.

3. Oh Vidura ! In the meanwhile (while Pracetasas were undergoing austere penance) the compassionate Nārada who knew the reality about the Supreme Soul, (visited and) reasoned with (their father) Prācīnabarhis who was attached to and was preoccupied in ritualistic Vedic acts, (as follows) :

4. "Oh King ! What bliss do you attempt to secure by the performance of ritualistic acts? That which removes miseries and secures happiness is (called the real) bliss. And (according to the wise) such beatitude is not expected from the *karmas*."

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* The story of Purañjana is an allegory on *jīva* and Paramātman. (Cf. the allegorical reference to the *jīva* and *Śiva* as two birds occupying the same tree, one enjoying the fruits and the other staying aloof—*Muṇḍ. Up.* 3.1.1 and *Śvet. Up.* 4.6) The commentators explain the allegory at every step in details.

It is interesting to compare the interpretation of the allegory given by the commentators with that given by the author of the Bh. P. himself in chapter 29 (infra).

The King said :

5. "Oh blessed Sir ! My mind is distracted by the ritualistic *karmas*. I do not know the supreme bliss. Please initiate me in that pure knowledge whereby I can be free from (bonds of all) *karmas*.

6. In the householder's life which is characterised by deceitfulness, a person looks upon his sons, wife and wealth as the sole objectives in life. Such ignorant persons, wandering in the pathways of *saṁsāra* (transmigration of the Soul), never attain the Supreme Bliss.

*Nārada said** :

7. Oh Lord of men ! Have a look at those multitudes of living beings mercilessly slaughtered by you in thousands, as beasts (consecrated) for sacrifice.

8. Remembering your cruelty (to them), they are waiting for you. When you will be dead, they, with their ire aroused, will pierce you (through and through) with their steel-like horns.

9. On this point, I shall narrate to you this ancient legend. Listen to the story of Purañjana as I tell you.

10. Oh King, there was a king of wide fame, by name Purañjana (i.e. *Jīva*). He had a friend called Avijñāta (i.e. the Supreme Soul) as his activities were unknown.

11. The king wandered over the earth[133] in search of an abode.[134] When he did not find any suitable asylum, he became rather dejected.[135]

12. Seeking after pleasures, he did not approve of any of the cities that existed on the earth as suitable for the realization

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* By his Yogic powers Nārada showed to the King the huge multitudes of beasts slaughtered by him for sacrifice—ŚR.

133. *Pṛthivi*—This indicates the universe—ŚR., VR. *karma-bhumi*—VJ.

134. *Śarīram*—Body through which the *jīva* gets experience in life.

135. Although he (the *jīva*) gets sensual pleasures in all births, he is not satisfied as non-attachment, which is the means of the Liberation (*Mokṣa*) is not possible in non-human births. Hence his dejection—GD.

of those pleasures.[136]

13.* Once upon a time, he saw, on the table land in the southern range of the Himālayas, a city having nine gates and possessing all the characteristics of a good city.

14.** It was surrounded by ramparts, gardens, watch-towers, moats, windows, arched gateways. It was crowded on all sides with houses with crests of gold, silver and iron.

15. It appeared resplendent like Bhogavatī,[137] in beauty, with floors of its mansions studded with precious stones like sapphires, crystals, cat's eyes, pearls, emeralds and rubies.

16. It appeared beautiful with assembly halls, court-yards, main roads (highways), gambling houses, markets, resthouses, flags and fluttering banners and platforms built of coral.

17. Outside the city, there was a park full of celestial trees and creepers. There was a lake resounding with warbling sounds of birds and humming of bees.

18. The bank of the lotus pond was richly beautified with trees the foliage and branches of which were fluttering with the cool breeze laden with spray from the cascades and blowing over the flower beds.

19. It was safe and free from molestation as the multitudes of wild animals infesting it were observing ascetic vows (e. g. non-violence etc.). The traveller feels that he is invited there, by the cooing of the cuckoos.

20.*** In that garden, he (King Purañjana) saw a young

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136. There is no possibility of enjoying all the earthly and heavenly pleasures in non-human species. Hence his disapproval—ŚR. Cf. *tābhyo gām ānayat tā abruwan na vai no'yam alam* etc. *Ait. Up.* 2.2.

*In Bhāratavarṣa, to the south of the Himālayas, he saw the city (human body) which was free from disabilities and handicaps like blindness, deafness—ŚR.

**The limbs or sense-organs of the body are the ramparts etc. The plexuses (*cakras* like *ādhāra* etc.) are the houses. The three types of turrets or house-crests are the *guṇas* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*—ŚR.

137. *Bhogavatī* : Literally—a place for enjoyment of pleasures, but it is generally derived from *bhoga* 'serpent's body'. It is the name of the city of snakes in the lower-regions, famous for its beauty.

***The lady is the intelligence (*buddhi*) and the ten attendants are the conative and cognitive sense-organs and the hundred (i.e. hundreds of) activities or *vṛttis* of each are the wives.—ŚR.

damsel of superb beauty coming there by chance. She was accompanied by ten servants each of whom was the husband of hundred ladies.

21. She was guarded on all sides by her bodyguard, a serpent with five hoods.[138] She was sixteen years of age, beautiful or capable of assuming any form she liked. She was in search of a husband.

22. The girl had a shapely nose, beautiful rows of teeth, lovely cheeks, attractive face and was wearing lustrous earrings in her symmetrical ears.

23. She put on a reddish-brown garment round her waist with a girdle of gold around it. The dark-complexioned[139] lady with well formed hips walked with her feet making a tinkling sound with the adorning anklets.

24. Out of bashfulness, she was (now and then) covering with the end of her garments. her symmetrical, closely knit, round (spherical) breasts indicating the advent of youth. She was walking (in the stately gait) like an elephant.

25. Being (as if) wounded with the arrows of her charming side-long glances, shot from the bow of her eyebrows making lively amorous movements, the hero (Purañjana) spoke in soft winsome tones to the girl who looked all the more lovely by her bashful smiles.

26. "Who are you, Oh beautiful lady with eyes like the lotus-petals? Whose (relative) are you? Whence have you come here? Oh timid lady, please tell me what you desire to do here on the outskirts of the city?

27. Who are these ten attendants commanded by the formidable warrior, forming the eleventh? Who are these beautiful damsels? Who is the serpent who goes ahead of you, Oh lady with beautiful eyebrows?

28. Are you the goddess Hrī, Pārvatī or Sarasvatī (the goddess of speech) or the goddess Lakṣmī leading the life of a sage in this secluded forest seeking a husband who must have surely got all his wishes fulfilled as your feet are desired

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138. This is *Prāṇa* of five vital functions—ŚR.

139. ŚR. quotes the following from the *Chānd. Up.* to explain the darkness of complexion : *annamayaṁ hi somya mana iti yat kṛṣṇam tad annasya /*

by him ?[140] If you be the goddess Lakṣmī, where has the lotus been dropped from your hand ?

29. Oh lady with beautiful thighs, you are surely none of these deities as you touch the earth (with your feet). You should, therefore, adorn this city along with me (who am) an excellent warrior of great exploits, just as goddess Lakṣmī as the consort of Lord Viṣṇu (the Lord of Sacrifices) graces Vaikuṇṭha (the highest region).

30. Please show favour to me, Oh graceful lady, as the mind-born god of love, prompted by you with the playful movement of your eyebrows and your bashful smile expressing love, is harassing me by piercing my heart with your side-glances.

31. Oh lady with bright smiles ! Please raise up and show me your sweet speaking face with beautiful eyebrows and eyes of bright, charming pupils—your face which is covered with locks of long dark-blue hair—as it is not turned to me through bashfulness."

Nārada said :

32. Oh warrior! The lady was infatuated with Purañjana, the hero[141] who was courting her so impatiently and (in response) greeted him with a smile

33. "Oh prominent man, we do not know properly who is your or my progenitor. No, do we know the family or the name (by which we are called?)

34. We know that we are here today, now. We do not know beyond that. Nor do we know who created this city which is my abode, Oh warrior.

35. Oh respectful one, these men and women, who are my friends, stay awake while I am asleep. So does this serpent guarding this city.

36. Leave aside the details about my name, family etc. Oh destroyer of enemies, I am glad that you have come.

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140. According to most commentators: But the alternate explanation "who must... wishes fulfilled as his feet are desired by you" is worth considering.

141. ŚR. presumably reads *ikṣya* and interprets *dṛṣṭvā* (having seen).

God bless you! Whatever sensual pleasures you desire, I shall secure for you with the help of my kinsmen.

37. Please occupy this city of nine gates, enjoying for hundred years all the sense-pleasures which I shall secure for you, Oh Lord.

38. For, whom else than you should I really please—him who is ignorant of erotics or pleasure, void of learning or wisdom, careless about tomorrow's work (i.e. his life here) and heedless about his life hereafter, a sheer brute.

39. Here (in the life of a householder) one attains to *puruṣārthas* called *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth) and *kāma* (pleasures of the senses). It is here that one gets the joy of getting progeny, immortality (i.e. Liberation—*Mokṣa*), fame and regions which are free from sins, sorrow—which even recluses do not know.

40. They, the sages of old, say that in this world, the stage of householder's life is the only asylum for the well-being of manes (*pitṛs*), gods, sages, men and all other beings and of the householder himself.

41. Oh warrior, what girl in my position (lit. like me) would not accept as a husband a famous, munificent, good-looking, loving personage like you.

42. Oh mighty-armed hero! What woman's heart in this world would not cling to your arms which are (tender yet powerful) like the body of a serpent?—You move about in the world in order to remove the mental anguish of the helpless by your smiling looks full of compassion."

Nārada said :

43. Oh King (Prācīnabarhis)! In this way the couple entered into a mutual agreement there. They then entered the city and lived in happiness for a hundred years.

44. Sweetly eulogised by bards everywhere, and playing in company of women, he entered the (swimming-) pool in the hot season.

45. For (the convenience of) the movements from and to the outer regions, of whosoever (unknown) was the master of the city there were seven gateways in the upper (i.e. front-)

part of the city (viz. two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and a mouth) and two in the lower part (the anus and the penis).

46. There were five doors to the east (front, viz., two eyes, two nostrils and one mouth), one to the South (the right ear), one to the North (the left ear) and two to the west (viz. the penis and the anus). I shall describe to you the names of these, Oh King.

47.* To the East were constructed adjacently a pair of gates called *khadyotā* (fire-fly) and Āvirmukhī (of manifest face—bright light). Through them he (king Purañjana) accompanied by his friend Dyumat, used to visit the country called Vibhrājit.

48.** A pair of adjacent gates called Nalinī and Nālinī were also built to the east. Through them he (Purañjana) in company of Avadhūta, goes to the region called Saurabha (Fragrance).

49.*** The fifth gate to the east was called Mukhyā (the main). In association with Rasajña and Vipaṇa, the king of the city goes through the gate to the countries of Āpaṇa and Bahūdana.

50.† On King (Barhisad)! Through the southern gate of the city called Pitṛhū, Purañjana, in accompaniment of Śrutadhara used to go to the country called Southern Pañcāla.

51.†† By the northern gate of the city, known as *Devahū*, Purañjana along with Śrutadhara, used to go to the country called Northern Pañcāla.

52. To the west of the city was the gate called *Āsurī* (pertaining to *asuras*—people indulging in sensual pleasures). In company of Durmada, Purañjana used to go to the country called Grāmaka (low or vulgar pleasures).

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* Description of the eyes.

** Description of the nose.

*** Herein *Āpaṇa* signifies speech, and *Bahūdana* denotes variety of food. *Vipaṇa* thus stands for the organ of speech and *Rasajña*, for the capacity of the tongue to taste—ŚR.

† The right ear is the Southern gate leading to the region of Pitṛs by the path of ritualistic *karmas*. It hears the *karma-kāṇḍa*, the path of the *karmas*. Due to its association with *Pitṛ-yāṇa* the right ear is called *Pitṛhū*. *Pañcāla* here is the science of *Pravṛtti mārga*.

†† *Devahū* is the left ear. It leads to the region of gods by following the *Devayāna* Path.

53. There was another gate to the West. It was called *Nivṛti*. Through it Purañjana went to the country called *Vaiśasa* (terrible), in company of Lubdhaka (a miser).

54. Out of the citizens (there were) two viz. *Nirvāk* (speechless) and *Peśaskṛta* (possessing no aperture). With these the lord of senses made movements of walking and doing.

55. If he goes to his harem (viz. heart) along with (his friends) *Viṣūcīna* (the chief of attendant in a harem), he experiences delusion, calmness and (excitement of) joy, from wife and children.

56. The unwise king (Purañjana) who was thus deeply attached to *karmas* (action) and whose mind was completely given up to sensual pleasures, was enraptured and whatever the queen wished to do, he acted accordingly.

57. Sometimes when she used to drink wine, he used to drink and get intoxicated. Sometimes when she took meals, he took it with her ; when she chewed, he did the same.

58. Sometimes when she sang, he used to sing; sometimes he wept when she shed tears; sometimes he followed her while she laughed ; sometimes when she chattered, he prattled.

59. Sometimes when she ran, he ran; he stood when she stood. When she lay in bed, he did so; sometimes when she sat up, he also sat up.

60. Occasionally, when she heard, he heard; when she saw, he also saw it; sometimes she smelt, he also smelt; when she touched, he used to touch.

61. Sometimes when the wife cried in sorrow, he wept after her like a man in distress; when she rejoiced, he rejoiced; on her being delighted, he was delighted.

62. In this way, he was deceived by the queen and lost his original nature (such as non-attachment to everything). The ignorant King though unwilling, simply imitated (the acts of his queen) helplessly like a domesticated monkey kept for amusement.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Purañjana's Hunting Expedition and His Queen's Wrath Pacified

Nārada said :

1-3.* One day, Purañjana, clad in the armour of gold and equipped with a mighty bow and an inexhaustible quiver (of arrows) and accompanied by his eleventh general, mounted his chariot fit for speedy marches. It was yoked with five horses; had a pair of shafts, two wheels, one axle, three flag-staffs, five cords, only one rein, one charioteer, one seat, two central poles to which yoke is fixed, five covered litters and sevenfold protection, capable of five kinds of movements and provided with instruments of gold. He set out for the forest called *Pañca Prastha* (Forest of five hills).

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*ŚR., VR. SD., GD., GS., BP. regard verses 1-10 as the description of Purañjana in the state of dream. Only VJ. thinks this as a state of wakefulness (*jāgrad-avasthā-praveśa*).

According to ŚR., the allegory becomes clear when we understand the following:

The chariot=His body in the dream.
Five horses=five cognitive senses.
Two shafts=The notions of I-ness and Mine-ness.
Two wheels=merits and sins.
One axle=Pradhāna (Primordial Nature).
Three flagstaffs=*Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.
Five cords=Five vital breaths (Prāṇa, apāna etc.).
One rein=the mind.
One charioteer=The intellect.
One seat=the heart.
Two poles=grief and delusion (*Śoka-mohau*)
Five recesses=Five objects of senses.
Seven-fold protection=Seven constituents of the body.
Five kinds of movements=Five conative organs.
Gold armour=*Rajoguṇa*.
The big bow=Attachment.
The inexhaustible quiver=Infinite tendencies associated with ego (*ahaṁkāra*).
One general=The Mind.
The Pafica-prastha forest=Five objects of the senses (e.g. sound, smell etc.)

VJ. explains differently (only differences are noted here):

While coming to the state of wakefulness, Purañjana entered the stage through the five senses for the purpose of possessing various objects.

4.* Being carried away by the passion for game, the proud king left behind his wife who did not deserve that treatment. Taking a bow and arrows, he started a-hunting there.

5. Taking to Asura (demonic) way of life, he became hard-hearted and merciless. He killed (all) the wild animals in the jungle with his sharp arrows.

6.** Even if a king is extremely fond (of hunting), it is restricted by the *śāstras*, that (it is only) on religious occasions like special *Śrāddhas* as specified in the *Śāstras* and not for routine *Śrāddhas* that theking may kill just the required number of sacrificial animals in the jungle (and not more).

7.*** Oh Chief of Kings! A learned person who does his acts as prescribed by the *Śāstras* is not thereby affected due to the knowledge arising from the performance of that act.

8. Otherwise a person who does acts (in violation of the restrictions of Śāstras), becomes full of egotism and falls in the stream of *guṇas* (i.e. *saṁsāra*). Losing his faculty of discrimination and judgment, he goes down[141a] (to lower grades of existence).

9. In the forest, there took place destruction of the afflicted animals whose bodies were shattered by arrows with variegated feathers—a sight unbearable to those whose hearts were full of compassion.

10.† After hunting down hares, hogs, buffaloes, bisons, deer, porcupines and many other (animals) irrespective of their fitness for being offered for sacrifice, he got exhausted.

His bow is the sacred syllable OM. The inexhaustible quivers are *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*. Purañjana is the leader of the army of eleven (10 sense-organs, mind). One axle is the Vāyu—the common 'thread' or force impelling all activities. Five recesses or knots are the *nāḍis* or 'tubes' through which five vital breaths (*prāṇas*) circulate through the body.

*Purañjana ignored his reasoning faculty altogether and with a mad attachment to sensual pleasures, indulged in them indiscriminately—ŚR.

**The allegory being thus clear, its application to each and every verse is not given here as it is unnecessary. Commentators, however, emphasize the inner meaning minutely rather than the story element.

***These show how one should do one's duties without being bound down by their effects and how an ignorant person impelled by passions gets involved in *saṁsāra*.

141a. *adho*—to hell—VR., GD.

† The hunted animals are the permitted and prohibited pleasures enjoyed by the *jīva*.

11.* Then being exhausted with hunger and thirst, he retired from hunting and returned to his palace. Having taken bath and proper (sumptuous) meal, he lay on bed and was relieved of fatigue.

12.** He got himself beautified with scents, cosmetics, flower garlands etc. Having got his person well adorned, he set his heart on the queen (his intelligence of *sāttvic* type).

13.*** In his youthful pride, the King who was satisfied and in a gay mood, got his mind overcome with the passion of love, he missed his (charming) wife who helped him discharging his duties as a householder.

14. Oh King Prācīnabarhis! Being rather frustrated, he asked the ladies in the harem, "Oh beautiful ladies, are all of you and your mistress, the queen, well as before?

15. The splendour and wealth of the house do not appear as brilliant as before (because) if the house is bereft of the mother or the wife who treats her husband as a god, it is like a broken chariot (without wheels etc.). What wise man will stay in it, like a miserable wretch?

16. Where is that charming lady who, at every step, illuminated my intelligence and lifted me up (by cheering me), while I was being drowned in the sea of miseries?"

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*According to ŚR., VR. and others, after describing the state of dream in verses 1-10, the author describes the happy life of a man with *sāttvikī buddhi* to the end of the chapter.

VJ. regards the remaining chapter as the description of the state of sleep thus: Being thoroughly tired of gross and violent mental activities, he retired from the state of wakefulness to his asylum viz. *hṛdaya-nāḍī*. Removing the dust of enjoyments in the stage of wakefulness and eaten his meals (his own blissful nature), the *jīva* sleeps fully relieved of fatigue.

**VJ. : This describes the preparation before going to sleep. Materials of decoration are for the worship of the Lord (the *antaryāmin*) to whose presence the *jīva* goes in deep sleep. His thought of the queen is the change from deep sleep to the dream-state.

***When the *jīva* is under the influence of *rājasī buddhi*, he will not find this *sāttvikī buddhi*—ŚR.

(ii) In the dream-state the *jīva* does not find the conclusive understanding about Hari (*niścaya-jñānaṁ no'paiti*)—VJ.

The ladies replied :

17. "Oh King (Lord of men), we do not know what your beloved intends to do. You see (for yourself) that she is lying on the bare ground, Oh destroyer of enemies."

Nārada said :

18. Purañjana who had lost all his knowledge (power of discretion and judgment) through his fondness for his wife, became highly agitated and distressed to see her lying stretched (that way) on the ground.

19. With an aching heart, he tried to soothe her with soft, pleasing words. But he did not get any indication (in her behaviour) that it was a feigned anger of his beloved queen towards him (due to love).

20. Being expert in the art of conciliation, the hero gradually cajolled her, touched her feet and seating her on his lap he caressed her.

Purañjana said :

21. Really unfortunate are those servants on whom, though they have committed an offence, their masters do not inflict any corrective punishment, thinking that they (servants) are after all under their control, Oh beautiful damsel.

22. Punishment is a supreme grace shown by the master to his servants. Oh slim lady, it is only an intolerant fool who does not understand this as a friendly act.

23. Oh high-Souled lady with beautiful teeth and charming eyebrows! Please show to us who are your own, your face with prominently shapely nose and soft, sweet accented speech—face bright with smiling looks, bent down with the weight of love and bashfulness, adorned with bee-like dark locks of hair.

24. Oh queen of a warrior (like me)! I shall instantly inflict punishment on him who has committed any offence against you unless he be an earth-god (*Brāhmaṇa*) or a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. Verily I shall see to it that he is not free from fear, much less joyous either in the three worlds or (even) beyond (wherever he may go, he shall die out of fear from me).

25. Never have I seen (before) your face without its *tilaka* mark (on the forehead) or your countenance so dull,

cheerless, terrific with anger, unwashed and gloomy. Nor have I ever noticed your lovely breasts soiled with (tears of) grief and your lips red like *Bimba*-fruit, bereft of their saffron-colour.

26. Therefore be gracious unto me, who, being mad with the passion for hunting, have committed the offence of going out to hunt as per dictates of his whim (without taking your permission). What woman wishing to have a union would not accept for the proper duties her lover who has always been under her control and who has lost his patience by the vehemence of passion of love.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN*

(*Invasion of Caṇḍavega—The Episode of Kālakanyā*)

Nārada said :

1. In this way, bringing Purañjana under her complete control by her womanly charms, Purañjanī (the queen of Purañjana) enjoyed her life, giving delight to her husband, Oh great king.

2. When the queen who took her full bath and beautified herself with auspicious decorations, approached the king fully satisfied and with bright countenance, he hailed her with joy, Oh king (Prācīnabarhis).

3. Embraced by her, he threw his arms about her neck. He lost his reasoning capacity by the amorous sweet words of the queen in privacy. As he was thus possessed by the young lady day and night, he did not grasp the inexorably rapid course of time.

4. The magnanimous prince, being overwhelmed with lustful passion, lay on a very costly couch with the queen's arm as a pillow. He regarded her as the supreme objective in life (puruṣārtha) and he did not think of his real transcendental self[142] (or Brahman) as he was overpowered with *Tamas* (ignorance).

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*This chapter describes the general course of *saṁsāra* with Purañjana as the representative *jīva*.

142. Or alternatively he did not know what was his and what was another's.

5. Oh king of kings ! While he was enjoying pleasures thus with his mind clouded with passion, his youth passed away as if it were half a minute.

6.* The emperor Purañjana begot through (empress) Purañjanī eleven hundred sons. But he lost half of his life then.

7. Oh Lord of creatures ! He (also) begot eleven hundred and ten daughters called Paurañjanīs. They brought glory to their parents and were endowed with qualities like good character and generosity.

8.** That king of Pañcālas (Purañjana) got his sons, (all) capable of continuing the race of their forefathers, married to suitable brides and his daughters to proper bridegrooms.

9. And his son had each a hundred sons who have verily propagated the race of Purañjana in the Pañcāla country.

10. By the formation of a strong attachment (lit. sense of mineness) to (sons and grandsons), the shareholders in his property, house treasures and dependants (e.g. ministers, servants), he became firmly attached to the sense-objects.

11. Being prompted by various desires he became consecrated for sacrifices and worshipped gods, manes (*pitṛs*), Lord of the goblins with sacrifices terrible on account of slaughter of beasts, as your honour has done.

12. In this way, he remained remiss about his duties (spiritually) beneficial to him, and had his mind strongly attached to his family. Verily there came the period of life (old age) which is repellent to persons addicted to women.

13. Oh King Prācīnabarhis ! There was a King of Gandharvas, known as Caṇḍavegā (signifying the complete year). The powerful king had a force of three hundred sixty Gandharvas (Gandharvas standing for days).

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*Here 'eleven' signifies the ten sense organs and the mind. 'Hundreds' means innumerable activities of senses.

Daughters are the mental activities.

**Jīva, the Lord of five senses, married his sons i.e. sense-activities to suitable brides, i.e. thoughts about what is beneficial or otherwise. His daughters i.e. mental activities were associated with virtues like modesty or proper objectives of pleasure.

14. Paired to(i.e.wedded to)them were similar (equal number of) Gandharva women (i.e. nights) some dark, some fair or white (according to the fortnights). By their rotational raids, they plundered the city furnished with all desired objects, since its creation.

15. When those attendants of Caṇḍavega began to plunder the city of Purañjana, Prajāgara, the serpent-guard resisted them there.

16. That powerful presiding deity of the city of Purañjana, single-handedly fought with seven hundred and twenty Gandharvas (male and female) for one hundred years (which is the duration of man's life).

17. When his relative—the guardian-serpent—began to lose strength by his single-handed fight with many, Purañjana, along with kingdom, capital and relations felt very much distressed with great anxiety.

18. In the capital city of Pañcāla he indulged in drinking and was under the thumb of women. While he used to receive taxes collected by his retainers, he was not aware of the danger.

19. Oh king Barhiṣad(Prācīnabarhis)! There was a certain daughter of Kāla[143] (the Time-spirit) who, being desirous of having a husband, toured over the three worlds. But nobody welcomed her.

20. Due to her misfortune she was well-known over the world as Durbhagā (the unfortunate). She was (once) sought after by the royal-sage, Puru, to whom she gave a boon.[144]

21. One day while she was wandering, she met me when I descended from Brahmā's region (*satyaloka*) to the earth. Being infatuated with passion, she sought me even though she knew that I had taken a vow of lifelong celibacy.

22. Getting enraged (at my refusal), she gave me an extremely unbearable curse ; 'Oh Sage, as you have set your

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143. *Kālakanyā*=Old age.

144. This refers to Puru's acceptance of the old-age of his father Yayāti to himself in exchange of his youth. Yayāti returned his youth to his son and made him the sovereign king after him.

face against my importunity, you will never stay at one place.'

23. The girl whose desire was so frustrated then followed my advice and approached the king of Yavanas,[145] by name Bhaya (Fear or Death), and courted him as a husband.

24. "Oh brave warrior ! I woo you, the leader of the Yavanas, as my coveted husband. The hope entertained by the creatures in you is never falsified.[146]

25. Good people feel regret for those two (types of) foolish and perverse natured people who neither give nor accept what is offered without any request and which is worth giving or receiving according to custom or Vedic precept.

26. Therefore, Oh good Sir, accept me who am offering myself to you. Please be gracious to me. It is the bounden duty of man to be compassionate with the afflicted."

27. Having heard the speech uttered by Kāla-kanyā (the daughter of Kāla), the lord of Yavanas, who desired to carry out the secret work of gods (viz., to bring about the death of living beings)[147] spoke to her with a smile.

28. "With the help of my Yogic vision born of my power of meditation, I have foreseen and selected a husband for you (even if) this world does not welcome you as you are both disagreeable (undesirable) and inauspicious.

29. Adopting unmanifest and imperceptible way of movement, you enjoy (each and every being in) the world created by *karma*. You go in company of my army (of diseases and anxieties) and you will bring about the destruction of all living beings.

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145. Yavanas signify physical pains and mental anguish.

146. VC. takes *bhakta* as 'the devotee of god' and interprets :

'The purpose of the devotees of the Lord is never frustrated'. Nārada intended that the 'Fear' (*Bhaya*) should grow old and weak by the marriage of Kāla-kanyā with him. His purpose should be achieved by my marrying you.

(ii) As *Bhaya* means *Kāla* (Death or Time) VD. adopts the second meaning 'Time' and explains: "A plan or determination made at the opportune (auspicious) time always bears fruit. I court you as you are the giver of fruit (success in undertaking) to all."

147. Death is kept secret by gods, lest people should renunciate the world.—ŚR.

30. This Prajvāra (Fatal fever created by Viṣṇu) is my brother. You be my sister. Accompanied by both of you and my formidable soldiers (physical and mental ailments) I shall range this world imperceptibly."

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

(Purañjana's Rebirth as a Woman and Attainment of Liberation)

Nārada said :

1. Oh King Barhiṣman (Prācīnabarhis)! Those soldiers of king Bhaya (i.e. diseases) who were the agents of fate, roamed over this earth accompanied by Prajvāra and the daughter of Kāla.

2. And all of a sudden, they swooped on the city of Purañjana on the D-day (on a certain day) and besieged the city, rich in earthly enjoyments, and guarded by the old serpent (i.e. the Prāṇa in old age whose physical activities became sluggish).

3. The daughter of Kāla also enjoyed perforce the city of Purañjana. Whatever man was overpowered by her, would at once become powerless.

4. The Yavanas (i.e. diseases) entered the city through all the gates from all directions and excessively ravished it, while it was being enjoyed by her (the body of the *jīva* is battered by repeated attacks of various diseases).

5. The city being (thus) devastated, Purañjana who identified himself with it as his own Self, and whose mind was troubled by his sense of mine-ness for his family (viz. intelligence, the mind, sense-organs etc.) underwent agonies of various kinds.

6. Clasped in the arms of the daughter of Kāla, bereft of his splendour and affluence, the wretched Purañjana whose mind was engrossed in sense-pleasure, lost his power of judgment and was forcibly deprived of his powers (viz. of making physical movements) by Gandharvas and Yavanas.

7. He saw that his capital city was completely razed and found that his sons, grandsons, attendants and ministers were antagonistic and disrespectful to him and his wife had lost love for him.

8. He found that he was in the clutches of the daughter (of Kāla) and that the Pañcālas were infested with enemies. He was lost in boundless anxiety and could not find any remedy against it.

9. The miserable king still hankered after the pleasures which were made stale (due to dyspepsia etc.) by the daughter of Kāla. He lost his affection for his son etc. here and his spiritual position hereafter, and continued in fondling his wife and sons.

10. Very reluctantly did the king proceed to abandon the city which was over-run by Gandharvas and Yavanas and was ravaged by the daughter of Kāla.

11. (At that time) there arrived Prajvāra (i.e. the high fatal fever) the elder brother of Bhaya (the chief of Yavanas). With a desire to render service to his brother, Prajvāra burnt down the entire city. (This indicates high temperature of the body).

12. When the city was aflame, the head of the family (Purañjana) along with his wife, children, dependents and citizens was greatly tormented.

13. When the city was occupied by the daughter of Kāla and his own home was surrounded by Yavanas, the guard of the city was greatly distressed when he was attacked by Prajvāra. (When the aged man is about to die, his body is in grip of diseases and the jīva is tormented every moment.)

14. When the serpent Prajāgara was not able to defend the city any longer there, he was violently trembling with severe agonies and he wished to escape from it (like a serpent) from the hollow of a tree ablaze with fire.

15. Oh King! When his limbs became weak and disabled and his prowess was thwarted by Gandharvas and he was surrounded by the inimical Yavanas, he verily wept bitterly.

16-17. The householder (Purañjana) entertained a false notion about his house etc. When the time of separation from his wife arrived, he became very miserable. Possessed with

egotism and a false sense of mine-ness about his daughters, sons, grandsons, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, attendants and whatever (little) remained of his house, treasures and belongings, he thought:

18. "When I have departed to the next world, how will this mistress of the family, being bereaved of her lord and lamenting for the children, carry on her life?

19. She is so devoted to me that she does not eat food until I have taken mine; nor does she take her bath till I have bathed. She gets terribly afraid, when I am angry; when reproached by me, she keeps quiet through fear.

20 When I become thoughtless, she brings me round (lit. wakens me) to the proper path. When I proceed on a long journey, she becomes emaciated through grief. True, she is the mother of heroic children. But how will she desire to carry on the householder's life (without me)—she will certainly die.

21. How can my miserable sons or supportless daughters possibly live when I am gone, as they are like unto passengers on a boat broken in the midst of the sea."

22. While he was thus lamenting like a mean-minded fellow which was unbecoming to him (as he was really the Brahman himself, the Yavana king called Bhaya with a determination to capture him, drew near him.

23.* When he was being dragged like a beast to his (destined) place by the Yavanas, his followers being extremely grieved, over-anxious and afflicted ran after him.

24. When the serpent which was blocked (by the Yavanas) escaped from the city to join (his master Purañjana) the city was completely razed and reduced to its elements.

25. Though Purañjana was forcibly dragged by the powerful Yavana, he was so much overpowered with *tamas* (ignorance) that he did not remember (Avijñāta) who was his former well-wisher and companion.

26. The sacrificial beasts which were ruthlessly slaugh-

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* When the *jīva* is being taken to his next birth predetermined by his *karmas*, his subtle-senses etc. follow him—ŚR., VR.

Cf. *tam ut-krāmantam prāṇo nūtkrāmati prāṇam anūtkrāmantaṁ sarve prāṇā anūtkrāmanti—Bṛhad. Up.* 4.4.2.

tered by him, remembered his cruelty and getting enraged cut him down with axes (or axe-like sharp horns).

27. He sank in bottomless darkness (hell). He lost his memory. Due to his sinful contacts with women, he suffered unbounded afflictions for eternal years.

28.* As he brooded over that very (virtuous) wife at the time of death, he was born later as a most beautiful damsel, the princess of (the pious king) Rājasiṃha of Vidarbha.

29.** The Pāṇḍya king, Malayadhvaja, the conqueror of the cities of enemies, vanquished other kings in the battle and married the princess of Vidarbha who was offered as prize for bravery.

30.*** He begot from her one daughter of dark-blue eyes, and seven sons younger to her who became the kings of Draviḍa countries.

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* ŚR. and VR. explain that brooding over a woman at the time of death results in birth as a woman. Purañjana thought of his virtuous wife at the time of his death and due to his good merits he was born in the pious family of Rājasiṃha of Vidarbha and got married to Malayadhvaja, a devotee of Viṣṇu. Both explain the pun on *Vidarbha*.

This allegory is explained differently by different commentators :

** (i) Purañjana was thus associated with a great devotee of Viṣṇu. For Malayadhvaja signifies an eminent votary in the southern country—Malaya—famous for Vaiṣṇavism. Pāṇḍya means one who deserves Paṇḍā—intellect capable of deciding the truth.—ŚR., VR.

(ii) Malaya-dhvaja—one whose mind has attained serenity etc. by service of Hari. By means of *yama, niyama* he defeated and subdued his passionate senses (the inimical kings). He is Pāṇḍya—one endowed with discriminatory intelligence. *Para-purañjaya*—conquerors of *viṣayas* or objects of senses. *Vaidarbhī*—keen intellect. Purañjana and Purañjanī brooded over each other at the time of their death and were born as Pramadottamā and Malayadhvaja—VJ.

(iii) SD. : *Malayadhvaja*—famous in Bhāratavarṣa.

Para-Purañjayaḥ—One who conquers, i.e. attains to Vaikuṇṭha.

Vīrya-paṇām—One available by good merits.

Jīva who was infatuated with *Buddhi* (Intelligence) changed one body after another, once upon a time finds a spiritual preceptor leading to *Mokṣa* (Liberation).

*** Allegory explained :

(i) ŚR., VR., GD. : *Ātmajā*—Liking for the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Draviḍa-bhūmi : The Draviḍa country is protected by devotion of the type of Śravaṇa etc.

31. Oh King, each one of them had hundred million sons, whose descendants will enjoy this earth for one Manvantara and more.

32. Agastya married the first-born daughter who was constant in observance of vows.[148] Through her was born Dṛḍhacyuta who had sage Idhmavāha as his son.

33. The royal sage Malayadhvaja distributed the land, among his sons. With a desire to propitiate Lord Kṛṣṇa he retired to the Kulācala mountain, viz., Malaya.

34. The Princess of Vidarbha with bewitching eyes abandoned her palaces, sons and pleasures and ran after the Pāṇḍya king (Malayadhvaja) like the moonlight following the Moon.

35. There flow three rivers viz., Candravasā, Tāmraparṇī and Vaṭodakā in that region. Every day he washed off both his internal (mental) and external (bodily) impurities with the holy waters of the rivers.

36. He performed austere penance by subsisting on bulbous roots, seeds, roots, fruits, flowers, leaves, blades of grass and water. (Thereby) his body got gradually emaciated.

37. He conquered the pairs of opposites like cold and heat, wind and rain, hunger and thirst, agreeable and disagree-

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In association with devotees of Viṣṇu, a desire to serve him is created and it is followed with seven kinds of *bhakti* or devotion viz. *Śravaṇa* (study of scriptures), *Kīrtana* (singing Lord's praise), *Smaraṇa* (remembering him—his name), *Pādasevana* (serving his feet) *arcana* (worshipping him), *vandana* (laying oneself prostrate before him). The Draviḍa country is famous for votaries of Viṣṇu.

(ii) VJ. names the seven sons as follows : *Virāga* (renunciation), *Vinaya* (discipline), *Dāna* (charity), *Dhairya* (courage), *Aspardhana* (non-jealousy), *Viveka* (discrimination), *Dama* (self control.

148. Different interpretations of the allegory :

Agastya : (i) The mind (ŚR., VC., GD., SD.) (ii) One desirous of *Mokṣa* VR. (iii) A devotee of Viṣṇu (VJ.).

Dṛḍhacyuta : (i) Devoid of any desire for even hereafter such as *Satyaloka*—ŚR.

(ii) Who has absolutely no attachment for sons etc. (VJ).

(iii) One not attached to any pleasure here and hereafter—VC,. SD., GD.

Idhmavāha : (i) Desire to worship the feet of the spiritual preceptor for initiation and obtaining the Lord's grace–ŚR., VR.

(ii) Desire to be a pupil of a spiritual preceptor—VJ.

able, pleasure and pain, viewing them with equanimity of mind.

38. He burnt down his passions by austerities and knowledge. He conquered his senses, breath (*Prāṇa*) and mind by observing religious vows and rules of self-discipline called *Yama* and *Niyama*. He reflected over the identity of his Soul with Brahman (lit. He united his Soul with Brahman).

39. He sat motionless like a post at one and the same spot for a period of a hundred celestial years. As he bore intense love and devotion to Lord Vāsudeva, he ceased to be conscious of anything else (even of his body).

40.* He realised within himself, the Self as pervading (and illumining) his own body and mental activities and being distinct and different from them. Just as in a dream, one is witness to (and is therefore different from) mental activities (for example the scene of oneself being beheaded in the dream). And hence he verily ceased to participate (in any activities).

41-42.** Oh King! By the light of pure knowledge which radiates its light in all directions—knowledge which was imparted to him by venerable Hari as his preceptor—he realized himself as within (i.e. identical with) the Supreme Brahman

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* (i) Malayadhvaja realized Paramātman, the Seer, to be different due to his pervasiveness and his body as ephemeral as a dream and devoted himself solely to Paramātman—VR.

(ii) He reasoned with himself and realized the Supreme Soul as present within his own Self and as all pervasive yet distinct from everything else. Thus renouncing *saṁsāra* he became liberated while alive (*jīvan: muktyavasthām āpa*)—VJ.

(iii) Due to *smaraṇa-bhakti* (constant remembrance of God) he felt deep love for the Lord. And he realized him to be shining everywhere in all directions. But feeling him to be distinct and different from himself, he was overcome with the intense feeling of separateness and was fainted in a swoon—VC.

(iv) He realized his Self as knower and his body etc. as transient. He became unattached to everything else except his Self.

**(i) In his religious meditation (*upāsanā*) he realised that his individual Soul (*antaryāmin*) to be identical with the Supreme Brahman. He continued his *upāsanā* to the end of his life.—VR.

(ii) He set aside the false view about the identity of *jīva* and Paramātman—VJ.

and the Supreme Brahman within himself that way. Ultimately he lost this consciousness (of identity) and (like a fire, fuel of which is burnt down) he automatically ceased to belong to *saṁsāra* (i.e. became liberated).

43. Oh King! At that time the Princess of Vidarbha (Malayadhvaja's queen) who looked upon her husband as a god, renounced all pleasures and affectionately waited upon her husband Malayadhvaja, the knower of the highest form of religion.

44. Clad in dark garments, emaciated by observance of vows and with her hair on the head matted, she appeared in the company of her husband like a smokeless flame near flameless fire (of live charcoals).

45. Not being aware of the expiry of her beloved-most husband who was firm in his sitting posture (even after death), the lady approached him and waited upon him as before.

46. When, while serving the feet of her husband she did not feel any warmth, therein she got terrified in her heart like a doe which has strayed away from her herd.

47. Finding herself miserable and friendless, she was overcome with grief and lamented (her fate). Bathing her breasts in tears, she wept loudly in the jungle.

48. "Arise, Oh royal sage, arise. You should protect the earth engirdled with seas, as she is afraid of robbers and apostate and wicked Kṣatriyas"

49. Lamenting thus loudly, the lady who followed her husband to the forest, fell at his feet wailing and shedding profuse tears.

50. She piled up a funeral pyre of fuel. Placing her husband's body on it, she set it on fire. Weeping (all the while) she determined to follow him in death (by burning herself along with his body).

(iii) He realised that the whole—the Supreme Brahman, comprised of the part (the individual Soul) and vice versa. He (thereby) gave up thoughts about *Saṁsāra* and became liberated —SD.

(iv) Oh ! How wonderful is the power of *Bhakti* as *Mukti* (Liberation) is dependent on *Bhakti*—GD.

51. (At that time) there appeared an old friend of hers, a Brāhmaṇa who had mastered his Self. Soothing the lady with sweet consoling words, he spoke to the weeping lady (as follows) :

The Brāhmaṇa said :

52. Who are you? Whose (daughter) are you? Who is this man lying down for whom you are weeping? Don't you recognize me as your friend with whom you used to roam about formerly (before the creation of the universe) ?

53. Friend! (Even if you do not recognize me) do you remember yourself as having a friend called Avijñāta and that you being given to earthly pleasures, left me in search of some place.

54.* Oh noble Sir ! You and I were swans, friends, living in the Mānasa lake. For a period of one thousand years (while the great deluge lasted), both of us were without any abode.

55. Oh brother ? You whose original nature was that, left me and with your heart set on carnal pleasures, you went down to the earth. While roaming there, you saw a place built by a certain woman (Māyā).

56. It was provided with five gardens, nine gates, one guard, three surrounding walls, six families (of merchants), five market places. It was constructed with five materials, and was ruled by a woman.

57. The gardens are the objects of senses; the nine gates are the openings (viz. two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, one mouth, the penis and anus) for Prāṇa (who alone works as a

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*(i) *Haṁsa* means one who has annihilated all agitations or emotions (*hinasti nirasyati vikārān iti haṁsaḥ*). They are by nature deathless and untouched by pleasures of senses. Enjoyment of pleasure to *jīva* is due to *upādhi* (conditioning) —VR.

(ii) Oh learned one ! Both of us are *haṁsas* which are by nature free from all impurities. Our abode is the Mānasa lake (i.e. knowledge). We have lived together for thousands of years. The memory of previous birth is aroused as a result of the accumulated merits. —VJ.

(iii) *mānasam* etc. : Our abode was the heart in the subtle body (*sūkṣmaśarīragataṁ hṛdayam*) —SD.

guard). Fire, water and food are the surrounding walls, and the group of five sense organs and the mind are the families (of merchants).

58. The market places were the five conative organs; the five elements constituted the imperishable materials and the power i.e. Intelligence was the ruler. Under her dominance the man who enters this abode loses his Self consciousness in deep sleep.

59. Being overcome with (the charms of) the woman there, you enjoyed yourself in her company and forgot the memory of the previously known fact (your original status of being the Brahman). It is due to your association with her that you have been reduced to this wretched condition, Oh Lord.

60. You are not the daughter of the king of Vidarbha. Nor is this warrior your friend. Nor are you the husband of Purāñjanī by whom you were interned in the city of nine gates.

61. It is really the illusion created by me that you regard the man (Purañjana in the previous birth) as the virtuous woman—(Vaidarbhī in this birth). You are neither. We are *haṁsas* (pure spirits). Please see (realize) our real nature (course).

62. I am identical with you. You are not other than me. Please note that you and I are one. Wise men never see even the slightest difference or distinction between us.

63. Just as a man finds his one Self as divided in two in (his reflection in) the mirror and in the pupils of eyes, similar is the difference between us two.

64. In this way, the *haṁsa* (swan) from the Mānasa lake i.e. *Jīva* who was awakened (was made to realize his original state) by his fellow swan, became established in his own real nature. He regained the memory of his original nature which was lost due to his separation from him.

65. Oh Barhiṣman! This knowledge about the Self has been explained to you in an indirect manner; for the venerable Lord, the creator of the universe, likes to remain beyond the ken of senses.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

(The Purañjana allegory explained)

Prācīna-barhis said :

1. Oh divine sage ! (The implication of) your speech is not clearly understood by us. Sages (with spiritual knowledge may) grasp it (correctly) but not we who are deluded by ritualistic *karmas*.

Nārada explained :

2. One should understand Purañjana (creator of the city) as the embodied Soul (or *jīva*); for it is he (*jīva*) who builds his own city, i.e., body, having one, two, three, four or many feet or no foot at all.

3. The friend of *Puruṣa* (*Jīva*) who is called *Avijñāta* (the Unknown) is *Īśvara* (Himself), for he is not known by men as being endowed with names, actions or attributes.

4. When the *Jīva* desired to enjoy all the attributes of the *Prakṛti* (i.e. material objects of pleasure) in their entirety, he thought that (out of those bodies) the human body, provided as it was with nine entrances, two hands and two feet, as the most suitable one.

5. One should understand the young damsel Purañjanī as the intellect (*Buddhi*) which creates the notion of I-ness and mine-ness. It is by presiding over (i.e. identifying himself with) *Buddhi* that the *Jīva* in this body enjoys sense objects by means of sense-organs.

6. The male companions (of Purañjanī) are the group of (ten) conative and cognitive sense-organs which bring about knowledge and action. (Her) female friends are the activities of the senses. The (five-hooded) serpent is the *Prāṇa* (vital breath) with its five-fold activities.

7. One should understand *Bṛhadbala* (the eleventh powerful hero attending upon Purañjanī) as the Mind, the leader (and controller) of both kinds of senses and that the *Pāñcālas* are the five sense-objects, in the midst of which is situated the city of nine gates.

8. Two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, the penis and the anus are the four pairs of adjacent gates, with the mouth (as

the nineth). Out of these *Prāṇa* goes out (to the particular sense object) in association with (the faculties of that) particular sense-organ.

9. The pairs of eyes, nostrils and the mouth are the five gates in the east (i.e. the front of the head). The right ear is regarded as the south gate and the left ear as the north gate.

10. The two opening gates in the lower parts of this are the western gates and these are called here the anus and the penis. *Khadyota* and *Āvir-mukhī*, the two gates that are constructed at the same place adjacently in this city, are (known as) the eyes. By means of the power of seeing possessed by these, the Lord of the body (Purañjana or *Jīva*) perceives forms and colours which are called here the *Vibhrājit* country.

11.* *Nalinī* and *Nālinī* are the two nostrils, and smell has been called the *Saurabha* country. The faculty of smelling is designated *Avadhūta* (the companion of Purañjana). The gate called *Mukhyā* is the mouth. The organ of speech is (Purañjana's companion) *Vipaṇa* and the organ of taste is (the name of Purañjana's friend) *Rasajña* or *Rasavid*.

12. *Āpaṇa* or the market signifies here as (the region of) speech activity while *Bahūdana* means the varieties of food. The right ear is the Southern gate known as *Pitṛhū* and the left the Northern gate is remembered as *Devahū*.

13. The scriptures (*Śāstras*) which treat of the path of worldly activities (i.e. ritualistic *karmas*) and those which deal with abstention from such *karmas* and renunciation, are designated as the country of Pañcālas. Hearing to these through the faculty of hearing is called here *Śrutadhara* (the companion of Purañjana), the *Jīva* may proceed by the path of manes (*Pitṛs*) or of the gods.

14. The organ of generation is the western gate called *Āsurī*; the act of sexual intercourse is the region known as *Grāmaka*. The procreative ability (in the organ) is spoken of as *Durmada* (who was Purañjaña's friend). The anus is de-

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* The order of verses from 11 to 30 in the text before VR. and to some extent before VJ. is different.

signated as *Nirṛti* (the other western gate or the postern passage).

15. The hell is the region called *Vaiśasa*, while the power of the organ to defecate (through the anus) is called his friend *Lubdhaka*. And now, hear from me who the two blind ones are. They are (the pairs of) hands and feet with the help of which one makes movements and does work.

16. The harem is the heart and the mind is called *Viṣūci* (*Viṣūcina*)—the principal officer over the harem. By the mind's attributes (like Sattva etc.), the Jīva attains to the state of infatuation, serenity or joy.

17. According as the *Buddhi* (intellect) is disturbed (in the dream state) or affects (the senses in the waking state) the *Jīva*, though (by nature) a mere witness, is tainted with her (*Buddhi's*) attributes, and is made to feel as if he is affected by those changes (directly)

18* The body is the chariot with horses in the form of senses, yoked to it. It (apparently) moves with the unimpeded speed of the year, though (actually) it is motionless. Good and evil actions are its two wheels. The three attributes (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) constitute its flagstaffs and the five vital airs (*Prāṇas* or *asus*) are its five cords.

19.** The mind is its rein (to control the horses); the Intellect is the charioteer; the heart is the seat; the pairs like pleasure and pain are the poles to which the yoke is rivetted; the objects of five senses are the weapons (for attack); the seven constituents of the body (viz. blood, flesh, fat, bones etc.) are its protective covers.

20. Ākūti (the five organs of actions, e.g. hands, feet, etc.) is its external motion. The *Jīva* vigorously runs after the mirage (-like objects of pleasure) with his army of eleven sense-organs (five cognitive and five conative sense-organs plus mind—the internal organ). He takes pleasure in five types of slaughter (i.e. wrongful enjoyment of five types of sense-ob-

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* These verses echo the following from *Kaṭha Up.* 1.3.3-4

** *Ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ viddhi, śarīraṁ ratham eva ca /*
Buddhiṁ hi sārathiṁ viddhi, manaḥ pragraham eva ca //
Indriyāṇi hayān āhur viṣayāṁs teṣu gocarān /
Ātmendriya-mano-yuktam bhoktetyāhur manīṣiṇaḥ//

jects by his five senses). The year which records the passage of time is *Caṇḍavega* (the king of Gandharvas).

21. Here the three hundred and sixty male Gandharvas under his command are the days and an equal number of female Gandharvas are the nights. By their turns, they take away the life of man by rotation.

22. *Kāla-Kanyā* is the old age incarnate. People do not greet her. Death, the king of Yavanas, adopted her as his sister for the (help in the) destruction of the world.

23. Mental anguishes and physical pains and diseases are his active Yavana soldiers. *Prajvāra* means the two types of fever (one accompanied with cold and the other with high temperature which is said to have a swift career to harass living beings.

24. Thus for a period of one hundred years, the embodied Jīva, covered as he is by dark ignorance, is being tormented in his body with various types of afflictions caused by supernatural agencies, (*adhidaivika*), elements (*adhibhautika*) and his body (*adhyātmika*).

25. Though he is essentially attributeless, he superimposes on himself the attributes of *Prāṇa* (such as hunger, thirst), the qualities of sense-organs (e.g. blindness, deafness) and the attributes of the mind (for example : passions of love, hate etc.). He lies confined to the body brooding over trifling pleasures of the senses and he continues to perform actions under the (influence of the) false notions of I-ness and mine-ness.

26. When the Jīva, though by nature self-luminous (i.e. self-knowing), does not recognise (himself to be) the glorious Supreme Preceptor, the Soul, he gets attached (and bound) to the attributes of *Prakṛti*.

27. Regarding the attributes as referring to his own self, he then helplessly commits actions which are white (*sāttvika*), black (*tāmasa*) and red (*rājasa*) and is born in various species of life according to the nature of his actions.

28. By his white (i.e. *sāttvika*) actions, he sometimes attains to worlds (like *Svarga*) which are full of light. Sometimes (by his red i.e. *rājasa* actions) he goes to regions which result in (i.e. lead to) sufferings and require exertion through

activities. And sometimes (by *tāmasika* actions), he takes birth in regions which are full of darkness (i.e. ignorance) and grief.

29. This *Jīva* with blind (i.e. deluded) intelligence is sometimes (born as) a male, a female, an impotent person, a god or a man or as a subhuman being according to his previous actions and the (dominant) attribute of *Prakṛti*.

30-31. Just as a poor starving dog which goes from door to door, gets (beating with) a stick or cooked rice (according) as destined by fate, the *Jīva*, with his heart full of desires, wanders, by paths which are high (as prescribed by religion) or low (as prohibited by scriptures), through higher (celestial) worlds, lower (infernal) regions or the middle (human) world and experiences pleasure or pain as ordained by fate.

32. There is no immunity to the *Jīva* even from one type of miseries which are caused by superhuman agencies like gods (*adhi-daivika*), by other beings (*adhi-bhautika*) and these relating to one's body (*adhyātmika*). Even if the remedy (against them) is sought, it is temporary and is (again) of the nature of misery.[149]

33. Just as a man carrying a heavy load on his head, places it on his shoulder (for relief), so are all remedies (of the nature of misery itself).

34. Oh sinless King ! Mere act (without the knowledge of the truth and accompanied with some desire) cannot be the effective final remedy against (the miseries etc. resulting from) another act (*karman*) as both are the outcome of *avidyā* (ignorance). It (such attempt to terminate one *karma* by another) is like a dream within dream (wherein there is an exchange of dream-consciousness but no termination of dreams as in wakefulness).

35.* Just as a person wandering in the dream-land with his mind which as *liṅga śarīra* (subtle body) forms the limita-

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149. There is no remedy against misery, the only remedy being the worship and contemplation of God—VR.

* VR. : The state of being a god, a man is not inherent in the nature of the Soul. It is due to the working of the mind that one falsely identifies the Soul with the body and experiences miseries. But they are like dream experiences.

tions of the Soul (and experiences fear, misery etc. till he wakes up from the dream to realize the unreality of that experience), the *saṁsāra* (transmigration of the Soul in the miserable world) does not come to an end (while his sleep of ignorance continues) in spite of the non-reality of the phenomenal world.

36. It is ignorance (or Mind—*manas*) that causes the uninterrupted chain of miseries[150] (or transmigration) to the Soul which is essentially the real existence. The chain of *saṁsāra* is cut asunder by Supreme devotion[151] to the Preceptor (Hari)[152].

37. When the *Yoga* of (self-less, disinterested) devotion to Lord Vāsudeva[153] is established in the proper manner[154], it (automatically) causes renunciation (of worldly pleasures) and manifests knowledge.

(ii) VJ. : The transmigration of the Soul (*saṁsṛti*) does not cease to be till one does not realise Hari directly (*arthe avidyamāne*) just as dream experiences continue till one awakes (to find that those experiences were unreal.)

As Madhva regards this world as real, VJ. takes pains to explain that the analogy between the dream and the world shall not be stretched too far and that 'the absence of knowledge of the reality-as-it is' is the common factor between the experiences in the dream and in the world and not the non-reality of the world. The implication of *hi* is that, if a person, born in *saṁsāra*, does not attain to the real knowledge of Hari, his *saṁsāra* is purposeless and fruitless.

(iii) GD.: Just as waking up from sleep is the only remedy against the miseries one experiences in dreams, realization of the Self is the only remedy against *avidyā* (nescience); other remedies cannot cut the vicious circle of the transmigration of the Soul and consequent miseries which are caused by 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'.

150. *anartha*—The illusion about the identity of the body with the Soul—SD.

151. *paramayā bhaktyā*—Devotion which is superior to austerities, vows, ritualistic acts and even the knowledge of the Soul—SD.

152. Devotion to Hari which generates knowledge should be performed as it terminates *Saṁsāra*—VJ.

153. Who is knowledge and renunciation incarnate and is the controller of the universe and giver of knowledge—GD.

154. *Sadhrīcīnena* : (i) by burning down all evils in the mind by the fire of Breath-control—VJ.

(ii) By person who is free from worldly desires—VJ.

38. That *Bhakti-yoga* dependent as it is on the stories of Lord Acyuta, will be mastered before long by him who always listens to those stories with faith or devoutly studies them every day, Oh royal sage.

39. Oh King ! (He can listen to those stories) in places where pious and pure-hearted votaries of the Lord narrate and listen to the glorification of the attributes of the Lord with eager hearts.

40. There (to the congregation of the devotees) flow forth from all sides rivers (entirely) of pure nectar (in the form) of stories of Lord Viṣṇu (the destroyer of demon Madhu) sweetly sung by noble souls. Oh King ! Those who drink those (nectar-like stories) with intent ears and without being surfeited, are never touched (affected) by hunger, thirst, fear, sorrow and delusion.

41. (In the absence of the company of the pious), being always harassed by these natural troubles, the world of beings (i.e. men) does not cherish any real love for the ocean of nectarlike stories of Lord Hari indeed !

42-44. Brahmā (the chief among the progenitors) himself, the venerable Lord Śiva (the Lord of mountains), Manu, Dakṣa and other lords of creation, Sanaka and life-long celibates, expounders of the Vedas like Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha—these and others ending with me—all masters of speech could not, to this day, see the Supreme Lord, the Seer of all, though (we have been) trying to visualize him by means of penance, *upāsanā* (worship) and meditation.

45* Those who meticulously study the meaning of the Vedas which are of very great expanse and fathomless in the depth of meaning, and worship him in his limited form (such as Indra etc.) the characteristics of which (viz. wielding a

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* (i) VR : The realization of god is possible by worshipping (*upāsanā*) him only and not by mere knowledge or by *karma* (ritualist act) only.

(ii) JG. & VG : Persons devoted to ritualistic acts (*karmas*) only, never realize God.

(iii) SD : The Veda directs persons not favoured by the Lord, to perform ritualistic acts (e.g. sacrifices) for attaining the Heaven and not to the worship and service of the Lord.

Vajra etc.) are detailed in the Mantras (Vedic text), do not know the Supreme Lord.

46. When the Lord who is being meditated upon in the heart by a person, shows his grace unto the meditator, the person (so favoured) withdraws his mind, howsoever deeply attached (it may be) to the ways of the world, and to the ritualistic acts prescribed in the Vedas.

47. Oh Barhişman ! Do not therefore look upon as real the acts (ritualistic *karmas*) which appear as real through ignorance. These acts are pleasant and attractive to listen to, but they do not even touch (i.e. have any relation with) the ultimate Reality.

48. Those whose intellect is occupied with *dhūmra-mārga* (the path of ritualistic acts like sacrifices etc.)[155] call the Vedas as prescribing the ritualistic acts only. They have not grasped the truth about the Veda. For they have not realized that the Ātman (the Soul) which is their own essential Self, is implicitly intended in the Vedas. These (devotees of the path of Karma) do not know the region where god Viṣṇu (Janārdana) dwells (much less Janārdana himself).

49. Having encircled the entire sphere of the earth with *darbha*-grass by spreading them with their ends to the East, you have become haughty, (and) proud by slaughtering a great many beasts (in sacrifices). You do not know what is *karma* and what is superior to *karma*. The act that pleases Hari is the real *karma*. And the knowledge which leads to the fixation of the mind in Hari is the real knowledge.

50. Hari is the Soul of the embodied beings as well as their Ruler. He is their independent cause (the material cause of the universe). The soles of his feet are the real asylum to all, for in them lies the well-being (and security) of all men here.

51. Verily he is the most beloved one, the Soul (*Ātman*). By resorting to him, there is not the slightest fear or misery (as in the cases of others). He who knows this, is indeed the learned one. He who is learned is the (real) preceptor and he is (veritable) Hari himself.

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155. Or whose intelligence has been smoky and impure—ŚR.

Nārada said :

52. In this way, your question is completely answered, Oh excellent one among men! Now listen to me carefully as I tell you, a secret yet definitely ascertained truth.

53. Find out the deer which ignoring the blood-thirsty wolves (which are waiting) ahead and unmindful of (the coming of the arrow) shot from behind by a hunter to pierce it, strolls about in a flower-garden enamoured of its female associate, grazing tender grass and with its ears spell bound with the music of humming beas.

54. Oh King! You should look upon yourself as the doomed deer whose heart is pierced with a hidden arrow discharged by the hunter, viz., the god of Death, who chases you unperceived from behind. You who, in the house resorted to by women who are similar to flowers (in their ephemeral youthful charms which fade away very soon), seek after the most insignificant dose of sensual pleasures of taste and sex which are extremely minute like the fragrance and honey in flowers and are the result of ritualistic acts (*karmas*) performed with a motive, for attaining a particular object. Co-habiting with women and with your mind firmly attached to them, your ears are extremely charmed by the sweet conversation with women and others—conversation which is extremely attractive like the sweet honey of swarms of bees. You are enjoying yourself in the house, completely oblivious of the small components of time amounting to days and nights which, like a pack of wolves ahead of you, prey upon your life.

55. Having carefully considered your own behaviour (as being) like that of the deer (in the above verse), you, who are so conditioned, restrain your mind in the interior of your heart, and the stream-like outgoing tendencies of your ears (and other senses) in your mind. Renounce the householder's stage of life (lit. women's house) with its talk about extremely lustful and lascivious gatherings; (Do try to) please the Lord who is the shelter of *jīvas* (*hamsas*) and withdraw step by step (from everything else)."

The King said :

56. "Oh Brahman ! What Your venerable Lordship has spoken has been heard and reflected over by me. The sacrificial priests do not know this. Would they not have spoken (about it to me) if they had known it ?

57. You have thoroughly resolved a great doubt raised by them (my preceptors) in this matter (pertaining to the Soul). (But a doubt still lingers). For even sages are deluded in the realm which is beyond the range of senses, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage. (The Vedists say :)

58. Leaving in this world the body with which a person begins to perform acts (*karmas*), he enjoys the consequent fruits (of those *karmas*), elsewhere (in the next world) through a different body.

59. This doctrine of the Vedists (the knowers and advocates of Vedic *karmas*) is heard everywhere. (But how is it possible when the two bodies viz., the performer of an action and the enjoyer of the fruit of that action are different?) (The second doubt is :) As soon as an act prescribed in the Vedas is performed, it disappears and does not become visible. (Thus due to the cessation of an act, its consequent fruit is an impossibility)".

60. A person enjoys the fruits of an action in the next world with the same subtle body with which he performs the act (in this world), and thus, there is no interruption (i.e. change of the subtle body and the mind).*

61. Just as a person (in a dream) forgets his identity with this body (which is) lying and breathing, and experiences (in the dream) impressions of actions recorded in the mind, similarly (he experiences the fruits of his actions committed here) with another body similar (to the previous one) or belonging to another kind (as of a god or of a sub-human being).

62. Whatever body the jīva assumes by saying in his mind that 'these (wife and sons) are mine' and 'I am this body (e.g. a Brāhmaṇa)' he accepts (the responsibilitiy of) the

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* ŚR. adds :—Due to the persistence of the subtle mental body even after the destruction of the physical body, there is no logical discrepancy in this.

karmas committed by that body and thereby (he gets) a subsequent birth.

63. Just as (tendencies of) the mind (that direct activities) are inferred by the behaviour and activities of both the conative and cognitive sense-organs so are the acts committed by the body in the previous birth, inferred from the natural inclinations of the mind.

64. What is never and nowhere experienced or seen or heard by this (present) body, is sometimes experienced (in dream etc.) according to the form as it is impressed on the mind (in the previous birth).

65. Therefore, Oh King, definitely believe that the *jīva*, dependent as he is on his subtle body consisting of *vāsanās* (*karmic* impressions left on the mind), had a previous body which has undergone that type of experience. For the mind is incapable of touching (perceiving) an object which is not experienced by it (previously).

66. May you be blessed! It is (the high and low propensities of) the mind which speak of the previous births of man as well as predict whether he will be born in a higher or lower form of life.[156]

67. Sometimes some impossibilities[157] with reference to place (e.g. a sea on the mountain top), time (e.g. stars by daylight) and action (e.g. getting one's self beheaded) are seen or heard in the mind (in dreams). (As these are impossible experiences even in previous births) these are to be inferred to be due to disturbed sleep etc. and these do not contradict the above (statement in verse 65.)

68. All objects which are within the ken of sense-perception enter the mind according to their (particular) order and in groups and disappear (after being so experienced). Hence (it is that) all persons possess a mind (with impressions of the past).

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156. *nābhaviṣyataḥ*—will not be born again or will be liberated —VC.

157. VJ. explains these impossibilities as due to mixing up of impressions. VC. explains the possibilities of these with reference to other times, places etc. For example : the sea is on the top of (the submerged) mount Maināka, stars appear in complete solar eclipse, disturbance in the humids or components of the body may give rise to strange dreams.

69. (Normally these objects appear in a serial order but some times all of them present themselves simultaneously).

When the mind is firmly established in pure Sattva (uncontaminated with *rajas* and *tamas*) and is in the presence of the venerable Lord (in meditation), the whole universe shines forth united with the Lord, like the dark planet Rāhu appears on the disc of the Moon (at the time of lunar eclipse). (It is the experience of Yogins that sometimes all objects simultaneously flash on the pure mind).

70. (Thus the doubt that the performer of an act and the enjoyer of its fruits are different is dispelled by the proven continuity of the same subtle body) as the notion of 'I' and 'mine' about the physical body which conditions the *jīva*, will persist (i.e. will not cease to exist) so long as this beginningless subtle body which is the result of the conglomeration of intellect (*Buddhi*), mind, the senses (and their) objects and the triad of *guṇas* (*sattva* etc.), continues.

71. Due to suspension of the passage of Prāṇa (i.e. of sense-activity) in deep sleep, unconsciousness, extreme anguish (due to bereavement of the near ones), as well as in high fever and at the time of death, the sense of 'I-ness' is unmanifest (dormant).

72. Just as the moon (though existent) is not seen in the night of the new-Moon day, due to underdevelopment of senses and organs in the embryonic stage, and even in infancy the notion I-ness does not clearly manifest itself in the eleven sense organs (ten sense-organs *plus* the internal organ—the mind) as it does in the case of a full-grown youth.

73. Just as (in spite of the unreality of the objects and events in dreams) the unpleasant happenings in the dream do not cease to be (till one is awakened), the *saṁsāra* (the cycle of the transmigration of the Soul) does not come to an end in the case of one who broods over the objects of pleasure, even though the objects are (in reality) non-existent.

74. Thus the subtle body (*liṅga*) is constituted of five subtle elements; is extended by the development of sixteen modifications (viz. 5 Prāṇas+1 mind + 10 Indriyas—sense); is a product of three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). When

it is united with consciousness, it (the whole aggregate) is called *jīva*.

75. It is through the subtle body that the *jīva* takes over or casts off (different) bodies. And it is by this that he experiences delight, sorrow, fear, misery or happiness.

76. Just as the caterpillar does not go away (from its first foot-hold on the blade of grass) and moves on (only after getting a firm foothold on another blade), the *jīva*, even while dying, does not let go his identity with its previous body (which he is giving up even at the point of death).

77. While he does not attain to another (i.e. the next) body by the exhaustion of the *karmas* (which were the cause of the previous dying body), the mind alone is the cause of birth and death (i.e. the *saṁsāra*) of beings, Oh King.

78. When, brooding over sensual pleasure (enjoyed by it), the *jīva* frequently indulges in *karmas* for achieving them. As a result of those *karmas* he, being subject to *avidyā* (nescience or ignorance), gets bound up with *karmas* of the body and the like.

79. Hence, in order to free yourself from the bondage of *avidyā* you worship Hari with all your heart, looking upon the universe as identical with him, for everything : the creation, maintenance and withdrawal of the universe is due to him."

Maitreya said :

80. Venerable Nārada, the chief votary of the Lord, explained to him the real nature of the swans (*jīva* and the *Paramātman*) and bidding good bye to him, he then went to the realm of the *Siddhas*.

81. The royal sage Prācīnabarhis passed on instructions (to his minister for conveying them) to his sons for the protection of his subjects and retired to the hermitage of Kapila for performing penance.

82. In that hermitage, the warrior, being free from attachment and with thoroughly concentrated mind, worshipped the lotus-like feet of Govinda with earnest devotion and attained a personality similar to the Lord.

83. Oh sinless Vidura, he who will listen to or make

others listen to this spiritual allegory sung by the divine sage Nārada, is emancipated from his subtle body.

84. He who gets by heart, while it is being sung, this self-purifying account which was issued from the mouth of a great divine sage and which purifies the world by the glories of Lord Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) and which brings in the highest reward, becomes free from all bondages and does not wander in the *saṁsāra*.

85. This is what I understood of this wonderful allegory about the Soul. I have narrated to you about *saṁsāra* by the alllegory of the householder's life and have dispelled the doubt as to how the fruit of *karmas* is enjoyed in the other world.

CHAPTER THIRTY

(The Story of Pracetasas—Their Marriage with Māriṣā and the birth of Dakṣa)

Vidura said :

1. What well-being did the sons of Prācīnabarhis mentioned by you, accomplish by propitiating Hari through repeatedly reciting the hymn sung by Rudra, Oh Brahman.

2. Oh pupil of Bṛhaspati (Maitreya)! Meeting by a lucky chance god Śiva (the Lord of mount Kailāsa), the Pracetasas who won the grace (lit. became favourite personal attendants of the Lord of *Kaivalya* or Liberation,[158] must have certainly attained to their highest goal in life (viz. Liberation or *Mokṣa*). Please tell me: Have they attained it here or hereafter?

Maitreya said :

3. Pracetasas who wished to carry out the order of their father remained under the waters of the sea (-like

158. i.e. Viṣṇu—VJ.

lake)[159] and propitiated the creator of all bodies (i.e. Viṣṇu) by worshipping him with repeated recitation (of the hymn sung by Rudra) and by practising austerities.

4. At the end of (the penance covering) ten thousand years, the Eternal Supreme Man (Lord Viṣṇu) manifested himself to them in a purely *sāttvika* form, completely pacifying their trouble of penance by his soothing splendour.

5. Like a (dark-blue) cloud on the peak of mount Meru (which is of pure gold) he rode over the shoulders of Garuḍa. He wore a yellow garment and had the Kaustubha gem in his necklace. By his splendour he dispelled the darkness from all directions.

6. His cheeks as well as his entire face appeared refulgent with bright gold ornaments (shedding a spectrum of variegated light of the precious stones set in ornaments). He wore a brilliant crown. He was wielding (lit. was attended upon by) eight weapons[160] (in his eight hands). He was waited upon by his attendants, sages and prominent gods (like Brahmā); His glory was being sung by the celestial singer Garuḍa with the fluttering of his (*Veda*-) wings.

7. The First (Ancientmost or Supreme) Man was garlanded with a wreath of forest-flowers (*vanamālā*) which vied in beauty with the goddess Lakṣmī who beautified the central space (His chest) encircled by His eight long and mighty arms. He looked with compassion at the sons of Barhiṣmat (the Pracetasas) who sought his protection, and addressed to them in deep voice like the rumbling of clouds.

The Venerable Lord said :

8. May you be blessed, Oh Princes! Due to your strong mutual love, you are following the same religious observances. I am highly pleased with you by your brotherly affection. You seek a boon from me.

9. A man who will daily remember you at dusk and

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159. Vide supra 4.24.20; 4.25.2.

160. VR. enumerates them : a conch, the disc—*Sudarśana*, the mace *Kaumodakī*, a lotus, the Śārṅga bow, an arrow, a sword, a shield. He defends the inclusion of a lotus as weapon by *chatri-nyāya*.

dawn, will love his brothers like his own self and will cherish friendliness to all living beings.

10. I shall bestow whatever boon is desired from me and brilliant intellect as well, to those who every morning and evening praise me with concentrated mind, with the hymn (which Rudra sang).

11. Since you have, with gladness, accepted and carried out the command of your father, your enviable glory will spread all over the worlds.

12. You will have a glorious son who is not inferior to Brahmā (the creator) in excellent attributes and who will fill (i.e. populate) the whole of these three worlds with his progeny.

13. Oh Princes ! A lotus-eyed girl was born to (a heavenly nymph called) Pramlocā from (a sage by name) Kaṇḍu. When the girl was abandoned (by her mother) (the presiding deity of) trees took charge of her.

14. When she, being hungry, began to cry, king Soma (the Moon god) who was moved with compassion, put his index finger overflowing with nectar, in her mouth.

15. You are commanded to increase population by your father who is (now) my follower. Therefore, marry that beautiful girl (with fine hips) without delay.

16. All of you are observers of the same vows (e.g. protection of subjects) and are of similar disposition (good-naturedness, high moral character etc.). She will completely dedicate her heart to you all and hence will have the same disposition and observe the same vows. (Hence there will be no conflict). May this beautiful lady (with a slender waist) be your wife.

17. Without any diminution in physical vigour, you will enjoy the earthly and heavenly pleasures through my grace, for a period of one million celestial years.

18. Then through your firm devotion to me, the impurities (such as lust, hate) in your heart will be burnt. Being disgusted with the hell (-like pleasures of this world and the next), you will attain to my abode.

19. Even in the case of those men who enter householder's life, if they dedicate all their actions to me and spend

their time in talking and hearing about my stories, the householder's life does not result in a bondage to them.

20. By listening to the discourses about me, by those who are well-versed in the Vedas, I, the Omniscient Lord, enter the heart of those devotees as if I become new one (every moment). This entry (i.e. my manifestation) into the heart itself is the realization of Brahman, for those who reach me are not deluded, grieved nor are elated.

Maitreya said :

21. When Lord Viṣṇu (Janārdana), the conferrer of the objectives in human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *Mokṣa*) and the best Friend of all, spoke to them thus, Pracetasas, whose impurities of *tamas* (ignorance) and *rajas* (emotions and passions) have been perfectly cleansed at his sight, bowed him with folded hands and addressed to him with their voice choked (with tears).

Pracetasas said :

22. "Many salutations to the Lord who destroys all types of misery and whose excellent attributes and names have been considered (by the Vedas and knowers of the Brahman) as the means of attaining the highest good. Obeisance to him who surpasses the mind and speech in speed[161] and whose path is beyond the ken of all the senses.

23. In your own essential nature, you are pure, serene (and joy incarnate). The unreal appearance of duality in you is due to (the function of the) mind. For the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe, you have assumed forms (of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) through the *guṇas* (attributes viz. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) of the Māyā. Our salutations to you.

24. Obeisance to Hari who is essentially pure *sattva* (unmixed with *rajas* and *tamas*), and knowledge about whom terminates the *saṁsāra*. Bow to Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa. the Lord of all *Sātvatas*.

25. Hail to you who have a lotus sprouted in the navel. Bow to the Lord, the wearer of a wreath of lotuses. Salutations

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161. Cf. *tad dhāvato'nyān atyeti tiṣṭhan* / Īśa. 4.

to the God with lotus-like feet. Obeisance to you, Oh lotus-eyed God!

26. Salutations to you who wear spotless, pure yellow garments like the filaments of the lotus. We bow to you who are the abode of all beings and a seer or witness of them all.

27. You have manifested to us who are afflicted with miseries, your form which annihilates all these kinds of trouble. What more grace could be shown? (This is the highest favour shown to us).

28. Oh destroyer of inauspiciousness! Only this much is to be done by the masters who are kind and compassionate to the poor that they should remember at the proper time, that the indigents are their own. (But in our case you have done much more than that in manifesting yourself to us).

29. Such remembrance (of the poor) brings peace and happiness to beings. Abiding as you are as *antaryāmin* (Inner Controller) in the hearts of even the most insignificant creatures, how is it that you do not know the blessing desired by us who are your devotees?

30. To us whom you are not only a guide to Liberation but a goal desired by us, the very fact that the Lord is pleased with us, is itself a boon sought by us.

31. We, however, seek a boon from you, Oh Lord, who are beyond the cause of causes i.e. *Prakṛti* (the prime cause of the universe). As there is no limit to your excellences or glories, you are extolled as Ananta (Infinite).

32. When the *Pārijāta* tree is easily found (by a lucky chance), a bee does not resort to any other tree. (Similarly), when we have found shelter at your feet directly, what other things should we seek?[16a]

33. So long as we, being dominated by Māyā, are wandering here in the *saṁsāra* due to the force of our actions (*karmas*), may we be blest in every life with the companionship of devotees attached to you.

34. We do not consider (the pleasures in) heaven or even the final beatitude as equivalent to the companionship of

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16a. Alternatively: (i) Why should we beg for other contemptible things?

(ii) If we are to seek anything there is no end to desires—ŚR.

your devotees (enjoyed even for a single moment). What of blessings like kingdom etc.) coveted by mortal beings?

35. In the company of Your votaries, sweet purifying stories (of the Lord) which pacify the thirst of desire are extolled. There is absence of enmity against all beings. Nor is there any fear to anybody.

36. There (in the company of devotees) the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself, the goal of Sannyāsins, is again and again extolled through sacred stories, by persons who are free from attachment.

37. Will not the association of your devotees who with a desire to purify the sacred places, move about on foot, be liked by a person afraid (of *saṁsāra*)?

38. Oh Lord! It is due to a moment's contact with your friend, god Śiva (Bhava) that we have today attained to you direct—you who are our goal and the best physician who cures the incurable malady of (the cycle of) births and deaths.

39-40. Oh Lord! (we seek the second boon:). Whatever we have properly studied, whatever troubles we have taken for propitiating the preceptors, Brāhmaṇas and elderly people by our compliance, the respects we paid to noble persons, friends, brothers and to all living beings without any jealousy, the austere penances we have performed without food, submerged in water for a very long period—may all this, we beseech you, contribute to the entire satisfaction and pleasure of yours—you who are the Omnipresent, the Supreme Man.

41. Manu, god Brahmā (the self-born), glorious Lord Śiva and others who have purified their hearts with penance and knowledge, praise your greatness even though they could not grasp the fullest extent of your glory. Hence we extol you according to our humble capacity.

42. Obeisance to you, the Supreme Man, who are equal to all and pure (unsoiled by Māyā). Salutation to you, glorious Lord Vāsudeva, who are pure *sattva* incarnate."

Maitreya said :

43. Thus extolled by Pracetasas, Hari who is affectionate to his devotees (lit. those who seek his shelter) and is of

irresistible prowess, became pleased with them and conferred that boon (saying 'So be it'.). Even though their eyes were not satiated by looking at him and they did not wish his departure, he returned to his abode.

44. Then the Pracetasas came out from the water of the sea (-like lake). Seeing the earth (wildly) covered with trees that had grown so tall as to obstruct the way to heaven, they flared up with wrath.

45. For rendering the earth tree-less, they then angrily breathed out from their mouth fire and wind, just as Saṁvartaka or Kālāgni Rudra does at the time of the dissolution of the universe.

46. Seeing the trees being thus reduced to ashes, god Brahmā appeared and pacified the sons of Barhiṣmat (Pracetasas) by reasoning.

47. Then the surviving trees which were terrified, acted upon the advice of god Brahmā and offered their daughter to Pracetasas.

48. In compliance of the command of god Brahmā, they (Pracetasas) married Mārişā (the daughter of the trees). Dakṣa, the former mind-born son of Brahmā (lit. one born of the unborn Viṣṇu), was born of her, on account of his (Dakṣa's) insulting the great god Śiva (formerly).

49. At the advent of the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara (the sixth aeon), when the previous creation was annihilated by the force of time[163] it was this Dakṣa who directed by the Lord, created the progeny as desired by him.

50. While he was being born, he eclipsed with his own splendour the light of all luminous bodies. He came to be called Dakṣa, the competent, on account of his precision and proficiency in the performance of ritualistic acts.

51. (The beginningless) god Brahmā installed him (as a Prajāpati—the protector of the creation) and appointed him to procreate and protect the creation. Dakṣa (in his turn) employed all other Prajāpatis—progenitors of creation—to perform their respective jobs.

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163. When Dakṣa's previous body was destroyed through the force of time (ŚR.).

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

(*The Story of Pracetasas : Their Renunciation and Liberation*)

Maitreya said :

1. Then (at the end of one million years of enjoying earthly and heavenly pleasures), superior knowledge dawned on Pracetasas. Remembering the words of Lord Viṣṇu (vide supra 4.30. 18), they entrusted their wife to the care of their son (Dakṣa) and immediately left their house (as recluses).

2. On the western sea-shore, at the place where (the sage) Jājali[164] attained the final beatitude, they resolved to engage themselves in (the sacrificial session in the form of) the enquiry about the Soul which leads to the realization that the Soul abides in all beings.

3. Nārada who was worthy of being praised by gods and demons (alike), saw them (Pracetasas) who controlled their vital breath, mind, speech and sight. Being the masters of their yogic (bodily) posture, their bodies were firm, unagitated and straight. They concentrated their minds on the Supreme, perfectly pure Brahman (unalloyed with Māyā).

4. Seeing him come, they (respectfully) stood up, bowed to him by lying prostrate before him and received him joyfully. They worshipped him with due formalities. When he was comfortably seated, they addressed to him.

Pracetasas said :

5. "Welcome is your arrival, Oh divine Sage! How glad we are that you have appeared before us today. Oh Brahman, your moving about (in the world) is like the movement of the Sun, for dispelling the fear of the people.

6. Whatever enlightenment was given to us by glorious Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu has been almost forgotten by us due to our strong attachment to house (householder's life).

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164. Jājali—An ancient sage famous for austere penance. When he felt pride about his spiritual attainment, he was directed to go to a merchant named Tulādhāra. The merchant enlightened him in spiritual matters after which Jājali attained Mokṣa (liberation).

—*MBH. Śānti.* 261-64; *PCK.* 371

7. Therefore, please kindle in us the light of the knowledge of the Soul which reveals the reality and by (realizing) which we shall easily cross the impassable sea of *saṁsāra*".

Maitreya said :

8. When enquired thus by Pracetasas, the venerable sage Nārada whose mind was merged in Lord Viṣṇu (of glorious renown) spoke to those kings.

Nārada said :

9. That life, those acts, that period of time, that mind, that speech of men are of some real worth in the world, if Hari, the Soul and Ruler of the universe is served by them.

10. If Lord Hari, who blesses us with self-realization is not attained, of what benefit is the three-fold birth, viz., through pure sinless parents, initiation ceremony and consecration (for the performance of sacrifice) ? What is the use of the (performance of) ritualistic duties enjoined by the three Vedas or a span of long life like that of gods' ?

11. Of what avail are the learning, austere penance, eloquent speech or the capacity to attend many things simultaneously ? Of what use is the keen intellectual capacity or physical power, high efficiency of senses ?

12. Of what use are the Yoga (consisting of breath control etc.) the Sāṁkhya (the knowledge of non-identity of the Soul and the body), the Sannyāsa (the life of a recluse) and the study of the Vedas and observances of other vows and renunciation.

13. For, as a matter of fact, the Self is the highest of all blessings (as they are liked and desired for the sake of the Self). Lord Hari is the Soul of all living beings. He is Self-giver (i.e. he manifests himself by the removal of *avidyā* or he gives form, power etc. similar to him to his votaries like Bali). He is dear (as he is by nature the highest bliss).

14. Just as watering the roots of a tree nourishes the trunk, branches, sub-branches (leaves and flowers of a tree, and just as the nourishment of the life (with food etc.) leads to the strengthening of the senses and organs of the body (and

not by applying food to those parts), so the worshipping of Acyuta (Lord Viṣṇu) is the worship of all.

15. Just as in the rainy season, waters (rain-drops) emanate from the Sun (the evaporator of waters which form the clouds and are the cause of subsequent rain-fall) and return to it again (as water vapour) in the summer, and just as the bodies of the mobiles and immobiles spring up from the earth and return to it, so does this universe of animate and inanimate things—the stream of *guṇas*—(emerge from and) merge in Hari.

16* This universe is the absolute, unconditioned essence of the universal Soul. (It is not different from him as it is

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*(I) VR. affirms the reality of the world as the universe has no separate existence except as the body of the Lord. Just as the light of the Sun and the Sun are inseparables, the whole universe is an inseparable attribute—the body of the Supreme Soul. Once, at the time of the creation, the universe appears as gross and at the time of the dissolution it becomes too subtle to be perceptible but its reality of existence persists, like the power of the sense-organs which are active in a waking state and inactive in sleep when illusions regarding the matter (the five elements) and the cognitive and conative sense-organs and one's being god, man etc. are lost.

(II) VJ. reads differently. Briefly stated : Referring to *hardveva guṇaprvāhaḥ* in the above (15) verse, he refutes that Hari is conditioned by the *guṇas* or their products. This world wherein Hari dwells and which he has created is quite distinct and cannot condition him—the only relation between Hari and the universe is that of the supporter and the supported or the 'phantom city of Gandharvas' and the sky. Hari is essentially knowledge brilliant like the light of the Sun. And His wisdom dispels all illusions regarding the body (*dravya*), power etc. When due to accumulation of merits, the breath and other *Vṛttis* cease to work externally and begin to function internally, and awaken the *jīva*, and the illusions about the false identity of the Soul and the body, thinking one's self to be an independent doer and that of being the master of one's senses, are removed, the real Form of the Lord is manifested.

(III) SD. : The analogy of the Sun and the water (in the above No. 15—verse) may be misconstrued to show that the universe and the Lord are totally different. This verse refutes that misinterpretation. The relation between the Lord and the world is like that between the Sun and its light, viz. identity-cum-difference. It is identical yet different. Just as the powers of the sense-organs are manifest in wakefulness and dormant in sleep, so is the creation and dissolution of the universe. How can the *jīva* be released from the *prapañca* (universe) so related with Brahman ? It is by propitiation of Hari, the Soul of the universe, that illusions causing *saṁsāra*, viz. (i) the feeling of I-ness and mine-ness about one's

evolved from him) just as the light of the Sun is not different from the Sun in spite of the once (i. e. temporary) appearance of the phantom phenomenon called 'the city of Gandharvas' Just as the powers of the cognitive and conative organs function during wakefulness and lie dormant during sleep (the universe which appears at the time of the creation from the Lord, dissolves itself in the Lord at the end of Kalpa.). In reality, in the Lord, there is absence of the effects of three types of ego (viz. ego due to matter, action or thought or the types of ego known as *tāmasa*, *taijasa* and *vaikārika*)and the misapprehension of diversity (caused by it).

17* Just as clouds, darkness and light appear in the sky and also disappear in their turn (but do not stick to the sky), similarly, Oh King, the potencies called *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* appear in Brahman (without affecting it) and the flow (of creation and destruction of the universe) continues (undisturbed).

18. Therefore, adore (and meditate upon) the Lord directly as being not different from you. Hari is the one undifferentiated Soul of all embodied beings. He is Time (the effi-

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body, house etc. (ii) regarding ritualistic acts leading to heaven as leading to Mokṣa, (iii) wrongly believing in the teachings of Kapila, Kaṇāda, Buddha as true and leading to salvation.

(IV) GD. explains the position of *Brahma vāda* as follows : Hari being the material cause of the universe, the latter cannot be different from Hari. At the time of the creation it evolves from the Lord, the Soul of the universe and it is not different from him just as the light of the Sun is not distinct from it. The evanescence of the universe and the eternity of the Lord are not contradictory, for just as the power of the senses functions during the state of wakefulness and becomes dormant in sleep (but the power still persists in both the stages) the world appears at the time of the creation and ceases to be so at the time of dissolution. (It is however not destroyed). The creation of the universe and the supported-supporter relation between the universe and the Lord do not act as his limitations, for the Lord is a cause of extraordinary and miraculous nature and above popular analogies. He is free from the illusory contact of five elements, eleven sense-organs and their presiding deities.

*VR. insists on the reality of the universe : the appearance and disappearance of clouds, darkness and light do not imply their unreality. Similarly, the manifestation and disappearance of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, the three potencies of *Prakṛti* with relation to Brahman do not mean that they are unreal.

cient cause), *Prakṛti* (Primordial Nature, as the material cause), the Supreme Ruler (as the creator). By his own prowess (or lustre) he has destroyed (i.e. remained unaffected by) the flow of *guṇas*.

19. By compassion to all living beings, and by remaining contented with anything whatever and by pacifying urges of the senses by remaining detached from the objects of the senses, Hari becomes pleased in no time.

20. Hari, the imperishable Lord, is invited by continuously growing contemplation to the pure hearts of pious people who have dispelled all the cravings. He does not wish to move out of the space of the heart, for he remembers his obligations to his devotees.

21. Hari loves the poor people who regard him as their only wealth; for he can appreciate the sweet bliss in their devotion which is motiveless and is solely concentrated on him. Hari does not accept worship from such crooked-minded persons who out of pride for their own scholarship, opulence, parentage and achievements, despise indigent yet righteous people.

22. He is not attached to Śrī (his wife—the goddess of wealth and beauty) even though she (always) waits on him. Nor does he attend to kings and gods who entreat her favours. For he himself is absolutely perfect (bliss etc.). But he is (always) subservient to the will of his servants (devotees). (This being the case) how can anyone with a feeling of gratefulness abandon him?

Maitreya said:

23. In this way, sage Nārada, the son of Brahmā (the Self-born god) narrated (these and) other stories of Lord Hari to Pracetasas and returned to the region of Brahmā.

24. Having heard the glories of Hari as narrated by Nārada, and which remove the sins of the world, they (Pracetasas) meditated upon his feet and attained to his region.

25. Oh Vidura, I have now narrated to you everything that you requested me to tell, viz. the dialogue between Pracetasas and Nārada containing the glorification of Hari.

Śrī Śuka said:

26-27. This dynasty of Uttānapāda, the son of Manu has been described to you, Oh best of Kings ! Now listen from me the race of Priyavrata (Uttānapāda's elder brother) who obtained the spiritual lore from Nārada and who after enjoying (i.e. ruling over) the earth, divided his kingdom among his sons and attained to the Lord's abode.

28. Having heard this sanctifying story about the invincible Lord Hari, as described by Maitreya (Kauṣārava), Vidura was overwhelmed with emotions. With his eyes flowing with tears, he installed the feet of the Lord in his heart and held (i.e. bowed to) the sage's feet with his head.

Vidura said:

29. Oh great Yogin ! Compassionate at heart as you are, you have shown me today the other shore of the ocean of darkness (i.e. ignorance) where dwells Lord Hari who is realized by votaries who are solely devoted to him.

Śrī Śuka said:

30. Having bowed to him (Maitreya) and taking his leave, Vidura who was desirous of seeing his relatives returned with peaceful mind, to Hastināpura.

31. Oh King ! He who would listen to the account of kings who have dedicated their minds to Lord Hari, would be blest with (lit. obtain) longevity, affluence, glory, family-bliss (sons, grandsons etc.), sovereignty and eternal happiness (or godhood).

FIFTH SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE*

(The Life of Priyavrata)

The king (Parikṣit) said :

1. Priyavrata was a devotee of the glorious Lord. As such he was merged in the highest bliss of the Soul (*Ātman*). How is it that he took delight in the life of a householder as it is the root of the bondage of *karmas*, and obscures one's real nature (by diminution of knowledge), Oh omniscient sage ?

2. Oh most excellent Brāhmaṇa ! It is definitely unbecoming that men like him, who have given up all attachment, should cherish such intense attachment to family life (including Vedic rituals, children, wife etc.).

3. The high-souled persons whose minds have found happiness and delight under the shade[165] of the feet of Lord Viṣṇu of excellent renown, cannot definitely entertain an intense desire for family life, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage !

4. (It is possible that due to the power of fate, some persons who found delight in the Soul, may get attached to family life). But there is my great doubt as to how he (Priyavrata) attached to his wife, home, children etc., could ttain Liberation, and could cultivate an unswerving devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, Oh Brahman !

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*This *Skandha* presents the third characteristic—*Sthāna*—of this Purāṇa (SD., VD., GD.). At the end of the last *Skandha* 4.31.26-27 it is mentioned that Priyavrata was at first initiated into spiritual lore by Nārada, but he entered householder's life and after enjoying the kingdom of the earth, he renounced it and attained final beatitude. King Parikṣit asked the question here.

165. *chāyā* : (i) Which removes (i.e. cools down) hot tormenting passions—ŚR.

(ii) Which removes *saṁsāra* and three types of misery—VR. VC.

(iii) Shade characterised by knowledge which removes torments of *saṁsāra*—VJ.

Śrī Śuka said :

5. Certainly, what you said is correct. But persons whose mind is possessed by (being soaked in) the honey of the lotus-like feet of the Lord of Śrī, Lord Viṣṇu of excellent renown[166] do not generally abandon their own blessed path of listening to the stories of the Lord, most loved by the great ascetics (*parama-haṁsas*) and the votaries of the Lord, even though their path might be temporarily obstructed (by some difficulties).

6. Oh King ! It is widely known that Prince Priyavrata was a great devotee of the Lord. By serving the feet of Nārada, he easily got insight into the real nature of the Soul. When he intended to dedicate his whole life to the abstract contemplation of the Supreme Soul, he was called upon by his father (Svāyambhuva Manu) to protect or to assume the responsibility of governing the world, as he (the Prince) was the sole receptacle of a host of excellent qualities (as pre-requisites of a ruler) as prescribed in the scriptures. By the *Yoga* of uninterrupted meditation, he (the Prince) had already resigned all the functions of his senses and organs solely to Lord Vāsudeva. He foresaw that by accepting office (of the king), his Self will be obscured by the duties and functions of the government, even though they be (essentially) unreal. Hence, even though the command of the father is not to be disobeyed, he did not welcome the order (to be a king).

7. Thereupon, the Self-born god Brahmā, the first among the gods, who correctly comprehends the intentions and desires of (everybody in) the world by his continuous thinking (and solicitude) for promoting the prosperity of the creation (world) which is the product of (three) *guṇas*, came down from his region (*Satyaloka*), surrounded by all the Vedas *incarnate*, and his retinue (consisting of Marīci and others).

8. During his journey through heavens, he was being worshipped at several points by great gods, riding their celestial cars. On his way through the sky, he was being eulogized by *troupes* of divine *artistes* like Gandharvas, Sādhyas, Cāraṇas

166. *uttamaśloka*—Who is glorified by excellent gods like Brahmā—VR.

and by Siddhas and sages. Illumining the whole valley of *Gandha-mādana* by his moon-like splendour, he approached the Prince.

9. (ŚR. asks us to understand that at this time, while Nārada was instructing Priyavrata, Manu also had come to take the Prince to his capital).

There, recognising by the vehicle—swan—that it was his father Lord Hiraṇya-garbha (Brahmā), Nārada rose up hastily and waited upon him with articles of worship, and along with the father and the son (Manu and Priyavrata), and offered prayers to him with folded hands.

10. Oh King Parīkṣit (Oh descendant of Bharata), Lord Brahmā, the Primeval Man, who was offered worship (by Nārada), and whose various excellent qualities, arrivals on the earth from Satyaloka (to confer boons), and glorious victories, were highly extolled in appropriate words, cast a smiling look, full of compassion at Priyavrata and spoke :

The Lord (Brahmā) said :

11. Oh Child ! Try to understand carefully this truth that I am telling you. You should not find fault with the self-refulgent inscrutable God (who is beyond the ken of intelligence). For, we (I Brahmā, Marīci and other sages), god Rudra, your father (Svāyambhuva Manu), this great sage (Nārada)—all of us, being totally under his control, carry out his behests.

12. No embodied being can undo what is decreed by him, through austere penances, knowledge of *Śāstras*, the power of Yoga (or Yogic powers like *aṇimā*, *laghimā*), his intellectual capacity, wealth, religious acts, or with the help of another (powerful person) or with his own capacity.

13. Dear Priyavrata ! All living beings always maintain association with the body which is ordained by the unmanifest Lord, for (undergoing) birth, death, doing actions, (experiencing) sorrow, delusion, fear, pleasure and pain.

14. We are tightly bound together to the cord in the form of his Word (the Vedas), with the unbreakable strings in the form of *guṇas* (like *sattva*), and actions (suitable for one's own position and stage—*varṇa* and *āśrama*—in life), Oh child !

We all offer worship to the Supreme Lord like quadruped animals (controlled) with a string woven through their nostrils, carrying loads for the bipeds (men).

15. For, dear Priyavrata, we accept whatever form of existence (e.g. gods, subhuman beings) is assigned to us by the Lord, according to our attachment to *guṇas* (*sattva* etc.), and actions (*karmas*); experience pleasure or pain (as ordained by him) like the blind led by a person endowed with eye-sight.

16. Even though a person is liberated, he should maintain his body, experiencing the fruits he is destined to reap, but without identifying himself with the body, just as a man, awakened from sleep, remembers the experienced dream (in a detached manner without identifying himself in the dream condition). He does not seek after attributes which lead to next body (birth).

17. (He answers the objection : as there cannot be detachedness in the householder's life due to one's indulgence in pleasure, one should renounce it and resort to forests). The fear of *saṁsāra* (cycle of births and deaths) persists in the case of a person who has not controlled his senses, even though he (leaves his house and) wanders from forest to forest (out of fear of attachment). (For) he stays in the forest beset with his six (internal) enemies (viz. uncontrolled mind and five cognitive senses). On the other hand, what harm can the householder's life possibly do to a wise man who has subdued his senses and who is absorbed in the bliss of his Soul.

18* He who wishes to subdue his (above-mentioned) six enemies, should first enter the householder's life, and intensively try to do so, like a king who, resorting to his stronghold, (first) overcomes his powerful enemies. When the enemies have been weakened, the wise man may go about (to another *āśrama*—stage of life) at will.

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*VJ. : A person desirous of subduing his enemies in the form of senses should first stay in the householder's stage of life. After getting satiated (*alam buddhim prāpya*) by enjoying pleasure, he should try for his final beatitude. In the householder's life, however, he should stay in the stronghold, viz. devotion to the Lord and curb his powerful enemies viz. senses eager for enjoyment, by restraining himself from enjoying pleasures and thus bring the senses under control. When the desire of sense-enjoyment recedes, the wise man may fearlessly proceed (with the Lord's devotion).

19. But you have already fortified yourself in the castle in the form of the lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the god with a lotus sprouting from his navel), and have conquered the six enemies. Therefore, (you should) now enjoy the blessings bestowed upon you by the Supreme Person, and then renouncing all attachment, you should resort to your essential nature (viz. the Self—*ātman*).

Śrī Śuka said :

20. (Priyavrata) the great devotee of the Lord who was thus addressed (by Brahmā), bent his head low, with a sense of his own smallness (before god Brahmā) and respectfully acquiesced in the command of the venerable Preceptor of the three worlds (viz. Brahmā), with the words 'Yes Sir'.

21. Venerable Brahmā was worshipped with due formalities by Manu. And while Priyavrata and Nārada were looking on calmly (without any rancour for the frustration of their original plans), he retired to his abode, meditating upon the Supreme Brahman, his own asylum, who is beyond the range of speech, mind and actions (*avyavahṛtam*).

22. Manu also got his desired object (of retiring to forest after appointing his son to the throne), fulfilled by the great god Brahmā With the consent of the great divine sage Nārada, he installed his son to protect and stabilise his sway over the whole of earth. As for himself, he (Manu) renounced his desire of householder's life which is like an unfordable poisonous lake of sensual enjoyments.

23. In this way, it was by the will of the Supreme Lord that Priyavrata, the Lord of the world was invested with powers to execute his duties (of kingship). He burnt down the impurities in his heart, by dint of constant meditation of the pair of feet of the Lord, the Supreme First Person, Whose supreme glory is capable of destroying the bondage of the whole world. Pure as he (Priyavrata) was, he governed the kingdom of the earth in order to show his regard to the great (god Brahmā and others, by carrying out their command to rule).

24. Then, he married the daughter, by name Barhiṣmatī, of Viśvakarmā, the Lord of created beings. And as

known to all, he got by her, ten sons, all of whom were great like him in character qualities, capacity of work, beauty of form and prowess, and a daughter, youngest of all, by name Ūrjasvatī.

25. All of them were named after the fire-god—Agni—(viz.) Agnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yajñabāhu, Mahāvīra, Hiraṇyaretas, Ghṛtapṛṣṭha, Savana, Medhātithi, Vīti-hotra, Kavi.

26. Out of these Kavi, Mahāvīra and Savana were lifelong celibates. Since their infancy, they cultivated acquaintance (i.e. took to the study of) the science of the Soul (spiritualism) and adopted the order of Paramahaṁsas (the highest type of recluses).

27. (While) in that (order of Paramahaṁsas), those great sages who were habituated to self-control and tranquillity, uninterruptedly meditated upon the beautiful lotuslike feet of the venerable Lord Vāsudeva who is the abode of all species of living beings and the place of refuge for those who are afraid (of death or *saṁsāra*). They realized the Lord within their heart which becomes thoroughly purified by the power of steadfast and supreme Yoga of devotion (born of that ceaseless contemplation). And freeing themselves from the conditioning gross body, they became absolutely identical with the Lord who is Soul of all beings.[167]

28. By another wife also, he had three sons (named) Uttama, Tāmasa and Raivata, each of whom ruled over a *Manvantara*.

29. While (three of) his sons were practising self-control, the Lord of the earth ruled over the world for one hundred and ten million years.[168] (During his reign) the enemies of righteousness were deterred by the twang of the bow-string pulled by his mighty pair of arms possessing enormous power whereby all his heroic undertakings became successful without any obstruction. The high-minded king enjoyed (the plea-

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167. VR. interprets *pratyag* as *jiva* 'individual soul' and *bhūta* as 'insentient bodies' (*a-caitanya-śarīrakatvam*). Thus VR. explains : They (the Princely Sages) realized that the individual Soul (*Jīvātman*) is like a body to and not separable from the Supreme Soul (Paramātmam). Thus they attained to a state like him (*Sādharmyam*).

168. *arbuda*=Ten crores (1000,000,00) years.

sures of life) as if he had not realised his true Self or had his judgment clouded by queen Barhiṣmatī's expression of daily increasing raptures in greeting him with her amorous womanly charms, her smiles and side-glances half-concealed by bashfulness and by witty conversations.

30. (Once he noticed that) even to the extent of the world (upto the Lokāloka mountain), over which the Sun shines during his circumambulation round Mount Meru (the mount of gods), it gives light to half the surface of the earth while leaves the other half to be enveloped in darkness. He did not approve of it. As his super-human power was enhanced by the adoration of the Lord, he decided to turn even the night into the day, by (riding in his) luminous chariot, equalling the Sun in speed. Thus, like a second Sun, he made seven circuits closely following the Sun (on the heels).

31. Verily, the wonderful moat-like tracks left by the fellies of the wheels of his chariot, became the seven seas which divided the earth into seven island continents (*dvīpas*).

32* They (*dvīpas*) are called Jambū, Plakṣa, Śālmali, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śaka and Puṣkara. As regards their dimensions, each succeeding island-continent is double in area as that of the previous one, and is surrounded by an ocean separating it (from the other).

33** The seven oceans are respectively of salt-water, juice of sugar-cane, wine, clarified butter, milk, curds and pure

*This concentric division of the earth in seven island-continents is mentioned by Patañjali (2nd cent. A.D.), and is common to *Viṣṇu P.* (2.4), *Mārkaṇḍeya P.* (54.6), and with a variation in *Matsya P.* (121, 122) and *Agni P.* 108.1.3. The arrangement is briefly as follows : (1) Jambūdvīpa surrounded by an ocean of salt water. Beyond this ocean and encircling is *Plakṣa-dvīpa* which is double the area of Jambūdvīpa. (2) Plakṣa-dvīpa is surrounded by the ocean of sugar-cane juice which in turn is engirdled by (3) Śālmalidvīpa. The ocean of wine surrounds this *dvīpa* and is encircled by (4) Kuśadvīpa with the ocean of clarified butter around it. (5) *Krauñcadvīpa* surrounds this ocean and is itself engirlded by an ocean of milk. (6) *Śākadvīpa* surrounds the ocean of milk and is itself encircled by ocean of curds (7) *Puṣkaradvīpa* surrounds this ocean of curds and is encircled by the ocean of fresh (sweet) water.

**N. L. De in GDAMI. 179, identifies the seven seas or oceans as follows : (1) Salt water sea—The Indian ocean surrounding Jambūdvīpa or India; (2) *Kṣīra* (Milk ocean)—Shirwan alias the Caspian Sea; (3)

(fresh) water. They serve as moats to each of the island-continent. They are equal in extent to the continent they encircle. Each one of the oceans is in a serial order, the outer boundary of the continent surrounded by it. Priyaṿrata (the consort of Barhiṣmatī) severally installed as ruler, dutiful sons by name Agnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yajñabāhu, Hiraṇyaretas, Dhṛtapṛṣṭha, Medhātithi, Vītihotra—each being the ruler of one of the continents such as Jambūdvīpa and others.

34. He gave his daughter called Ūrjasvatī in marriage to Uśanas (Śukra, the preceptor of demons), and of her was born Devayānī also called Kavya-suta (the daughter of Kavi, i.e., Śukra).

35. Such heroic achievements are not impossible in the case of devout men who, by the (efficacy of the) dust of the feet of Lord Viṣṇu (who as Trivikrama took the universe in his long strides), have conquered the six senses (five cognitive senses and the inner organ—mind) or six anxieties (such as physical hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, old age and death). For if, a man even from the lowest caste, utters but once the name (of god Viṣṇu), he immediately shakes off the shackles of *Saṁsāra*.

36. In this way Priyavrata, a possessor of immeasurable strength and prowess, once felt disgusted with himself as he found himself to be dissatisfied with the contact with the product of *guṇas* (in the form of his kingship and worldly enjoyment) which fell to his lot, even after his resorting to the feet of (the) celestial sage Nārada, and said this (to himself):

Surā (Wine)—a corruption of Sarain or the Caspian Sea forming the south-eastern boundary of Kuśadvīpa; (4) *Ghṛta*—derived from the Erythraean Sea or the Persian Gulf forming the boundary of Śālmalidvīpa or Chaldia, i.e. Assyria; (5) *Ikṣu* (sugar cane) a variant of the Oxus. The river is taken as a sea (cf. Sindhu means both the sea and the river). It forms the southern boundary of Puṣkaradvīpa or Bhushkara i.e. Bokhara. (6) *Dadhi* (curds) is a hyper Sanskritisation of Dahi (Dahae)—a scythian tribe living in the upper Jaxartes on the shore of the Aral Sea. Hence *Dadhi* is the Aral Sea. (7) *Svādu* (sweet water)—a corruption of Tchandun, a river in Mongolia i.e. Plakṣadvīpa. These identifications are still controversial. Vide—Baladeva Upadhyaya—*Purāṇa Vimarśa* pp. 317-331. D.C. Sircar—*Studies in GAMI* pp. 17-25.

37. "Alas ! What a (terrific) iniquity has been perpetrated by me ! I have allowed myself to be pushed by my senses into the dark terrible pit of sensual objects produced by Avidyā. Now enough of this. Fie upon me who became a beast of recreation (i.e. monkey) to this woman" Thus he censured himself.

38. He regained his power of discretion and thinking, by the grace of Hari, the Supreme Deity. (Hence) he divided the earth proportionately among his dutiful sons (as per injunctions of the Dharma Śāstra). He abandoned, like a dead body, his queen with whom he enjoyed pleasures, renounced his great imperial wealth and grandeur. By the power generated by the realization of the stories and pastimes of Hari, he became disgusted (with *Saṁsāra*) in his heart, and he followed again the spiritual path shown to him by the divine sage Nārada.

These are verily the verses composed of old to eulogize the glory of Priyavrata:

39. Who else than the Lord Himself can perform the great achievements of Priyavrata who, while dispelling the darkness (of the night by riding in his refulgent chariot), created seven oceans by the deep tracks of fellies of his chariot.

40. For the happiness and convenience of beings he divided the earth (in seven island-continents). He fixed the boundaries (in each *dvīpa*) by means of rivers, mountains and forests.

41. Devotees of Lord Viṣṇu were dear to him. He regarded as hellish, the glories and affluence acquired in the Pātāla (subterranean world), the celestial world and the human world as well, through powers of *karma-yoga*.

CHAPTER TWO

(The History of Agnīdhra)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When his father (Priyavrata) was thus absorbed (in the *yoga* of devotion as advised by Nārada), Agnīdhra, who abided by his (father's) commands, kept the injunctions of Dharma in view, and accordingly protected properly his subjects, the inhabitants of Jambūdvīpa, like his own children.

2. Once upon a time, he, being desirous of attaining to *Pitṛloka* (the region of manes, by having a son), went to perform penance in the valley of mount Mandāra which was the sporting ground of beautiful celestial damsels. He collected all the articles required for worship, and with concentrated mind, he propitiated the venerable Brahmā, the lord of the progenitors of the universe.

3. Having understood his intention, the glorious First-born god Brahmā, deputed to him a celestial damsel called Pūrvacitti who was a singer in his assembly.

4. And leisurely did she stroll to the garden adjacent to Agnīdhra's hermitage. The garden appeared extremely beautiful with its lotus-ponds of crystal-clear water, which were resounded with the variegated sweet warblings of acquatic birds like water fowls *Kāraṇḍavas* (a kind of duck), swans etc. And the water-birds were (in their turn) aroused by the resounding melodious notes of the pairs of herbacious and terrestrial birds, perching on golden creepers which entertwined the mass of branches of densely grown forest trees of various kinds.

5. The Prince caught up the sound of the beautiful anklets jingling at every step she wove in a charming, amorous pattern in her graceful advance. He slightly opened the pair of his lotus-bud-like eyes which were till now closed in religious meditation, and perceived her closely.

6. Like a female bee (kissing a flower), the heavenly nymph was enjoying the sweet smell of flowers not far from him. She was making room for the god of Love (the flower-weaponed god) in the minds of men by her gait, sportiveness, bashful and modest glances, sweet voice and charming limbs which profusely delighted the minds and eyes of gods and men (alike).

Her full (pitcher-like) breasts, braids of hair and girdle were slightly agitated by her quickened steps out of fear, when she was assailed by a swarm of bees blind and inebriated with the fragrance of her breath (in the form) of words which dropped from her mouth, and which being accompanied with a smile, were sweet like nectar and intoxicating like wine. Agnīdhra fell under the strong influence of the god of love (with a crocodile on his banner), who got an opportunity to enter his heart the very moment he saw her, and like a stupid[169] fellow, he addressed her (as follows):

7. "Oh great sage ! Who are you and what do you propose to do on this hill ? Are you some indescribable power of the worshipful, Supreme Deity ? Oh friend ! Do you carry a pair of stringless bows (namely your eyebrows) for your purpose, or do you hunt after careless uncautious beasts (like me who are not self-controlled) ?

8. (Referring to her amorous side-glances). These two arrows of your glorious self are winged with lotus-petals (in the form of your eyes). They are gentle, beautiful without feathers, yet of extremely sharp teeth (points). We do not know at whom you wish to aim them in this jungle. May your valour be for the good of dull-witted persons like us.

9. (Referring to the black bees moving about her due to the fragrance of her body). These disciples of your worship are reciting (Vedic hymns) around you, and by incessantly singing the Sama verses with a full understanding of its mystic doctrine they are glorifying the Lord. Just as all sages eagerly resort to their particular (traditional) branch of the Vedas, all these (black bees) eagerly resort to the showers of flowers that are dropped down on all sides from your braid of hair.

10. (Listening to the jingling of the anklets). Oh Brahman ! We can hear only the sweet notes of the *tittira* birds which are encaged (in your anklets), but their form is not visible. Whence did you get the Kadamba-flower-like splendour (of the garment), round your hips which are engirdled by a fire-like shining zone.

11. (Referring to her full conical breasts). Oh Brāhmaṇa

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169. He is called stupid as he failed to distinguish between a man and a woman, and addressed the nymph as if she was a man.

(twice-born one) ! What is stored in your beautiful horns which you carry (with difficulty on your bosom), despite your slender waist, and on which my eyesight is firmly resting ? The saffron—coloured fragrant paste applied to your horn is such as has filled my hermitage with sweet smell, Oh beautiful one.

12. Oh best friend ! Please show me your region, the inhabitants whereof bear on their bosom such wonderful pair of limbs which (delight yet) agitate the minds of ascetics like us, and who have on their countenance such a wonderful treasure of sweet words, amorous gestures, nectar and the like.

13. (Pointing to the betel leaves which she was chewing) What is the food on which you subsist? By eating (chewing) that there blows forth a fragrance like that of an oblation offered into the sacrificial fire, Oh dear friend. You are a part (*aṁśa* or *kalā*) of god Viṣṇu, for like Him, there are (ear-rings with) two unwinking crocodiles in your ears. Your countenance is like a lake with its bewildered eyes which are a pair of fish in agitation; with your rows of teeth appearing beautiful like a row of swans and with the mass of curly hair like swarms of black bees moving about you.

14. This ball which, when hit by your lotuslike hands' moves about in all directions, makes my eyes roll about. You are not aware of the loosened braids of your curly hair. Alas ! The dissolute wind, addicted to licentious pleasure, is taking off your lower garment.

15. Oh ascetic (rich in penance) ! Your beauty wrecks the penance of those who are engaged in austerities. By what kind of penance did you secure it (your beauty) ? My friend ! (Come on) You should perform penance in my company. Or it may be that god Brahmā (who desires to extend creation), has been verily pleased with me (and has sent you to me).

16. I shall not let you go, my beloved, who are conferred on me by god Brahmā. Neither my mind nor even my sight, fixed on you as they are, would like to depart. Oh friend with beautiful horns, be pleased to take (lead) me, your devoted servant, wherever you like. May your faithful companions follow me (Or, may the female deer which are the companions in the forest go by the right side—as an auspicious omen".

Śrī Śuka said:

17. In this way, Prince Agnīdhra who was highly expert in the art of courting beautiful ladies and was blest with god-like intelligence, thoroughly propitiated the celestial damsel in a language which cleverly expressed his intention.

18. And she whose heart became strongly atttached to him on account of the intelligence, noble character, beauty, youth, splendour and liberality of that prominent hero (lit. the lord of warriors), enjoyed in the company of the lord of Jambūdvīpa, earthly and heavenly enjoyment for a pretty long time (lit. a period of a myriad of myriad years.)

19. The great king Agnīdhra, they said, got by her nine sons by name Nābhi, Kimpuruṣa, Harivarṣa, Ilāvṛta, Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya, Kuru, Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla.

20. Having given birth to nine sons, one per year, and leaving them in the palace, Pūrvacitti again rejoined her service with god Brahmā.

21. Those sons of Agnīdhra, from their birth, inherited well-built body and (enormous) strength by the grace of their (heavenly) mother. When the patrimony was duly divided among them by their father, they enjoyed severally (kingship of) the different divisions of Jambūdvīpa which were also named after them[170].

22. King Agnīdhra was not still satisfied with enjoyment of pleasures. Everyday he brooded over nothing else but that celestial damsel. By performance of acts prescribed in the Vedas, he attained the same region as hers—a region where departed forefathers enjoy themselves.

23. On the demise of their father, the nine brothers married the nine daughters of Meru, whose names were Merudevī, Pratirūpā, Ugradaṁṣṭrī, Latā, Ramyā, Śyāmā, Nārī, Bhadrā, Devavītī.

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170. VR. notes that Bhāratavarṣa is later named after king Bharata. Previously it was known as Ajanābha, after king Nābhi.

CHAPTER THREE

(The History of Nābhi—Incarnation of Ṛṣabha)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Being desirous of progeny, Nābhi, along with childless Merudevī[171], worshipped the venerable Lord of Sacrifices, with concentrated mind.

2. Although the Lord of charming personality is difficult to be attained to by the use and accomplishments of all the means of sacrifices such as wealth, suitable place, time, appropriate *Mantras* (incantations), competent sacrificial priests, and payment of liberal sacrificial fees he is affectionate to his devotees. Hence, when he (king Nābhi) was devoutly and with pure heart, performing the sacrifice, his (the Lord's) heart became eager to accomplish the object desired by his devotee. Although his charming personality is absolutely independent, he manifested his form with beautiful limbs, ravishing the mind and sight, at the time of conducting the *Pravargyas* (the ceremony preliminary to the Soma Sacrifice).

3. And lo ! The Supreme Lord appeared as a self-refulgent personality with two pairs of arms. He was clad in tawny coloured silk garment. He had the splendid *Śrī-vatsa* mark on his chest. He was characteristically distinct by the great conch (Pāñcajanya), lotus, Vanamālā (a garland of forest flowers), discus, the immortal jewel Kaustubha, mace and others. At this the priests officiating at the sacrifices, the directors of the sacrifice and the sacrificer waited upon him very respectfully with *arghya* offering water to wash the guest's hands. They received him bending down their heads respectfully, just as poverty-stricken persons would do when receiving a rich treasure-trove.

The Sacrificial Priests said:

4. "Oh most adorable (God)! (Even though you are perfect in every respect) you be pleased to accept of your own accord, the worship offered (to you) by us, your servants.

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171. Marudēvī in Jaina tradition (Hemacandra's *Triṣaṣṭi Śalākā Puruṣa Carita* (TSPC).

We are unable to praise you as your form is incomprehensible. Hence we are taught by the saintly persons to express our obeisance to you again and again. You transcend Prakṛti and Puruṣa. What man, whose mind is absorbed in *saṁsāra*, the product of the *guṇas of Prakṛti* and hence incapable, can describe fully the nature of the Supreme Ruler of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* by means of name, form or colour belonging to modern gross creation called *saṁsāra* which can hardly touch you).

5. One cannot do anything more than to extol only, a part of those multitudes of the excellent and the most auspicious attributes which destroy the sins of all human beings.

6. You are thoroughly pleased indeed, Oh Supreme One, through worship offered to you lovingly, by Your followers—worship consisting of water, pure white shoots, tender *Tulasī* leaves and sprouts of *dūrvā* grass, and accompanied by sincere prayer in faltering tone.

7. We do not see if you have to achieve any covetable object of yours through this elaborate sacrifice enriched with a number of component parts (formal rites).

8. You are the highest bliss, the embodiment of all the mutually complementary *Puruṣārthas* (highest objectives in human life) which flow from yourself uninterruptedly, directly and to an unlimited extent. But Oh Lord, this sacrifice signifies as merely (an inadequate) means of propitiating you in the case of us who covet blessings (of *Puruṣārthas*.)

9. Oh Supreme Person ! You are superior to supreme gods (like Brahmā). We are ignorant. We by ourselves do not know what is our highest good. Nor have we worshipped you properly (with due formalities). But just as others (philosophic teachers approach the laity for enlightening them, even though not duly received), out of your exceedingly profuse compassion, you reveal yourself here to us and bestow upon us your glory known as Final Liberation as well as the objects coveted by us.

10. However, (the very fact) that you have now manifested yourself to the vision of your own people (devotees), at the sacrifice of the royal sage (Nābhi), is itself a veritable boon, Oh most worshipful God, the foremost among those who confer boons !

11. Oh Lord ! The description of the host of your excellent attributes is a source of the highest auspiciousness even to sages who have completely burnt down their impurities by the fire of knowledge intensified by non-attachment, and have consequently become similar to you in nature, and enjoy themselves in their Self. (But even such sages have not visualized you). Hence your excellent virtues are continuously (and repeatedly) sung by them.

12. (Though we have been favoured with your audience, we seek one boon of you. May your names descriptive of your excellent qualities and annihilating all sins, be ever uttered by us (lit. be within the range of our speech), even when we are unable to remember you, while stumbling, hunger-stricken, falling, yawning and in wretched conditions and even when attacked by fever and at the moment of death as well.

13. Moreover, this royal sage is desirous of progeny. He looks upon progeny as a covetable object in human life. He covets to have progeny like you. Hence, like a beggar approaching Kubera, the Lord of Wealth—for obtaining mere husk, he beseeches you, the Lord who are competent to give all blessings including pleasures in Heaven and Final Beatitude.

14. Is there any such person in this world who has not waited upon the feet of the high-souled ones and still is not overcome by your invincible Māyā of inscrutable ways and whose intellect and understanding has not been clouded by her and whose nature has not been overwhelmed by the vehemence of the poison in the form of sense objects of pleasure ?

15. You have been invited here for an insignificant object. This act of ours who are dull-witted enough to regard progeny as the highest object in human life, is really an insult to you who are the Lord of unlimited achievements. Be pleased, Oh God of gods, to forgive us all who are ignorant ones as you are equal (in kindness) to all."

Śrī Śuka said :

16. The glorious Lord Viṣṇu was thus being praised in a hymn composed in prose. The feet of that foremost of gods were bowed to by the priests who were (in their turn) paid obeisance by (king Nābhi), the ruler of a sub-continent

(which later became famous as Bhārata-varṣa). He (the Lord) spoke graciously as follows :

The Lord said :

17. "Oh sages ! It is admirable that a very embarrassing and difficult boon viz. the son of this (king) should be like unto me, has been sought from me by you whose words are not futile and ineffective. For being matchless (one without a second), I alone am similar to me. Nevertheless, the words of Brāhmaṇas should not prove untrue inasmuch as it is my own mouth that is represented by the race of Brāhmaṇas who are like gods among the twice-born ones.

18. Therefore, no compeer to me being available, I shall exhibit a part of mine by incarnating (on the earth) through (king Nābhi), the son of Agnīdhra."

Śrī Śuka said :

19. Within the hearing of queen Merudevī the Lord addressed this to her consort and disappeared.

20. Oh king Viṣṇudatta[172] (Parīkṣit) ! The glorious Lord who was thus propitiated by the great sages in that very sacrifice, and who desired to oblige the monarch, descended as the son of Merudevī in the king's harem. He assumed a white (pure, *Sāttvic*) personality with a view to demonstrating to the world the sacred vows to be observed by (nude *Śramaṇas*) or recluses clad with air, performing austerities with a pledge to observe life-long celibacy[172a].

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172. So called because he was restored to life by Kṛṣṇa—vide *supra* 1.12, 7-10.

172a. This obviously refers to Digambara Jaina sages despite ŚR.

CHAPTER FOUR

(The miraculous history of Ṛṣabha)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. It is reported that after the incarnation, Lord Ṛṣabha had all the characteristic marks of the Supreme Lord (such as the marks of thunderbolt, goad etc.) manifest (on the soles of his feet), from his very birth. His majestic splendour was everyday enhanced by qualities like impartiality and equality towards all, control of internal and external senses, non-attachment to sense-pleasures, domination and control over all beings, and possession of great spiritual powers. The king's counsellors, subjects, god-like Brāhmaṇas very eagerly wished to have him as the protector of the earth.

2. On account of his Supreme-most personality which was extolled in laudatory verses by poets, his abundant vigour, physical strength, splendour, glory, dominance and valour, his father significantly named him Ṛṣabha (the most excellent).

3. The mighty Indra became jealous of him, and did not rain in his continent (Ajanābha, later known as Bhāratavarṣa). When apprised of it, Ṛṣabhadeva, the Master of yoga pooh-poohed it with a laughter, and profusely showered rains over his *Varṣa* (continent) called Ajanābha, by his mystic (yogic) power.

4. Being blessed with a worthy child as desired by him, Nābhi was transported with rapturous joy, and affectionately fondled the glorious Lord, the most ancient Person who, of his own free will had assumed a human form. His (Nābhi's) mind was overpowered with Māyā. He fondly caressed him with faltering words choked with emotion : 'Oh child, my daddie' and felt exceedingly happy.

5. King Nābhi who regarded the mandate of the public as authoritative, came to know the love and loyalty of all, from common man to the minister (commanded by Ṛṣabha), installed his son for the protection and preservation of the boundaries (standards) of religious conduct. Having entrusted him to the care of Brāhmaṇas[178] he, accompanied by Merudevī,

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179. According to Jinasena, Nābhi installed Ṛṣabha as an emperor when he was grown up and married. MPS (*Tri-ṣaṣṭi-lakṣaṇa Śrī Mahā Purāṇa —Saṅgraha*—K.B. Nitwe, Ed. 1899) 16.32.

retreated to Viśālā (Badarikāśrama), where he propitiated the venerable Lord Vāsudeva (alternatively) known as Nara and Nārāyaṇa, through severe penance which caused no trouble to others, and through the *yoga* of profound meditation. In due course, he attained to his greatness, viz., the state of *jīvanmukta* (being liberated while alive).

Oh descendant of Pāṇḍavas (king Parīkṣit) ! The two following verses are sung in his (Nābhi's) praise :

6. What other man can perform the righteous deed as done by the royal sage Nābhi, due to the purity and piety of which act, Hari became his child ?

7. Who else than Nābhi could be so devoted to Brāhmaṇas, who, being propitiated by sacrificial fees, by their spiritual power, made the Lord of Sacrifice manifest himself (to him) in his sacrifice ?

8. After his coronation, Lord Ṛṣabha-deva regarded his own continent as *Karma-kṣetra*[174] (a land fit to perform acts leading to the Heaven and Liberation), and showed (the model of life) how one should stay in the preceptor's house (for education). He obtained the permission (to enter house-holder's life) from his preceptors who were given boons (as fees) of their choice. For teaching the duties of a house-holder's life he married Jayantī[175] who was given (in marriage) by Indra. He performed both types of duties as prescribed in the scriptures (of *Śrutis* and *Smṛtis*). He begot through her (queen Jayantī) one hundred sons who were like unto him.[176]

9. Out of those (sons), the eldest was the great *yogī*, Bharata, who was endowed with highly excellent attributes. It is on account of him that this continent came to be called Bhārata[177].

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174. Jinasena interprets *karma-bhūmi* as a country in which the order of Agriculture and other six ways of livelihood had been fixed by Ṛṣabha (MPS 16.249).

175 According to Jinasena, he married Yaśasvatī and Sunandā with the consent of Indra. These two were the Princesses of Kaccha and Mahākaccha (MPS. 15, 69, 70).

176. Jain tradition confirms the number of sons as 100, but the names are different (MPS. 16.4).

177. Jain tradition endorses this derivation :

tat. nāmnā Bhāratam Varṣam
iti hāsīj janāspadam /

MPS. 15.59.

10. After him were born nine sons viz. Kuśāvarta, Ilāvarta, Brahmāvarta, Malaya, Ketu, Bhadrasena, Indra-spṛś, Vidarbha and Kīkaṭa—these were the leaders of (other) ninety (sons).

11-12. Kavi, Hari, Antarīkṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvis, Hotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana—these nine who demonstrated to the world, the sacred duties of votaries of the Lord, were themselves eminent devotees of the glorious Lord. We shall describe to you later on (in Skandha XI) their pious life imbued with the glory of the Lord, and leading a fund of tranquility, in the dialogue of Vasudeva and Nārada.

13. The eightyone younger sons of Jayantī who were obedient to their father, and of great modesty, profound scholars of the Vedic lore, habitual performers of sacrifice and of extremely pious deeds, became Brāhmaṇas (i.e. were given to meditation on Brahman).

14. The venerable Lord called Ṛṣabha was completely self-dependent. By his nature, he was eternally free from evils. He enjoyed absolute joy. Though he was the Ruler of the universe (God himself), he performed actions as if he were the opposite (an ordinary human being). He taught the ignorant by his behaviour, the traditional righteous duties. He was equal and impartial, friendly and merciful. He laid down the rules of conduct to people in the householder's stage of life, by his achievement of righteousness, wealth, fame, progeny, (earthly) joy and liberation.

15. Whatever is done by the heads (the leading persons) is followed by the world.[178]

16. Even though he knew for himself the confidential, esoteric Vedic lore containing the religious duties of all (people), he governed the people by expedients called *sāma*, (conciliation) *dāna* (gift or, bribery), *daṇḍa* (punishment), *bheda* (sowing discords) as advised by Brāhmaṇas.

17. As per counsels of Brāhmaṇas, he worshipped the Lord by performing for a hundred times, sacrifices, each provided with all the requisites with reference to the materials,

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178. *Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭho . . . . lokastad anuvartate*/ BG. 3.21.

place, time, age (of the sacrificer), faith, (proper) sacrificial priests, and the several gods to be invited.

18. While Lord Ṛṣabha was protecting this continent (Bhārata-varṣa), no man, at any time, desired or expected anything whatsoever from anybody else, as if it was non-existent (and hence beyond desire or expectation); nor did he cast a wistful glance at another's possession—except the ever-increasing intense love for their Lord.

19. Once upon a time, while touring (through his kingdom) Lord Ṛṣabha came to Brahmāvarta.

With a view to admonishing his sons in that conference of great and prominent Brāhmaṇa sages, he spoke thus to his sons even though they had their minds controlled, and their conduct governed by affection and modesty—he did so, within the sight and hearing of his subjects.

CHAPTER FIVE

(Ṛṣabha's discourse on the Path of Liberation)

Ṛṣabha said :

1. (My) dear sons ! This human body in the world of embodied beings, does not deserve to be devoted to pleasures which lead to misery, and which are fit for animals (like dogs and swine) feeding on excrement. It is fit for penance devoted to the realization of the Lord, and which purifies the mind; and pure mind leads to the infinite bliss of absorption into Brahman.

2. The wise say that service rendered to the great is the gate to final liberation, while association with those who are attached to women, is the entrance to hell (or *saṁsāra*). They are (really), the great who are of balanced mind, serene and composed, free from anger, friendly and righteous.

3. They (only are the great) who regard love unto me as the highest objective of human life, and who entertain no liking for people who are engrossed in maintaining their bodies

only, and have no attraction to houses (householder's life) and are devoid of desire for anything beyond the bare necessities of life (lit. maintenance of the body).

4. When one attempts to gratify one's senses (with their objects of pleasure), one certainly (loses discretion and) becomes wreckless, and commits sins only. I do not approve of (the repetition of) such (sinful) acts which (having been perpetrated in the previous existence) caused the body which, though really (unreal and) transitory, became a source of trouble to the Soul.

5. So long as one does not enquire into the real nature of the soul, it remains obscure[179] due to ignorance[180]. So long as the actions (*karmas*) are being performed, the mind persists in its disposition to activity (*karmas*) and a mind so disposed binds down the Soul to the body.

6. In this way, while (the real nature of) the Soul remains obscured by *avidyā* (nescience), the previous *karmas* (of man) tend his mind to perform more activities. He is not liberated from the bonds of the body, so long as he does not entertain love and devotion to me (Vāsudeva).

7. When one (the *jīva*) becomes careless about one's own interest, and even though possessing the power of discrimination does not realise the activities and functions of organs of sense as unreal and unconnected with him, he fails to bear in mind his real nature. Ignorant as he is, he gets into a householder's life (lit. a home with the provision of sexual enjoyment) and undergoes misery (of three types) therein.

8. They (the learned ones) call this stage of matrimonial union of a man with a women as the knot of their mutual hearts which reciprocally binds them. (This is in addition to the knot of the identification of their body with the Soul,—the knot which exists already in their individual hearts. It is this marital knot that deludes a man to regard the house,

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179. *Parābhavaḥ*—The real nature of the soul is dominated over by the body.—ŚR. (2) Is dependent on *karma* (VC., VD.). (3) Misery. —VS. (4) Involved in *Saṁsāra* characterised by the recurrence of birth and death (SD.). —

180. Cf. *Jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute*/BG. 4.37.

landed property, sons, relatives and wealth as being himself or his own.

9. When this strong knot of the heart, viz., the mind which continues to be hard by the past *karmas* (of the *jīva*), becomes loose, (then alone) a man becomes absolved of the (deluding) man-wife relation. He (then) shakes off *ahaṁkāra* (ego, the cause of the bondage), becomes free, and attains to the highest position, viz., *Mokṣa*.

10. Through devotion to me, the pure Self and preceptor; through service unto me; through freedom from thirst (for worldly enjoyment), by endurance of the pairs of opposite states like pleasure and pain; through understanding that the life of *jīva* is subject to miseries everywhere (even in the other world); through an enquiring spirit (into the nature of the truth); through penance and abstention from *karmas* (performed) for attainment of desires:

11. By actions done for my sake; by (listening to and recounting) my stories all the time; through association with persons who regard me as the only Deity; only by glorifying my excellent attributes; through freedom from the feeling of enmity, by impartiality and evenmindedness, through tranquillity and self-restraint; and through a desire (and attempt) to dispel the (false) notion of the identity of the Self with the body, house (property etc.), Oh sons.

12. Through proper studies in the scriptures dealing with the Soul (*ātman*); by living in seclusion; through control of breath, senses, organs and the mind; through absolute faith in the truth (or scriptures and the word of saintly people); through observance of strict celibacy; through eternal vigilance in performance of sacred duties; through control of speech (for abstention from studying the false doctrines and for observing silence).

13. Through clearsightedness realizing my presence everywhere, through wisdom illumined with Śāstric knowledge and experience; by means of deep concentration, a clever man, endowed with courage, perseverance and discrimination should strive to get rid of the subtle body, the limiting condition known as ego (*ahaṁkāra*).

14. One should always remain vigilant and by the

means, as taught (by the *śāstras* or the preceptor) should completely cut asunder the bondage in the form of the knot (of (*ahaṁkāra*) in the heart which has been caused by Nescience (*avidyā*); for that (knot) is the reservoir of all (previous) *karmas*. Having done so, he may cease to adopt these means.

15. A king, a teacher or a father who desires to attain to my region or regards my grace as the highest object in life, should thus instruct his subjects, pupils or sons who are ignorant of the Truth. (If they do not abide by his teaching) he should not get angry with them. Deluded as they are with the path of *karma* (as the path of real happiness), he should not direct them to perform *karmas*. What[181] advantage would a man reap by misdirecting the blind (i.e. ignorant ones to perform action (*karmas*) with a desire to get their fruit) and make them fall into the abyss (*of saṁsāra*).

16. People (involved in *saṁsāra*) have no insight (to know) in what lies their own (real) good. (Hence) they, being overwhelmed with (a powerful) lust for enjoyment of pleasures, desire for objects of sensual enjoyment. They entertain enmity with each other, for a particle of (insignificant pleasure). Deluded as they are, they have no idea of the unending misery (as a result of such hostility).

17. Seeing an ignorant person steeped in Nescience, what learned and compassionate person who himself knows the Truth, will misdirect him to the wrong path, just as one does not lead astray a blind man who has missed his way.

18. He who would not, or is incompetent to, liberate a person (whether he/she be a pupil, relative, an offspring or a wife or a devotee) from involvment in *saṁsāra*, is not a real preceptor (even though he may claim to be so) or a real relative, father or mother or husband or a deity. [ŚR. followed by VC., SD., GD. and BP. explains the implication as follows : If a preceptor would not or is incapable of leading his pupil to Liberation, he should not claim preceptorship and accept anyone as his pupil, and the pupil should disown such a teacher and leave him. Similarly, a man should not procreate a child or a mother should not accept one in her womb if he or she

181. VR. offers no comment on this line, presumably due to the deletion of the line *kam* ..... *garte* in his text of the Bh. P.

is incompetent to guide the child to Salvation. There is no sin in disowning such a father or mother as was done by Prahlāda in the case of his father and Bharata about his mother Kaikeyī. Such a deity is not a real deity and should not accept worship from a devotee and the devotee should ignore such a deity as was done by Khaṭvāṅga].

19. This body of mine (which, by my free will, appears human in form) is beyond comprehension (as I am not an ordinary human being). For my heart is definitely pure unalloyed *sattva* wherein abides righteousness (*dharma*). Since non-righteousness has been already expelled by me far behind, the noble ones call me Ṛṣabha (the most excellent).

20. All of you are born from my heart (which comprises of nothing but pure *sattva*). You should, therefore, without entertaining any jealousy, serve your brother, the noble-minded Bharata. That will render service unto me and will be (the real execution of duty of) protecting the subjects.[182]

21. Among the (animate and inanimate) created beings, creepers (which spread by themselves) are extremely superior. Higher than these (creepers) are reptiles (and other mobile creatures like insects) which can move from place to place; better than these are beasts which are gifted with intelligence; superior to them are the human beings; higher than men are *pramathas* (goblins, spirits) to whom are superior Gandharvas (celestial singers) and Siddhas (a demi-god tribe endowed with supernatural power); higher than these are followers of gods (such as Kinnaras).

22. Higher than these are Asuras (demons) to whom gods, whose leader is Indra, are superior; greater than these are Dakṣa and other sons of god Brahmā; among them Bhava (Lord Śiva) is the greatest. Brahmā is superior to god Śiva whose power or birth is derived from Brahmā; I am superior to him (Brahmā, and I regard Brāhmaṇas adorable as my own God.

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182. VJ. thinks that this is an exhortation to serve Hari. He interprets: You should sincerely resort to Hari who is mightier than the mighty, loves to support the subjects and is the shelter of all. Through your loving devotion to me, Liberation is just on the palm of your hand. Bharata to whom you serve will be serving me who abide in the subjects whom he protects.

23. Oh Brāhmaṇas ! As I do not regard any other being as comparable equal to Brāhmaṇas, I cannot see any being superior to them. I do not enjoy the oblations offered to the sacrificial fire with that much relish, as I enjoy to the full, the food liberally offered by men to these Brāhmaṇas with faith.

24. It is the Brāhmaṇas who have maintained in this world my glorious, ancient, eternal body (the Vedas). In them are found the eight great excellences such as) most sanctifying *sattva*, tranquillity of the mind, control of senses, Truthfulness, grace, asceticism, the spirit of endurance and knowledge of the reality. (Who can be then superior to Brāhmaṇas?).

25. Though destitute of everything, Brāhmaṇas who cherish deep devotion to me seek nothing of me, although I am superior to the Supreme-most god (Brahmā), possess infinite power etc. and am competent to confer heavenly blessings and Liberation (*Mokṣa*). How can they crave for any other blessing (like kingdom etc.)!

26. Oh my sons, at every step, you should look upon all mobile and immobile beings as my place of residence. That alone will be my real worship by you whose mind (sight)is unprejudiced by jealousy etc.

27. My propitiation is therefore the dedication of the activities of the mind, speech, sight and other sense-organs to me. Without such propitiation one shall not be able to free himself from the noose of death in the form of great delusion."

28. The divine Lord whose name was Ṛṣabha and who was the greatest well-wisher of all, exhorted his sons, even though they were well disciplined, as the exhortation was meant for the world as well. Possessor of great power as he was, he exemplified the path. He intended to exemplify the path of the Paramahaṁsas (recluses of the highest order) which is characterised by devotion, knowledge and renunciation, of great sages who are habituated to tranquillity and self-control and who have desisted from the path of *karma*. Having installed on the throne for the protection of the earth, Bharata, the eldest of his hundred sons, who was (himself) a great devotee of the Lord and devoted to the votaries of the Lord as well,

retained the possession only of his body and renounced everything else in the house. With the sky as his clothing, and with scattered dishevelled hair like a madman, he enshrined within himself the Āhavanīya fire, and set out from Brahmāvarta.

29. He took a vow of absolute silence and kept quiet even though spoken to by men. Behaving like a stupid, blind, dumb, deaf person or like a ghost or a mad person, he put an appearance of an Avadhūta (a sage who has renounced all worldly attachments and connections) who has lost all the sense of his body.

30. With his mind remaining unperturbed, he wandered all alone over the world. (While wandering) in cities and towns, mines and hamlets, flower gardens and the habitations at the foot of mountains, military camps and cowpens, settlements of cowherds, caravans, hills and forests, hermitages of sages and such other places wherever he went, on every road he was maltreated by the dregs of human society. He was threatened, belaboured, was urinated over, spat at, pelted with stones, showered with dust, subjected to stinking odours and to words of abuse. Like an elephant harassed by flies, he ignored these, as he never assumed any ego-hood as being his own self or as belonging to him the unreal habitat in the form of the body which is wrongly called real. He was established in his own essential glory, realising both being and non-being.

31. His hands, feet and broad chest were very delicate; his long and big arms, shoulders and neck, charming face and other limbs of the body were beautifully disposed. His beautiful face was brightened up with a spontaneous smile as he was by nature charming; he appeared beautiful with his reddish, large and refreshing eyes which were like petals of full blown lotus; his cheeks, ears, neck and nose were shapely and captivating; by the superb gracefulness of his face, he made the god of Love enter into the hearts of the damsels of the town; his face was adorned with profuse ringlets of matted and golden locks of hair overhanging it. His uncared-for body covered with dust (like an *avadhūta*), he appeared to be possessed by a devil.

32. When the Lord found that this world was opposed to his practice of Yoga, he regarded it reprehensible to offer any

resistance to it. He accepted the vow to lead the life like an *ajagara* (python). It was in a lying position that he ate, drank, chewed, passed urine, execrated till his limbs were daubed with faeces.

33. The wind perfumed with the fragrance of his faeces filled with sweet smell the whole country within a radius of ten *yojanas*.

34. Similarly, adopting the mode of life of a bull, deer and a crow, he behaved like a bull, a deer and a crow and drank, ate, chewed, urinated while going, staying, sitting or lying down.

35. In this way Lord Ṛṣabha, the dispenser of Liberation, adopted various modes of life useful for the practices of yoga. He had no environment like a physical body to prevent his mind i.e. power of direct cognition. He realised his highest bliss in all-pervading *ātman* who is Lord Vāsudeva, the inner controller of all beings. He was, by nature, fully possessed of yogic power such as travelling through the space, acquiring the speed of mind, the power of becoming invisible and of entering the body of another, the faculty of seeing objects distant in time and space and such other powers. Oh King, he did not welcome at heart these super-natural powers which came to him unsolicited.

CHAPTER SIX

(Ṛṣabha quits His body)

The King said :

1. The Yogic powers which accrue unsolicited to persons who realise bliss in their Self and who have burnt down the seeds of their *karmas* (leading to future bondage), through the fire of knowledge, inflamed and fanned by yoga, do not lead to miseries. (Then why did Ṛṣabha not like them?)

The sage (Śrī Śuka) said :

2. Your observation is true. But there are some intelligent persons in this world who are not at all prepared to trust

their fickle mind like a wily hunter would do about a deer (even though trapped by him).[183]

It has also been observed thus:

3. One should never form friendship with (i.e. place trust in) the fickle and changeful mind. It is through such (blind) trust in the mind that the penance of Śiva (at the sight of god Viṣṇu in the Mohinī form)[184] or that of great ascetics (like Saubhari[185]) which was accumulated for a long period, was totally lost.

4. Just as a faithless wife would give entry (to her paramours in her husband's house to get him murdered), the mind of a *yogin* who has formed friendship with it, always leaves loopholes to lust and other enemies (like anger, delusion etc.) to enter.

5. What wise man would regard his mind as obedient and trustworthy to him, for it is the mind which is the source of lust, anger, pride, greed, sorrow, delusion, fear and which binds him down with *karmas* ?

6. Though he (Lord Ṛṣabha) was the ornament of all the protective deities of the world, his divine grandeur remained unnoticed due to his strange stupid-like dress, speech and behaviour like an *avadhūta* (an ascetic who has renounced all worldly attachments and connections). He desired to give up his body with a view to instruct the *yogins* in the method of quitting this mortal body. He realised that the Supreme Spirit directly abiding in him was absolutely one with him without a second. Being free from the continuity of the *vāsanās* or effects of past deeds, he became free from his subtle body, shedding off his (conceptual) identification with the *liṅga śarīra* (subtle body).

7. The body of Lord Ṛṣabha who was free and detached from his subtle body, roamed over the world through the semblance of egotism caused by virtue of the unconscious effects of his yogic powers. As willed by Providence, he tra-

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183. Or just as a dealer (merchant) would not trust a deceitful *Kirāta*—ŚR.

184. Vide infra 8.12.24-32

185. Vide infra 9.6.39-52.

versed Koṅka, Veṅka, Kuṭaka and South Karṇāṭaka[186] countries. In the jungle near mount Kuṭaka, he holding a piece of stone in his mouth and with dishevelled hair, wandered like a madman.

8. Then a fearful forest conflagration created by the friction of bamboos tossed by the velocity of winds, burnt down the forest along with his body.

9. Verily, in the Kali Age, when unrighteousness will rule supreme, there will be a foolish king named Arhat, ruling over the territories of Koṅka, Veṅka and Kuṭaka. Learning about the strange way of the life of Ṛṣabha, he will (try to) study and adopt it. As a result of the accumulated sins of the previous life of the people, as fate would have it, he (Arhat) being deluded, will give up the path of his own *dharma* which is free from fear or danger in every way. Out of his whim, he will propagate the wrong, and absurd way of the heretics.

10. By that (propagation of the heretical creed), in the Kali Age, wretched people, being deluded by the Māyā potency (power of delusion) of God, will (neglect and) be devoid of the purity, cleanliness and good conduct enjoined upon them by their scriptural injunctions. With their intelligence stupefied by the Kali Age wherein unrighteousness predominates, they, of their respective individual free will, will adopt wrong and corrupt vows involving contempt of gods, abstention from bath, *ācamana* (sipping of water before religious ceremonies etc.), neglect of cleanliness, plucking out hair (from the head instead of shaving) and such others. They will generally condemn the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Lord Viṣṇu (the presiding deity of sacrifices) and the world.

11. Believing in the blind tradition about the new way of life chosen by them but which is unsupported by the Vedas, they of their own accord will fall into dark abysmal hell.

12. This incarnation (of Lord Viṣṇu as Ṛṣabha) was

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186. VR. and VJ. identify Koṅka with Koṅkaṇa, the narrow strip of land between the Western ghats and the Arabian sea. Veṅka is probably Veṅkaṭādri, the Tirupathi hill.

VJ. states: Ṛṣabha travelled from the land irrigated by the Bhīmā and Southern Karṇāṭak a to Saurāṣṭra and thence to the east of Nagpur where near the 'Uttarā' river there is the Kuṭaka hill. Obviously VJ. is guessing. N. L. De identifies Kuṭaka with Gadag in Dharwar district. GDA. Ml. 112.

intended for instructing people (who are) immersed in the *Rajoguṇa*, in the way of Liberation.

They (people) sing the (following) verses describing Ṛṣabha's excellent qualities:

13. Oh! This sub-continent (Bhāratavarṣa) is the sacredmost in all sub-continents (*Varṣas*) and island-continents (*dvīpas*) of the earth which is engirdled with seven seas; for people hereof sing of the auspicious deeds of Murāri (Lord Viṣṇu, slayer of the demon mura)—deeds associated with his (Viṣṇu's) incarnation.

14. How lucky is the race of Priyavrata of pure and sacred glory! In it (Viṣṇu), the Ancient Person took an incarnation (of Lord Ṛṣabha). The First Personage observed that path of religion which became the cause of Liberation (lit. non-action).

15. Is there any other *yogi* who can even mentally follow the direction of this birthless Lord (Ṛṣabha)? For the yogic powers, to attain which other Yogis strive covetously, were discarded by him as unreal and illusory, even though the powers automatically accrued to him.

16. Thus has been narrated to you the pious (and sanctifying) life of the Lord, by name Ṛṣabha, who was the most venerable to all the Vedas, the worlds (people), gods Brāhmaṇas and cows. It completely cleanses all impious actions of men (who devoutly listen to or recite it). It is the abode of the highest auspiciousness and supreme bliss. He who, with rapt attention and increasing faith, listens to it or recites it to others, unswerving devotion into venerable Vāsudeva is developed in them.

17. It is in *bhakti* (devotion and not in *yoga* etc.) that wise men continuously steep their Soul, tormented as it is with the scorching heat in the form of miseries of the worldly life (*saṁsāra*) full of manifold sins. They do not at all evince any regard or desire for the final beatitude though it is the highest *Puruṣārtha*, (objective in human life), despite its being automatically obtained. For, being worshippers of the Lord, they have ipso facto completely achieved all the *Puruṣārthas* (highest objects of human pursuits).

18. Oh King! Of you Pāṇḍavas and Yadus; the vene-

rable Lord is the protector, preceptor, the deity to be worshipped, a friend and well-wisher, the controller of your family, and occasionally even a servant (e. g. an ambassador to the Court of Duryodhana). May it be as it is. But Lord Krsna (Mukunda) awards Liberation to his worshippers, but not loving devotion (to him).

19. Salutation to the venerable Lord Ṛṣabha who is free from desires due to his eternal realization of his own Self, and who, out of compassion for the world, explained the fearless nature of the self to the people (or the world) whose mental capacity is lost in sleep (ignorance) for a long time, as it is engrossed in desires of the body and its property.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(*The Life of Bharata*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. When Bharata, the great devotee of the venerable Lord, was by his volition ordained to protect the earth by Lord Ṛṣabha, he became fully engaged in complying with his will (viz. protection of the world). He married Pañcajanī, the daughter of Viśvarūpa.

2. Just as *Ahaṁkāra* (ego, the source of all *bhūtas*) creates the subtle elements (*tanmātras*), through her he begot five sons who were entirely like himself.

3. (They were:) Sumati, Rāṣṭrabhṛt, Sudarśana, Āvaraṇa and Dhūmraketu. It is after him that this continent (*Varṣa*) which was (erstwhile) called Ajanābha, came to be designated as Bhārata.

4. The Lord of the earth had a wide knowledge, and like his father and grandfather was devoted to his duties (as a king). Like them, with great (filial) love, he protected the subjects who were engaged in their respective duties.

5. He worshipped the venerable Lord who is of the form of *Yajña*[187] and *Kratu* by performing punctually[188] and with

187. A sacrifice conducted without the use of Yūpa or a sacrificial post is Yajña and that with the use of a sacrificial post is a *Kratu*—ŚR.

188. i. e. at the proper time in the morning, at noon and in the evening.

ardent faith, sacrifices, both big and small such as Agnihotra, Darśa, Pūrṇamāsa Cāturmāsya and those performed with the offering of a beast as well as with Soma sacrifices in their completely detailed forms as well as their modifications. Being properly authorised he got them performed through the four classes of sacrificial priests, viz., Hotā, Adhvaryu, Udgātā and Brahmā.

6. While different sacrifices were being performed wherein all the accessory rites and actions were being conducted with meticulous care (by Adhvaryus, with ghee, rice, *puroḍāśa* and other oblations in their hands for offering to the fire) Bharata (the sacrificer) mentally dedicated the entire Apūrva[189] (the prospective transcendental effect) of the fruit of the sacrificial act which is designated as Dharma, to Lord Vāsudeva, the Lord of the sacrifices. He is the doer, as he is the director and controller of deities (lit. objects) of all the Mantras which are symbols of all the gods. In this way, he cleared the impurities (like love, hate) of his mind by his cleverness and wisdom (of dedicating the fruit of sacrifice to Lord). The sacrificer (Bharata) contemplated the gods who partook the offerings from the hands of the Adhvaryus, as resting on the various limbs of the Sacrificial deity (viz. Lord Vāsudeva).

7. In this way, in Bharata's heart, thoroughly purified by such exemplary (faultless) performance of (sacrificial) actions, developed intense devotion which went on increasing

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189. *Apūrva*: (A) Lit. Something new, not known before. It is 'a Force set in motion by the action of sacrifice, this Force being the Direct Instrument whereby, sooner or later, the Action brings about the Result' (G.N. Jha—*Pūrva Mīmāṁsā in its Sources*, p. 231). Jha discusses the details of this (*Apūrva*) theory and the differences between the Prābhākara and Bhāṭṭa Schools of the Mīmāṁsā (ibid., pp. 226-35).

(B). Jhalkikar defines Apūrva as the special potency developed by performance of sacrifice and leading to heaven. (*Yāgādijanyaḥ svargādijanakaḥ Kaścana-guṇa-viśeṣaḥ*/*Nyāyakośa*, p. 48-49). He further states that *Prārabdha-karma* of Vedāntins, *dharmādharma* of the Nyāya Schools, *adṛṣṭa* of the Vaiśeṣikas and *Puṇya* and *Pāpa* of followers of *Purāṇas* are the same as *apūrva*. Śaṅkara criticises this theory that it is non-spiritual and if God is said to act according to *apūrva*, it becomes identical with the Vedāntic view that God acts with reference to the law of *Karma* (*Śārīra Bhāṣya* 3.2.41).

daily with forceful ardour. The devotion was unto the Supreme Spirit (Brahman) who, within the inner space of Bharata's heart, manifested himself in the form of the Supréme Man, Lord Vāsudeva who was distinguished with the characteristic *Śrī Vatsa*, the *Kaustubha* gem, a garland of forest flowers (*Vana-mālā*), the discus (*Sudarśana*) and the mace (called *Kaumodaki*) and others. Lord Vāsudeva who stays steady (as if drawn in portrait) in the heart of his devotees, stood effulgent in Bharata's mind (as well).

8. In this way he spent one thousand myriad (Ten million) years. Having understood that the time of exhaustion of the fund of his *karmas* (resulting in enjoyment of kingship) had arrived, he proportionately divided the ancestral property and kingdom which was till then enjoyed by him, to his sons. Abandoning his home which was the abode of all kinds of wealth and prosperity, he retired as recluse to the hermitage of Pulaha.[190]

9. They say that, out of affection and grace for his votaries who stay there (at Pulahāśrama), Lord Hari, verily even now manifests himself to his devotees in the form desired by them.

10. That eminently holy river called Cakra-nadī (the Gaṇḍak) hallows all the places in that hermitage with wheel-like circular pebbles with navel-like dimples on both the sides.

11. It is indeed said that in a grove adjacent to Pulaha's hermitage, he performed, all alone, the worship of the Lord with different kinds of flowers, tender leaves of various kinds, especially of the Tulasī-plant and with water, and offered to him (as *naivedya*) bulbous roots, roots and fruits. He ceased to have any desire for objects of senses and cultivated perfect tranquillity of the mind and attained to supreme bliss.

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190. *Pulahāśrama*—ŚR., SD., GD. call it *Harikṣetra*, while VR., VJ., BP. identify it with *Śāla* (*li*) *grāma*. N. L. De locates it somewhere near the source of the Gaṇḍaka. However, he points out that (Jaḍa) Bharata's hermitage was situated on the Kakaveni river on the north of Redigrama and that of Pulaha in the latter village. —GDAMI. 174.

The place is confirmed by *Padma P.* Pātālakhaṇḍa, Ch. 78 and *Brahma Vaivarta*, P. 2.13.

12. By such type of uninterrupted worship of the Supreme Man, his heart melted with the pressure of his increasing love for God and became slack in making any efforts (as if hypnotised); due to ecstatic joy, the hair stood on their end all over his body; his eyes became bedimmed with tears of joy which flowed profusely due to his love and solicitude (to realize the Lord). His consciousness and thought activity was drowned in the deep lakelike heart overflowing with supreme joy due to the increasing intensity of devotion caused by his constant contemplation of the red-lotus-like feet of his beloved Lord. And he forgot (even) the worship of the Lord that he was performing.

13. He had thus undertaken the sacred vow of propitiating the Lord. With the deer-skin for his clothing and with his mass of tawny, curly matted hair, wet on account of his ablution in the morning, noon and evening, Bharata appeared charming. He praised the glorious Lord, the golden (Self-effulgent) Supreme Man manifested in the orb of the rising Sun by means of Ṛgvedic hymns addressed to the Sun, thus :

14.* The light of the Sun-god (the Creator of the universe) which dispenses the fruit of actions, is transcendental to

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* (i) VR. : We take shelter with the brilliantly luminous form of god Viṣṇu—Viṣṇu who is beyond the sphere of Prakṛti and whose knowledge is ever manifesting, eternal and limitless. He created this universe by His Will (-power). He entered again his own creation, along with Jīva, charged with his power (or it is by his Will-power and knowledge that he entered the universe consisting of the sentients and insentients). He sees (protects) the Jīva who hankers after the objects of senses and who enjoys the fruits of his action by his intelligence leading to the miseries of the cycle of births and deaths.

(ii) VJ. : You transcend (i.e. are superior to and beyond) Prakṛti or are free from *rajas*. You are the maker of the world. You have perfect knowledge of everything. Being established by the Vedas, you are the offspring of the Vedas. The Lord created this universe by his mental power. By his power, he entered the universe and stayed there as the controller. You put an end to miseries. You are the Lord of all *jīvas* who are full of cravings (of all kinds). We eulogize you.

(iii) SD. : This verse elucidates the meaning of Gāyatrī. The main idea is: "Lord Vāsudeva is the creator of the universe. To his brilliantly shining golden form, we take shelter."

Prakṛti (lit. is beyond *rajas*, is purely *Sāttvic* unalloyed with *rajas* and *tamas*). It created this (phenomenal universe) by its will (power) only, and having entered it (as the *antaryāmin*—the Inner Controller), it protects, by its intellectual capacity, the *jīva* who seeks its help. We resort to that light which actuates our intellect.[191]

CHAPTER EIGHT

(Bharata reborn as a deer)

1. Once upon a time, after finishing the necessary (bodily) acts (e.g. urination), Bharata bathed in the great river (the Gaṇḍkakī) and completed his routine of general and special religious duties. He then sat on the bank of the river, repeating the sacred syllable *Om*, for a period of three *muhūrtas*.[192]

2. At that time, Oh King, there approached near the river, a female deer, all alone, to satisfy her thirst.

3. Exactly at that time, while she continued to drink water with avidity, there arose, not far from the place, a terrifically loud cry of a roaring lion, panicking the world.

4. The female deer was timid by nature. Hearing it, with frightened looks, she became panicky at heart, with the

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(iv) GD. : This verse brings out the following characteristics of the Lord :

(1) The creator of the universe; (2) the protector of the world; (3) Being a witness—aloof and above the world; (4) Being the inner controller as follows:

(1) His lustre being identical with the Lord's form created the universe with his mental power. (2) From him does the wealth i. e. the fruit of Karmas, issue. (3) Having re-entered the universe, he, by his *cit-śakti* (intellectual capacity) sees the Jīva hankering after pleasures. (4) He motivates the intellect, organs of senses and vital airs among beings.

191. Cf. also
tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi/
dhiyo yo naḥ-pracodayāt/ RV. 3.62.10.

192. *muhūrta*—a period of 48 minutes.

fear of the lion. With her eyes swimming and thirst unquenched, she suddenly leapt across the river through fear.

5. When the doe which was carrying leapt over, the foetus in her which became dislodged through terrific fear, got discharged from her organ of generation and fell into the river.

6. That devoted female companion of a black antelope was afflicted with exhaustion caused by the abortion, (unusually) long jump and fear (of the lion), she strayed away from her herd, rushed into a cave and fell dead.

7. The royal sage Bharata noticed that the helpless young one of the deer was being carried away by the current. Out of compassion, he picked it up, as it was abandoned by its relatives, and took it to his hermitage, as it was motherless.

8. They say that he developed intense attachment for it, feeling the young deer to be his own. Day by day, he got engrossed in its feeding, protection (from wolves etc.), caressing and pleasing it (with scratching etc.). When he got so fondly attached to it in the course of some days, his daily righteous duties along with *yamas* (moral observances like non violence—*ahiṁsā* etc.), worship of the Supreme Lord and others, became neglected one by one, and soon all of them were abandoned by him.

9. (Bharata said to himself) : "Alas ! What a pity ! This poor unfortunate young deer has, due to the velocity of the rotation of the wheel of Time, been separated from its kith and kin and friends, and has resorted to me as a shelter. It regards me only as its father, mother, brother and relative and as a companion in its herd. Nor does it know anyone else. It has placed its absolute trust in me. I know the gravity of the sin in letting down a person seeking my protection. Hence it is up to me that I, with envy towards none, should look after the feeding, protection, satisfaction and fondling of this young deer which completely depends on me."

10. For certainly, self-restrained and tranquil-minded noble worthies who are friendly to the poor and wretched, disregard even their bigger interests for such (compassionate acts).

11. In this way he felt attachment to it. His heart was

bound down with affection for the fawn while he was sitting, sleeping, wandering, standing, eating and doing such other acts.

12. When he wanted to bring the (blades of) Kuśa grass, flowers, sacrificial sticks, leaves, fruits, roots and water, he went into the forest along with the young one of the deer, as he apprehended danger to the life of the fawn from wolves and dogs.

13. When due to its innocent nature, it became stuck up at various places on the way, he, with his heart overwhelmed with excessive affection, bore it on his shoulder, out of pity for it. In this way, by placing it on his lap, hugging it to his bosom and by fondling it, he derived the highest pleasure.

14. Even during the course of performing his religious duties, he used to rise up frequently at intervals to have a look at it, and with his heart reassured, the Lord of the Bhārata varṣa) continent expressed his blessing with the words, "may you be safe from all sides, my child".

15. On other occasions (when he did not see the fawn), he felt excessively anxious about it like a miser who has lost his wealth. With extreme anxiety and full of tenderness and compassion, his heart was tormented, with the pangs of separation from the fawn. Being overcome with great infatuation and lamenting for the young deer, verily, it is said that he used to lament (lit. express himself) as follows :

16. "Oh ! Is it possible ? Will that pitiable motherless young one of the deer place its confidence again in me who am, alas ! ignoble, of deceitful and cruel nature like a cunning Kirāta and who have done no meritorious acts ? Will it return (to me) forgetting and forgiving my faults by its inherent goodness and purity of heart like a saintly person?

17. Shall I be able to see it (again), protected by God, and safely grazing tender leaves of grass in the garden of the hermitage ?

18. (How strongly I wish) that no wolf, or dog or any other gregarious animal (like boar) or solitary wanderer (like a tiger) eats it.

19. The glorious Lord (the Sun), which rises for the weal of the whole world and which is the Soul of the triad of

Vedas (the Ṛg, Yajus and Sāman) is (now) certainly setting. But still the fawn, the charge entrusted to me by the female deer, has not arrived.

20. Would that the princely young deer return and delight me who have done no righteous deed, and remove the anxiety and sorrow of his near and dear ones, by its manifold beautiful, pleasing, sportive fawn-like activities?

21. When in joke, I close my eyes in sham meditation, out of anger resulting from affection, it would approach me hesitatingly with awe. And with the tips of its horns soft like drops of water, it would strike at me.

22. When it is chided by me for polluting (by nibbling) the Kuśa grass on which the sacrificial offerings are placed, it being extremely afraid, immediately desists from its sport (sportiveness) and stays steady without moving its limbs, like a boy-sage with all his senses controlled. Oh! What wonderful penance must have been practised by this fortunate earth!"

23. (After saying the above words, he went out and found the prints of the hooves of the deer and said): "By means of the rows of the imprint of tiny, charming, auspicious-most hoofs of the docile young one of the black-antilope, the earth indicates the track of the treasure-trove (viz. the lost fawn) to me, a wretched person, who am afflicted due to my being deprived of my wealth (the youny deer). And having got herself beautified with those foot-prints, she becomes transformed into a sacrificial place[193] for the twice-born ones (*dvijas*) aspiring after *Svarga* (heaven) and *Mokṣa* (the final beatitude).

24. (Looking at the Moon that has arisen, he imagined that the deer-like spot on the disc of the Moon was his fawn). Maybe that, out of compassion, the glorious Lord of stars who is kind to the poor and afflicted, protects, from the fear of the lion, this fawn whose mother is dead and which has strayed away from its hermitage (shelter).

25. Or it may be that with its cool, soothing and (due to affection) profusely flowing drivel in the form of rays, the

193. ŚR. quotes a Smṛti text to support the sanctifying effect of the foot-prints of black antelopes rendering that place fit for performing sacrifices: *yasmin deśe mṛgaḥ kṛṣṇas tasmin dharmān nibodhata*/Cf. Manu 2.23.

Moon soothes me whose land-lotus-like heart is scorched by the flames of the forest conflagration of the fever (torments) of separation from my child (-like fawn), and who, in search of the fawn, am following the young one of the doe."

26. In this way, the heart of Bharata was overcome with wishes which could not be accomplished. By the force of his own destiny (lit. fruition of his deeds done in previous birth) which appeared in the form of that fawn, Bharata the *Yogī* and the sage, swerved from the yogic practices[194] and his acts for propitiating the glorious Lord. How else there would be such an intense attachment to the young one of a deer—an animal of a different species—in Bharata who formerly considered his own sons—with whom it is so very difficult to part—as veritable impediments in the attainment of Liberation and separated himself from them. In this way, the practice of Yoga, commenced by the royal sage Bharata, got interrupted. He forgot the real nature of the Soul (or himself) while feeding, protecting, pleasing and caressing the young deer. Meanwhile just as a serpent rushes to the hole of a rat, the inevitable time of death, of terrific speed, arrived.

27. Even at that time, he wistfully fixed his glance on the deer which like unto a son was mourning by his side. With his heart fixed on the fawn, he left this world. He did not lose the memory of his previous life along with his dead body, but like other (ordinary *jīvas* with such obsessions at the time of death*) got the body of (birth as) a deer.

28. Even in that life as a deer, by virtue of his (endeavouring at) propitiation of the Lord (in his previous birth) he remembered the cause of his birth as a deer and being greatly tormented with repentance, he said:

29. "Alas! How painful it is! I strayed away from the path of the knowers of the Supreme Self. With great fortitude I divested myself from attachment of every kind and resorted

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194. VR. includes under these the three kinds of *Yoga* viz. *Jñāna-yoga, Karma-yoga* and *Bhakti-yoga* and these are regarded as the three kinds of austerities which Bharata practised.

*Cf. *yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajatyante kalevaram/ taṁ tam evaiti Kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ //* —BG. 8.6-

to a secluded sacred forest. Self-controlled as I was, I completely devoted and concentrated my mind on the venerable Lord Vāsudeva who is the (*antaryāmin*) inner controller of all, I utilized fully all the time, every moment of which was devoted with energetic efforts to the listening to the excellences of the Lord, reasoning and pondering over them, extolling his virtues, worshipping him, constantly remembering him. That mind of my ignorant self in a moment flowed (was attracted) to a young one of a deer from far afar".

30. Thus being full of deep remorse, he left his mother-deer. And from Kālañjara[195] hill (his birth place), he returned again to the hermitage of Pulastya-Pulaha at Śālagrāma, a holy place consecrated to the Lord, a place favourite with sages who have attained self-control and serenity of mind.

31. Even there, he waited for the termination of his life (lit. death). He was so terribly disgusted with attachment that he lived all alone. Subsisting on dry leaves, grass and creepers he was counting (his days) for the exhaustion of (his *karma* which was) the cause of his birth as a deer. (Ultimately) he cast off his body of a deer immersing half of it in the sacred waters of the Gaṇḍakī.

CHAPTER NINE

(Bharata, reborn as a Brāhmaṇa, saved by Bhadrakālī)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Then (after Bharata's quitting his body as a deer, the story of Bharata proceeds as follows).

There lived a certain holy Brāhmaṇa, foremost in the clan of Aṅgiras. He was possessed of self-control and tranquillity of mind. He was noted for his austerities, study of the Vedas, liberal hospitality, contentment, endurance, modesty, knowledge of rituals, non-jealousy, knowledge of the Supreme

195. Kālañjara in the Badausa Sub-division of Banda district-N.L. De—GDAMI. 84.

Self (as being different from the body) and felicity (as a result of righteousness). (From his elder wife) he got nine sons, all similar to him in scholarship, nobility of character, rıghteous conduct, handsomeness and liberality. From his younger wife was born a twin—a son and a daughter.

2. They say that the male among the twins was Bharata, the great votary of the Lord, the foremost among royal sages. He cast off the body of a deer and as the last incarnation (before final beatitude) was born as a Brāhmaṇa.

3. In this birth also, he was terribly afraid of attachment to his relatives. He specifically contemplated in his mind the pair of the lotus-feet of the glorious Lord who cuts asunder bondage of *Karma* of those who listen to, meditate upon and extol the excellences of the Lord. He remembered the series of his previous incarnations through the grace of the Lord and being apprehensive of his fall (as in his previous life), he presented himself to the world as being an insane, stupid, blind and deaf person.

4. With his heart deeply attached to his son through filial affection, the Brāhmaṇa verily performed all the sacred ceremonies (*Saṁskāras*) up to *Samāvartana*[196] as prescribed in the *Śāstras*. To his son whose *upanayana* ceremony (for investiture of the sacred thread for the beginning of the study of the Vedas) was performed, he taught him well the rules of conduct such as the Śāstric way of personal purity of performing *ācamana* (sipping water before and after meal and while performing *sandhyā* etc.) and other rules of performing sacred duties, even though they were not to the liking of his son; for (according to Śāstric injunctions) a son must be instructed (in the observance of religious duties) by his father.

5. And he (Bharata) also used to behave in the wrong

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196. *Samāvartana* was originally a ceremonial bath after finishing Veda study. It marked the termination of studenthood. Some texts on *dharma Śāstra* regarded it as a subordinate element (*aṅga*) of marriage. The Brāhmaṇa did not want to get the stupid son married. Hence he completed the purificatory ceremonies upto *Samāvartana*. For details of this ceremony vide Kāne *Hist. of Dharma Śāstra*, pp. 402-415.

way,[197] contrary to the instructions[198] (of his father) in his father's presence. The father intended to instruct him in the Vedas (in the month of Śrāvaṇa). But in spite of his continuous instructions during the months of the spring (*Caitra* and *Vaiśākha*), and the months of the summer (*Jyeṣṭha* and *Āṣāḍha*) he could hardly teach the boy the three-footed Solar-hymn (known as *Gāyatrī mantra*), along with *Vyāhṛtis* (the mystic syllables *bhūḥ*, *bhuvaḥ* and *suvaḥ*) with the sacred syllable OM at the beginning.[199]

6. In this way, the Brāhmaṇa's heart was fixed on his son who was his own self. He stuck fast to the false notion that a son must be made learned at all costs. He taught Bharata all the duties of *upakurvāṇa*[200] celibate, viz., cleanliness and purity, Vedic studies, observance of vows, self-discipline, service of the preceptor, worship of the sacrificial fire and others, even though Bharata had no regard for them. But he could not realise his ambition. In the meanwhile, the Brāhmaṇa who, due to his attachment to domestic life, remained negligent (about his spiritual good) was taken away by the ever vigilant death.

7. Having entrusted the twin children that were born from her, to the care of her co-wife, the younger pious wife of the Brāhmaṇa died after him (by immolating herself on his funeral pyre) and attained to the region of her Lord.

8. When the father died, (Bharata's) brothers who were ignorant of his superhuman power and greatness, and who, being (totally) ignorant of the higher knowledge (viz. that

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197. GD.: The word *iva* implies that whatever a knower of Brahman does, is right and true, though it may appear strange to ordinary people.

198. VC. illustrates: He used to take *ācamana* before going for urination and not after. GD. explains: the words *u ha* express wonder at the necessity of compliance to his father's request when Bharata had realized Brahman.

199. i.e. in spite of instruction for four months, Bharata could hardly pronounce the following Gāyatrī Mantra:

Om, bhūr bhuvaḥ suvaḥ tat Savitur vareṇyam /
bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt //

200. *upakurvāṇa*—A Brāhmaṇa in a state of pupilage (Brahmacārin) who wishes to pass on to the state of a householder.

of the Self or Brahman), regarded knowledge of the three Vedas (i.e. *karma-kāṇḍa* enjoined therein) as the highest knowledge, thought him to be dull-witted and desisted from their duty of teaching their brother.

9. When he was addressed by ignorant bi-ped brutes (e.g. men) as madman, a stupid or a deaf fellow, he replied to them suitably (according to the implications of the epithets given by them). When he was made to work according to the will of another person, he worked. He used to partake whatever food he got, in return for wages or forced labour (without wages), by way of begging or unsolicited, whether it be little or plenty, savoury or otherwise, but (he never ate) for the gratification of his senses. For he attained the knowledge of his Self which is not the product of any cause but is self-existent, of the nature of extremely pure bliss; and he never identified himself with his body in pleasure or pain caused by pairs of opposites (like heat, cold, respect, disrespect).

10. Stout and muscular as he was, he wandered about barebodied like a bull, in cold (the winter) and heat (the summer), in stormy winds and showers (the rainy season). He lay down on the bare ground to sleep; had not massaged his body (with oil); nor did he ever take a bath. Under the coating of the dirt (so accumulated on his body), his spiritual glory remained unmanifested just as the brilliance of a big gem is obscured by a coating of dust. His loins were covered with a dirty cloth. With his dirty-most sacred thread, he was (contemptuously) ridiculed as 'a nominal Brāhmaṇa', 'an unworhty Brāhmaṇa' (a Brāhmaṇa by caste only), by persons ignorant of his real greatness.

11. When, however, he wished to have food (for his livelihood) in return (as wages) for work, from others, he was employed even by his brothers in farm work, on agricultural farm. He did it but he did not (care to) know whether the ground was level or uneven or whether he worked less or more (in proportion to the wages). He swallowed, as if it were nectar, the broken rice, oil cake, husk, worm-eaten grains (called Kulmāṣa), charred rice sticking to the bottom of the boiling pot (offered as remuneration for work).

12. Now, on one occasion, a certain chieftain of robbers

(of Śūdra caste) desirous of having a child, was about to offer a man as a sacrificial beast to goddess Bhadrakālī.

13. The animal (i.e. the man brought for being sacrificed) providentially escaped. The servants of the chieftain who ran in all directions on the track of the (luckily escaped) victim in (the darkness of) the night, could not catch the 'beast', even at midnight owing to thick darkness. By chance (however) they saw the famous scion of the Aṅgiras family in the Vīrāsana posture guarding the fields against deer, boars and other beasts.

14. Observing him to be of defectless limbs and feeling pretty sure that it will serve their master's purpose thereby, they bound him with a rope and brought him to the temple of the goddess Caṇḍikā (Bhadrakālī), their faces blooming with joy.

15. The Paṇis (robbers) bathed him in their own ritualistic way, covered him with new (unwashed) piece of cloth, decorated him with ornaments, pigments, garlands, a sandal-paste mark on the forehead etc., fed him (to his fill). Taking with them burning incerse, lamps (torches), wreaths of flowers, fried grains, tender shoots and sprouts and offerings of fruits according to their traditional ritual of human sacrifice and in accompaniment of loud music, singing of panegyrics and beating of drums and the musical instrument called *Paṇava*, they made the human (sacrificial) animal sit before the goddess Bhadrakālī.

16. The robber chieftain of the Vṛṣalas (Śūdras) wishing to worship the goddess Bhadrakālī with the wine in the form of human blood of the man sacrificed as a beast, took a very terrible sword charmed with the specific incantation (of Bhadrakālī[201]).

17. The nature of the Vṛṣalas (Śūdras) was dominated by *rajas* and *tamas*. Their minds grew haughty due to the *rajas*, the pride of wealth. In utter disrespect for the family

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201. VD. quotes it as follows :

gṛdhrakarṇi, virūpākṣi, lamba-stani, mahodari /
hana śatruṁ triśūlena kruddhasya piba śoṇitam //

He gives an alternate incantation:

Kāli-kāli, Mahā-kāli etc.

of Brāhmaṇas, (who are) the leaders possessing (and preserving) the Vedas, the rays of the venerable Lord, they strayed wilfully on the wrong (sinful) way and sported in acts of violence (as an amusement). The goddess Bhadrakālī noticed the terrible-most act of immolating the son of a Brāhmaṇa sage who had become one with Brahman, and who was above enmity, and a friend of all beings—the killing of whom is not permissible[202] even in (such an) imminent danger wherein violence is allowed. With her body fiercely scorched with the extremely unbearable Brahmanic lustre, the goddess suddenly exploded forth from the image.

18. In extreme wrath and indignation, her terrible face with her branch-like arched eyebrows thrown up in agitation, her dreadful, curved jaws and the movement of her blood-red eyes, showed that she was as if bent on destroying this world. In terrible rage, she roared forth a thunderous laugh. Springing forward, she cut off the heads of those wicked sinners with that very sword (with which the king was to slay Bharata) and drank to her fill, along with attendants, hot wine of the blood gushing forth from their throats. Intoxicated with over-drinking of that blood-wine, she sang at the topmost pitch of her voice in company of her attendants, and danced and played with the ball-like lopped heads.

19. In this way, verily, a malevolent aggressive black magic to kill the great-souled ones totally rebounds against the exorciser.

20. Oh Viṣṇudatta (King Parīkṣit) ! It is not a great miracle in the case of the great devotees of the Lord who are free from all attachment to the world (*Parama-haṁsas*) that they remain unperturbed even if the calamity of getting beheaded is impending; for they have resolved the formidable knot in their heart—the knot viz., the identification of their Self with their body—and who are well-wishers of all the beings in their heart

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202. VD. quotes an Āgama text prohibiting human sacrifices in general and of a Brāhmaṇa in particular. The quotation from the Black Yajurveda indicating human sacrifice does not involve actual killing as explained by the annotator. A.B. Keith, the translator of the Black Yajurveda, also shows that actual human sacrifices were not current in Vedic times. (*The Religion & Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*—pp. 347-48).

and are above all enmity. They have resorted to the feet of the Lord and are protected from all sides by the venerable Lord Himself directly, by the ever-vigilant weapon called the discus of Time and through various forms (like Bhadrakālī here).

CHAPTER TEN

(Bharata's Life : King Rahūgaṇa accepts discipleship)

Śrī Śuka said:

(The following incident took place when Rahūgaṇa, a King of Sindhu-Sauvīra, was going to the sage Kapila for instruction in philosophy).

1. One day, while Rahūgaṇa, the King of Sindhu-Sauvīra,[203] was proceeding (to Kapila), the captain of the palanquin-bearers who was in search of a palanquin-bearer, providentially found this excellent Brāhmaṇa (viz. Bharata). (He thought that) this stout, young man of sturdy constitution was fit to carry any load like a bull or a donkey. Bharata was taken perforce along with others who were already so employed to carry on the forced labour without remuneration even though he (Bharata) did not deserve it, that exalted personage carried the palanquin.

2. The gait of the great Brāhmaṇa who (in order to avoid injury to others) walked after carefully looking the ground ahead to the length of arrow, did not conform to that of other men (bearing the palanquin) Rahūgaṇa felt the jolts of the irregular movement of the palanquin. He spoke to the men (palanquin-bearers), "On bearers, walk properly. Why is the vehicle (palanquin) borne so irregularly ?".

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203. *Sindhu-Sauvīra*—Names of two adjacent countries, Sindhu and Sauvīra. Ancient Sauvīra was situated to the east of the lower Indus and included Multan on the north. According to Alberuni, Sauvīra included Multan and Jahrawar. Sindhu lay to the west and Sauvīra to the east of the lower Indus. D.C. Sircar GAMI 33 and 113. For other identification see N.L. De : GDAMI, p. 183.

3. Hearing the taunting words of the master, they, afraid in their minds of the application of the fourth remedy[204] (viz. corporal punishment) to them, humbly submitted to him.

4. "Oh Lord of men! We are not negligent. We are properly carrying (the palanquin) in complete obedience to your majesty's commands. Though employed just afresh (just now), this (new) fellow does not walk quickly. Hence we are not able to carry the palanquin with him."

5. He (King Rahūgaṇa) realized that the contagious fault (disease) even of one man certainly becomes the fault of all who come in contact with him. Though he had waited upon the elderly (wise) person, his original (Kṣatriya) nature overpowered him. His intelligence was clouded (lit. covered) with *rajo-guṇa*. Getting slightly enraged, he spoke (sarcastically to Bharata) whose Brāhmanic lustre remained unmanifested like fire (covered with ashes).

6. "Alas! What a pity, brother! You are obviously very much exhausted. Your honour alone has carried the palanquin to a great distance for a long time, and these other co-bearers are as good as non-existent. You are neither stout nor possessing a well built body. And you are overcome with old age, oh friend!" Though he was thus severely reproached in an insulting manner, he (Bharata) who had never superimposed the false notion of I-ness and mine-ness on his final body which was created by nescience (*avidyā*) as a combination of gross matter (five elements), attributes (ten sense organs), (effects of past) actions (merits and sins) and the mind—an unreal configuration of aggregates and who was on the verge of merging into Brahman[205], silently carried the palanquin as before.

7. Later on, when the palanquin was borne irregularly again, Rahūgaṇa flared up in rage and said, "Oh! What does

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204. *upāyāḥ sāma dānaṁ ca bhedo daṇḍas tathaiva ca |*
samyak prayuktāḥ siddhyeyur daṇḍas tvagatikā gatiḥ ||
Yājñavalkya Smṛti 1.346

Conciliation or negotiation (sāman), bribery (dāna), sowing dissension (*bheda*) and punishment (*daṇḍa*) are the stratagems or expedients to deal with enemies (in the case of Kings).

205. Brahma-bhūta—(1) One whose mind is absorbed in Brahman—VJ.

(ii) One who has realized the identity of his self and Brahman by the cessation of *āvidyā*—GD.

this mean? You are (as good as) dead though alive. Disdaining me (who am your lord), you transgress the command of your lord. Like unto Yama, (the god with a rod) who metes out punishment to people, I shall administer the corrective remedy to you, a negligent fellow, so that you will come to your senses."

8. The venerable Brāhmaṇa who was to be absorbed into the Supreme Spirit (*Brahman*) was the well-wisher of all beings (even those who offended him), the very self of them all. Totally free from pride, he spoke with a slight smile to Raḥūgaṇa who indulged in a good deal of irrelevant bragging. This way Rahūgaṇa who was puffed up with the pride of being the lord of men, who being inebriated with arrogance and infatuation born of *rajas* and *tamas* contemptuously disregarded the whole community of the votaries of the Lord (who are beloved of him) by insulting Bharata, who, though (in conceit wrongly) considered himself to be learned, had little knowledge of the modes of behaviour of masters of yoga.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

9* What you stated (about fatigue, bearing palanquin alone for a long distance, etc. in 6 above) is a fact. There is no sarcasm (therein) Oh warrior![206] If there be anything like a burden, and if it be borne by a body called bearer, and if the body has any relation with me, then the taunt would apply to me. (But that is not the case due to the unreality of the burden and the bearer and their non-relation to me—the self). So also if a station is to be reached by the goer, there

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* (i) What you spoke is true from the popular point of view. But if there be a burden to the bearer, the consequent fatigue is possible; it however is not applicable to me as I am not carrying anything. If there be some station to be reached there would have been distance to be covered but such movement is obviously non-existent in my case. The epithet 'fat' may be applicable to the body which is a conglomeration of *bhūtas* and not to me in the language of those who have realized the Self (*ātman*) —VR.

(ii) VJ. endorses the same interpretation in different words.

206. v.l. *addha*—directly, in the real sense of the term.

would be (the existence of) the way[207]. Only the fools and never the wise, apply the epithet 'stout' to the Soul. For this description is applicable to the (body which is) the conglomeration of *bhūtas* etc. (and not to the Soul).[208]

10. Corpulence and emaciation, (bodily) pains and (mental)worries, hunger and thirst, fear, quarrelsomeness, desire, old age, sleep, attachment, anger, arrogance and griefs—all these apply to one who is born with a body, but not to me (who am the self and not the body).

11. (As for your words, "You are as good as dead though alive", I say that): Simultaneousness of life and death is the law found applicable to everything that is a product (and hence subject to transformation, and not limited to me) for all products have a beginning and an end. (As for your charge of transgressing your orders), Oh praiseworthy king! If the relation as servant and master were real and permanent, then only would the relation between order and its execution be real. (But if you lose your kingdom and I become a king, the whole relation will be reversed).

12* (If you think that I am a servant so long as you are the king) we do not find the slightest ground for the notion of the difference as king and his servant, except conventional verbal usage. Who is then the ruler and what it is to be governed (servant)? However (if you still entertain the notion of being the ruler) please tell what we should do for you.

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207. Just as you concentrate in ruling your kingdom, pay similar attention to what I say—GD.

208. I am by nature the Supreme Soul to which the epithet 'stout' is slanderous,—VC.

* (i) VJ. goes out of his way to prove the superiority of Hari to Rudra while explaining this verse :

Master-servant relation is reversable in the case of men but not so in the case of gods. This unchangeable lordship among gods is conferred on Rudra by Hari—the real Ruler. The ignorant subjects of Sindhu call you a ruler. But this is a conventional verbal usage. You are in no way superior to other *jīvas*. However granting that you are the ruler, please tell us what should be done for you.

(ii) GD. waxes eloquent to establish the Śuddhādvaita thesis : The pure Brahman (unsoiled by Māyā etc.) is the reality and not the master-servant relation." He does not differ in the interpretation.

13* (Bharata presents a dilemma to show that the King's threat of punishment is wide of mark. If I be a *mukta* —beyond bondage of *saṁsāra* what purpose and to what extent, can be served by your treatment (punishment) or lessons to me who am established in the self, though appearing like a lunatic, intoxicated or dull-witted person. (If I be not a *mukta* the proposed punishment or lesson to a person who is obstinate or insane is (as useless as) grinding flour, Oh warrior[209].''

Śrī Śuka said:

14. In this way, Bharata replied (each and every) statement (of the king) after recapitulating them. The great sage was tranquil and self-controlled by nature. Nescience—the cause of false identification of the body with the Soul, had ceased in him. He wanted to exhaust by sufferance (the effect of) the *karma* that was bearing fruition, and (thence) he continued to bear the vehicle of the king.

15. By the force of his genuine right faith, the king of Sindhu-Sauvīra countries became eligible to enquire into the Truth. Having (carefully) listened to the speech of the Brāhmaṇa which was calculated to resolve the knot (of ignorance) at one's heart and which was approved of (and supported by) many treatises on Yoga (self-knowledge), he got down (from the palanquin) in haste, and prostrated himself (before him) with his head at the sage's feet. Beseeching forgiveness (for his rudeness), and completely free from the pride of his royalty, he said:

16. "Who are you of the great Brāhmaṇas who go about in disguise, as you wear the sacred thread? Who are you among the *avadhūtas* (like Dattātreya and others, if you be an *avadhūta*) ? Whose son are you ? What is your native place ? Why have you come here ? If you have come for our spiritual well-being, are you not the sage Kapila ?

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* VJ. : Bharata explains to the king that despite his appearance like a mad person etc., he is totally immersed in Lord Hari; and as such, the punishment proposed is useless; for he has completely detached himself from his corporal body.

209. Your prowess may have been effective elsewhere, but is vain against me.

17. I am not afraid of the thunderbolt of the lord of gods (Indra), of the trident of the three-eyed god (Śiva), or of the rod of Yama (the god of death). I do not fear the missiles of (the fire-god), the Sun-god, the wind-god and the lord of wealth (Kubera). But I am terribly afraid of disrespecting the Brāhmaṇa race.

18. Hence please tell me. You are free from attachment. Though you possess infinite power, you conceal your superior wisdom and prowess, and roam about like a dull-witted person. Oh pious sage, your words are couched in yogic terms (or conveying the advice of great yogis) as such, are not capable of being comprehended by our minds. (Or-Even persons of keen intellect cannot grasp the significance of your speech couched in yogic terms).

19. "What is the true asylum in this Saṁsāra"? To ask this, I am now proceeding to Kapila who is master of yoga, and the supreme preceptor of sages who have realized the true nature of the Self; who is Hari incarnate and has incarnated in this world by his power of supreme knowledge.

20. It may be that perhaps your honour verily be Kapila himself, who is going about incognito, for observing the condition of the people. How can a person attached to house-(holder's worldly) life, with intellect blinded (by infatuation), fathom the ways (of behaviour) of the masters of yoga?

21. (The king raises objections to Bharata's speech given above*).

I have experienced fatigue through activity (e.g. fighting in battle). By inference I presume that your honour must have felt the same when carrying a load while walking. The course of the phenomenal world must be real at the bottom; for, otherwise it is impossible to carry water etc. with a non-existent pitcher.

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* ŚR. expounds the logic in the king's speech by detailing the syllogisms as follows:

He who does work, feels exhausted.

e.g, I feel exhausted in fighting etc.

You have carried the burden of my palanquin. Therefore you must have been exhausted. Hence, your statement that you did not feel fatigue (verse 9) is illogical.

22. The heat of fire applied to the vessel is conducted to the water (in the pot); the heat of the water leads to the softening of the grains of rice from inside. Due to the contact with the body, sense-organs and the life-breath and the mind, the state of *saṁsāra* affects the *jīva*, as the states of environments affect each other.

23. (As to the impermanence of the master-servant relation mentioned by you:)

The king is (for that particular period at least) the (real) controller and protector of the subjects. He who is the servant of Acyuta does not grind the already ground material flour. (His performance of duties is not wasted). For by carrying out his righteous duties he propitiates Lord Acyuta and gets rid of his sins.

24. Oh friend of the distressed, be pleased, therefore, to cast a friendly glance at me who, out of my intoxicating pride of being the ruler of men, have treated with contempt the best of saints,so that I may be able to cross over the sin of showing disrespect to the the righteous people.

25. (The king refers to Bharata's words that he was not insulted etc., and says)

There may not be any change (perturbation of mind) in you who are a well-wisher and friend of the universe and who, out of his sense of equality to all, are completely devoid of attachment (even to your body). But a person like me—even though he be Rudra, the bearer of trident, will certainly perish in near future as a result of his showing disrespect to the exalted."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

(Bharata imparts spiritual knowledge to Rahūgaṇa)

The Brāhmaṇa said:

1. You are (really) ignorant. You (simply) give verbal expression to the arguments (which are apparently similar to those) of the learned. You will not, therefore, be (considered

as) pre-eminent (in any way) among those who are supremely wise; for the sages never speak of mundane relations (e.g. the master-servant relation) along with their investigation into(the nature of) Reality. (You regard master-servant relation as real but the sages do not recognize it as such.

2.* (Similarly the ritualistic way—*Karma-Kāṇḍa*—described in the Vedas is also not true. In the highly glittering flowery descriptions in the Vedic texts pertaining to the detailed study of the minute rituals connected with the householder's life, no light is definitely thrown on the exposition of the truth which is pure (i.e. free from the contamination of injury (*himsā*) etc.) and good (i.e. devoid of passions like love, hate) as a rule (persons who dedicate all their *karmas* to God are eligible for such exposition of truth).

3. Not even the most authoritative Vedic (Upaniṣadic) texts can directly impart the comprehension of the Truth to a person who on the analogy of (the unreal, evanescent and hence worthless pleasures enjoyed in) a dream does not conclude that the (dreamlike) pleasures in the house-holder's life (and those in heaven accruing from sacrifices) are by themselves worth casting off.

4. As long as the mind of a man is under the dominating influence of *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*, it goes on producing unchecked merit or sin through his sense-organs of perception and action.

5. The mind (which, as an *upādhi* of *ātman*, is designated as *ātman*) is a store-house of impressions unconsciously left by the good or bad actions in the past life; it is attached to objects of pleasures; it is tossed about by *guṇas*; it is affected by passions; it is the chief among sixteen constituents (elements, sense-organs etc.) of the *Liṅga Śarīra* (the subtle body). It assumes different forms (man, beast etc.) under different names, and extends (i.e. causes) higher or lower form of life in the various kinds of physical bodies.

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* (i) VR. : Persons interested in performance of ritualistic *karmas* cannot be interested in pure knowledge. And in the former (i.e. *karma-kāṇḍa*) portion of the Vedas, no decisive conclusion is reached.

(ii) VC. : Mīmāṁsakas do not regard an objective (*puruṣārtha*) higher than heaven attained by *karmas*. Exposition of truth to such unqualified persons is a waste. For this truth is above the taint of passions and free from injury.

6. The mind, the limiting condition created (and imposed upon the Soul) by *Māyā*, entices it (the *jīva*) in the cycle of saṁsāra.[210] By embracing the Soul associated with it, it subjects the *jīva* to pleasure, pain and other[211] (viz. delusion), inevitable fruits of *karmas* at the proper time (of fruition).

7. So long as the mind exists, this phenomenon of waking and dream states manifests itself within the range of perception of the *kṣetrajña*. It is hence that they (the wise ones) say that the mind is the cause of the lower state viz. *saṁsāra* (the product of *guṇas*) and of the higher state viz. *Mokṣa* (liberation), which is beyond the range of all *guṇas*.

8. If the mind is attached to objects of senses (which are the products of *guṇas*) it leads the creature to misery (viz. *saṁsāra*). If it is free from and unattached to them, it takes the *jīva* to eternal happiness (*in Mokṣa*). Just as a lamp which emanates flames mixed with soot while it consumes its wick soaked in ghee, otherwise (after the consumption of ghee) betakes itself to its original state, the mind, which is attached to objects of senses and (consequent) activities, resorts to various courses and returns to its true original self, when unattached (to them).

9. The courses (of the activities) of the mind are eleven —five in relation to the organs of action, five with reference to the senses of perception and its own sense of I-ness. And they say that conative organs, the subtle elements and the body are (respectively) the eleven grounds (receptacles) for these (courses), Oh Warrior.

10. Smell, form, touch, taste and sound (the five objects of cognitive organs), evacuation (of bowels), copulation, locomotion, verbal expression, and manipulation and the eleventh is the body which is accepted as mine; (And in the case of the ignorant who have completely identified themselves with the body, the I-ness is the twelfth course (of the mind) with the body as its object or bed (In the city viz. body, the *jīva* sleeps i.e. abides with *ahaṁkāra* and is hence called *puruṣa*).

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210. *saṁsṛti-cakra-kūṭaḥ*—The *jīva* stands firm like a mountain-top in the whirlpool or cycle of *saṁsāra*. —VR.

211. v.l. *vyatimiśra*—a mixture of pleasure and pain. —VJ.

11* These eleven modifications (tendencies) of the mind multiply into hundreds, thousands and multi-millions with reference to objects, nature of things (the variety of the causes of the products), the effect of previous experience, unmanifested effect of *karmas* (acts), the agitating factor Time. They owe their existence to the *Kṣetrajña* (the Supreme Soul) and not to each other or to their own Self. (Or: The *Kṣetrajña* or *jīva*, being above changes, these *vṛttis* do not proceed from *jīva*; nor do they spring from their mutual action and reaction nor from themselves. Hence all these are *mithyā*—unreal).

12. The Supreme Soul who is pure and unaffected, stands as a witness to the continuous stream of states of the mind which are sometimes manifest (in the waking and dream states) and sometimes unmanifest (as in deep sleep)—the mind, an *upādhi* of *jīva*, a creation of *Māyā*, and of impure activity.

13. The Supreme Soul is all-pervading, the prime cause of the perfect (in all respects), ever-present, self-luminous (not depending on anything for the proof of its existence), devoid of birth (and death), the Ruler of gods like Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa (the abode of the world of beings), the venerable Lord (of six excellences), Vāsudeva (the receptacle of all beings) and Himself the Inner-dweller and Controller of all *jīvas* by His *Māyā* power.

14. Just as the air, entering in the from of breath controls both the mobile and the immobile beings, so does the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, the all-pervading Soul, enter this universe (as the Inner Controller).

15. Oh Lord of men! A man continues to wander in the *saṁsāra* so long as he has not shaken off *Māyā*, by the dawn of knowledge, and became free from attachments and conquered

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* (i) VR. emphasizes that *kṣetrajña* here should be interpreted as *jīva*—the individual Soul. He however admits that the interpretation of *kṣetrajña* as Nārāyaṇa is possible.

(ii) VC: Due to infinite variety of objects (e.g. sandal, saffron) and variety of natures liking these, and differences in mind due to wickedness etc., destiny or fate and stages in life (childhood, youth etc.) these states or *vṛttis* of mind are infinite. But they owe this variety to God of infinite powers, and not to themselves individually or mutually.

the six enemies (viz. passions like lust, anger, avarice etc.) and has not realized his true Self.

16. (He continues to wander) so long as he does not understand that the mind, the conditioning environment of the Soul, is the field of the miseries of *saṁsāra* (the cycle of birth and death), and the source of a continuous series of griefs, delusions, diseases, passions, avarice and hatred and the creator of the feeling of mine-ness.

17. Therefore, being very careful and armed with the missile in the form of the feet of Lord Hari, Who is the preceptor, kill this enemy (in the form of the mind) of formidable power who has grown in strength through your negligence and who, though unreal in itself, is capable of deluding you about (the true nature of) your Soul.

CHAPTER TWELVE

(*Dialogue between Bharata and Rahūgaṇa*)

Rahūgaṇa said[212] :

1.* Salutations to you again and again—you, who are the Prime Cause of the universe (God himself) who has assumed a human form (for the protection of the world), and who, in the light of supremely blissful self-realization, have regarded your body as insignificant. I bow to you. Oh Master

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212. Verses 1-4 are an echo of the query made by Rahūgaṇa to Bharata in the same context in V.P. (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*) 2.14.2-6.

* VJ. notes that this apparent praise of the Brāhmaṇa is really a eulogy of the *antar-yāmin*. VR. and others generally echo ŚR., but VR.'s alternative explanation is interesting :

"Salutations . . . you who are the Supreme Self incarnate who have assumed human form for the protection of persons like me. In your self-realisation, you have banished hatred against persons (like me) who have offended you, and who have concealed your realisation of the Eternal, Supreme Soul under the guise of the contemptuous dress of a depraved Brāhmaṇa".

of Yoga, who have concealed your realization of the Eternal (Supreme Soul) in the guise of a depraved Brāhmaṇa.

2. My vision (power of understanding) has been thoroughly poisoned (perverted) by the bite of the serpent in the form of (my) false identification of the self with this worthless body. Your speech acts like a nectarine medicine on me, just as a sweet palatable specific medicine (does) to a patient suffering from high fever or the ice-cold water (or the water of the Gaṅgā (is soothing) to a person scorched by the heat of the summer.

3. I shall, therefore, refer my doubts to your honour later on. My mind is full of curiosity. Now, be pleased to explain to me, in easily intelligible language, your speech which was couched in *Yogic* terms, about the (knowledge of the) Soul.

4. Oh Lord of Yoga ! My mind fails to grasp (in bewilderment, the significance of) your statement that the (actual) act (of carrying a load) and its effect (the resultant fatigue) though visible (directly), are limited to (and not contradicted in) practical life (*vyavahāra*), but they will not easily stand the test of philosophic investigation.

Brāhmaṇa replied[213] :

5. That which has come to be known as 'this person' (the palanquin bearer) is a modification of the earth which moves over the earth due to some (inexplicable) cause, Oh King ! Above the feet of this (modification of the earth called 'this person') are two ankles, two shanks, two knees, two thighs, the waist, the chest, the neck and the two shoulders (one above the other).

6. On the shoulder is the wooden palanquin wherein is seated an (empty) designation called 'the King of Sauvīras'— which is nothing but another modification of the earth. You identify yourself with it (that modification of the earth). Be-

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213. Verses 5 and 6 are echoes of VP. 2.13.66-67.

Bhūmau pāda-yugaṁ tvāsīt jaṅghe pāda-dvaye sthite /
ūrvor jaṅghā-dvayāvasthau tadādhāraṁ tathodaram//66//
Vakṣasthalaṁ tathā bāhū skandhau codara-saṁsthitau /
skandhādhiṣṭheyaṁ śibikā mama bhāro'tra kiṁkṛtaḥ//67//

ing blinded with arrogant pride, you feel that you are the king of the Sindhu country.

7. You are hard-hearted as you caught hold of these pitiable (palanquin-bearers) who are already highly afflicted with hardships and have forced them to labour without remuneration. Still you brag about as being 'the protector of the people'. Shamelessly insolent as you are, you will not look respectable in the assemblies of the wise.

8*. We know that all the mobile and immobile creation is always born out of and re-assimilated into the earth only. The difference in name is due to the difference in its product or functions[214]. Let it be investigated if there be any other real cause or basis deducible from its effect and work (functions).

9. (The substance) that is denoted by the word 'earth' is unreal as (will be) explained thus (hereafter). The earth (in its ultimate analysis) disaggregates itself into atoms. The atoms, the aggregates of which combine to form the particular (element viz. the earth) are hypothetical, postulated by mind (of the theorists) through ignorance. (As a matter of fact, they do not exist. Hence the unreality of the earth).

10. Similarly, know that what is thin or fat, small or big, cause or effect, sentient and non-sentient or that which has a second (i. e. all the duality), is brought about by the *Māyā* (the unborn), under the name of substance (viz five elements), nature (the changeability of the phenomenal world), the inclination (determined by the impressions unconsciously left on the mind by past actions, i. e., *vāsanā*), the time factor (disturbing the equilibrium of *guṇas* leading to creation) and the destiny (*karma*).

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* VG : We know that all things mobile and immobile are created out of the earth and get disintegrated into the earth. All these modifications are not different from the earth. Please tell us if you have any reasoning or logical argument to show if there be any real cause other than mere verbal designations of its effects and functions.

214. cf. *vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam mṛttiketyeva satyam*/—Chāndogya Up. 6.1.4.

11*. Knowledge alone is pure (unsoiled by passion or actions), absolutely real, one (without any difference) devoid of any aspect of in-ness or out-ness, perfect and full, direct (self-manifesting), unchangeable, designated by the appellation *Bhagavat* (the venerable possessor of six excellences such as Lordship of the Universe etc.). They (the sages) called it ('knowledge') by the term 'Vāsudeva'.

12. Oh Rahūgaṇa! This knowledge (or Brahman) is not attained through austere penance, or through Vedic sacrifices or through charitable distribution of food or through performance of duties prescribed for a householder (such as honorary social service) or through the study of the Vedas or through propitiation of (the presiding deities of) water, fire and the Sun, except (i. e. it is attainable only) by being sprinkled over with the dust on the feet of the exalted Souls (while rendering service to them).

13. For here (in the congregation of these exalted persons) the discourses on the excellent attributes of the Lord are always held. These prohibit all talks of vulgar worldly topics. By listening daily to these (holy discourses) the pure mind of the seeker of Liberation is concentrated on Lord Vāsudeva.

14. I was formerly a king called Bharata who, freeing himself from the bondage of attachment to all things seen or

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* (i) VR.: The Ātman or the Self is knowledge or consciousness. It is unsoiled by *Karma* (actions) and passions; it is the only highest objective to be attained (by man). It is absolutely one whole with no aspect of in-ness or out-ness. It is all-pervading, real, eternal, self-realizing (or direct) unaffected by the six miseries (such as hunger, thirst, sorrow, delusion, old age and death). It is *Vāsudeva* also called by the appellation *bhagavat*.

(ii) VJ. regards these as the attributes of Hari, the Supreme Self. He derives the term 'Vāsudeva'—*vas*—'to dwell', although he concedes the popular etymology 'the son of Vasudeva'.

GD. explains: 'Knowledge' means 'Brahman'. In the path of *Bhakti*, it is designated as *bhagavat*, the venerable Lord (the possessor of six excellences) and 'Vāsudeva'. It is essentially existent and of the nature of the highest bliss and consciousness or knowledge. Being direct (being Self-hood by nature) one need not go elsewhere to attain it. It is perfectly serene as it is devoid of birth, death or othar troubles. It is 'pure' i.e. absolutely unconnected with any attachment. It is beyond the limitation of space as the states of outness or inness are inapplicable to it.

heard (i. e. objects obtainable here and hereafter) endeavoured the propitiation of the Lord, but was frustrated (in my object of God-realization) through my attachment to a deer and was born as a deer.

15. Due to the efficacy of my devoted worship of Kṛṣṇa that memory (of my previous birth) was not lost even in my form (i. e. birth) of the deer. Oh Warrior ! Hence, being unattached to and afraid of association with the society, I roam about without disclosing my real personality.

16. Therefore a man should, in this very world, completely cut off (the ties of) delusion by the sword of knowledge obtained through the blessed company of the great Souls who are free from attachment. Having revived the memory (consciousness about God) by recounting and hearing (meditating upon) the glories of Hari, one reaches the end of this long road of *Saṁsāra* and attains to the Lord.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(*The Saṁsāra—a forest*: An allegory)

The Brāhmaṇa said :

1. Like unto a company of merchants intent on acquisition of wealth, this (well-known) multitude of *jīvas* desirous of and solely devoted to the attainment of pleasure[215], was put by the Prakṛti or Māyā, on the path (of Pravṛtti—active worldly life) which is unending and so difficult to traverse. It (the multitude of *jīvas*) sets its eye (attention) on[216] the activities actuated and dominated by (the attributes) *sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. While wandering (in search of pleasure) in the forest of *Saṁsāra* (worldly existence), it does not find any bliss.

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215. BP. *artha* :—*dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*—the three *puruṣārthas* (highest ideals in life).

216. VJ. : It (the multitude of *jīvas*) regards them as its own and identifies them with the Soul.

2.* In that forest these six bandits (viz. sense-organs) perforce rob the caravan captained by an evil-minded leader, Oh king. Just as wolves carry away the sheep, jackals (in the form of relatives), finding entrance into their camp, carry off a careless member (devoid of spiritual outlook).

3. In the forest, impregnable with the dense growth of a mass of creepers, grass, clumps of trees and bushes the caravan was harassed by sharp stinging gnats and mosquitoes (In the householder's life full of passions and actions, a man is harassed by wicked people). At some places they find the city of Gandharvas in the sky (the phenomenon is fictitious; so is one's body), while at other places, they witness fleeting spirits in the form of fire brands.

4. Oh (King Rahūgaṇa !) With their intellect (mind) naturally anxious to find some dwelling-place, water and wealth, the company of merchants ran here and there in the jungle. And at some places, with eyes blinded with dust, it does not distinguish the directions darkened with the dust whipped up by whirl-winds (Here the whirl-wind stands for a woman who raises erotic sentiments which blind man to the existence of the dieties presiding over directions who stand witness to his actions).

5. With their ears acutely pained by the shrill cries of unseen crickets (i.e. back-biting by evil-minded persons) and with their minds agitated by the hooting of the owls (i.e. harsh words, scolding directly addressed by enemies, persons in authority), they resort to unholy trees[217] (i.e. irreligious persons) when tormented with hunger. At some places (when thirsty) they run after the mirage[218] (i.e. fruitless objects of worldly pleasure).

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* ŚR., VR., VC., SD., GD., BP., state that although the allegory is explained in the next chapter, they are briefly explaining it for reader's understanding the text of these verses.

217. This refers to the superstition that the shade of the *vibhītaka* tree (*Terminalia Belerica*) is inauspicious by day and that of Pippala tree by night and that of the wood apple tree, day and night—VD.

218. i.e. are attracted to the centres of the non-believers in Vedas—pākhaṇḍa śramaṇas—VJ.

(ii) beg at the doors of notorious misers—VC.

6. At some place they go towards beds of dry rivers (only to get their limbs bruised by falling, instead of getting water); being short of food they beg it from one another. At some places they approach the forest conflagration only to get scorched; at other places, they find to their despair that they are deprived of their life (-like wealth) by Yakṣas.[219]

7. At some other places, it, being deprived of its possession by the powerful government officials (or village chiefs expert in robbery) becomes mentally despondent. Overcome with grief and bewildered, it faints away. At some places, it enters an imaginary city of Gandharvas (the company of loving near relatives) and feels overjoyed for a while, as it is really happy.

8. At some places, being desirous of scaling a mountain (i.e. attempting a great undertaking) it proceeds with the soles of its feet pierced with thorns and cut with gravel and sits down depressed in spirit. Tormented at every step by the inner (gastric) fire (or hunger), and with the (unbearable) responsibility of maintaining) a large family, it gets angry with its own people.

9. Sometimes being swallowed up by the boa-constrictor (viz. sleep) it lies like a dead body abandoned in a jungle and is not conscious of anything. Sometimes bitten down by fierce venomous snakes, it becomes blind and falling into a well with its mouth hidden with overgrown grass and plants, it lies immersed in darkness (i.e. misery and ignorance).

10. At times (when) it seeks after honey of low quality (i.e. courting another man's wife) it is harassed and humiliated by bees (i.e. is insulted and beaten up by her husbands). If it (caravan members) is successful in that attempt with great difficulty, others rob it perforce, and while it is engaged in fighting with them, others carry off that booty.

11. And sometimes, (at some places), it (the caravan of merchants) sits down incapable of protecting itself against

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219. ŚR. explains : The dry riverbeds are the schools of the non-believers which lead to misery in the other world. The forest-fire is the household where the *jīva* is tormented with miseries. The *Yakṣas* and Rākṣasas are the government servants who squeeze out life-like wealth of men.

(lit warding off) cold, heat, storm and showers of rain; at some other places they sell among themselves whatever they have with them and become enemies of each other by fraudulent money-dealings.

12. Now and then, being destitute of wealth, and devoid of bedding, blanket (to sit on), house and conveyance, they beg it from others. But not getting their desired objects, they cast a coveting glance at another man's property and get insulted.

13. (Though) they develop hostile relations with each other by mutual (fraudulent) monetary transactions, they enter into marital relations with each other. Thus they proceed along their path, famished through suffering great difficulties, financial losses and other calamities (and feelings of hatred).

14. The caravan of merchants proceeds on its journey leaving behind those that are dead, at various places, and taking with them the new born babes. Nobody has as yet returned to its starting place. Nor does anyone (howsoever powerful) betake to yoga which lies at the terminus (of the road), Oh Warrior.

15. All those resolute and highminded warriors who have conquered the great elephants guarding the eight directions and who, claiming the earth as their own, have contracted hostility (with each other), shall lie dead on the battlefield. But they do not attain to the place (the region of Viṣṇu) where the recluse (the Saṁnyāsin) who has been free from enmity, reaches,

16. At some places, it (the caravan) clings to the arms (tender shoots) of creepers (i.e. rests on the tender arms of women); it longs to listen to the indistinct chirping of birds which have resorted to them (i.e. listen to the sweet indistinct warbling of children clinging to their mothers). And it feels strongly attached to them. Occasionally, at other places, it is afraid of a multitude of lions and makes friends with cranes, herons and vultures (Being afraid of death, they enter the fold of vile, cruel heretics).

17. Being deceived by them, it (the company of merchants tries to enter the flock of swans (i.e. knowing the futility of the false faiths, it tries to enter Brāhmanic fold). But

not liking their pious way of life (i.e. not finding the Brāhmanic way of life to their liking), it approaches the monkeys (i.e. takes to the monkey-like behaviour of depraved people). By the (amorous) sports natural to that species, it (the caravan) gets its senses gratified (with sensual pleasures) and forgets the (approaching) end of life, while looking at the faces of each other.

18. Amusing himself in the trees (i.e. worldly objects observed in life), he fondly loves his children and wife. Being powerless in their own bondage, he becomes void of judgment due to the lust for sexual enjoyment. Some times falling into a valley due to inadvertence, he catches hold of a creeper and remains in a hanging position, afraid of elephant (below) (i.e. due to the meritorious acts done in previous life, he continues to live in fear of impending death).

19. If, by a lucky chance, he anyhow overcomes this calamity, he again enters the company of merchants (i.e. takes to the path of *pravṛtti* or active worldly life), Oh vanquisher of enemies. A person who is set on this path (of *Pravṛtti*) by Māyā (the unborn) continues to wander in *saṁsāra*. No such person has as yet perceived the highest *Puruṣārtha* (viz. *Mokṣa* or liberation).

20. Oh Rahūgaṇa ! Even you are also set on this track (by Māyā). You lay down your sceptre (or desist from violence to living beings) and make friends with all beings. With your mind unattached to worldly pleasure and arming yourself with the sword of knowledge sharpened by (dedicated) service to Hari,[220] get to the other end of this road (of *saṁsāra*).

The King said :

21. Oh ! The birth as a man is the most glorious of all births in other species. Of what use are other births even in the heaven, where the association with high-souled people like you whose minds are purified by (singing and listening to) the glories of Lord Hṛṣīkeśa (the Ruler of sense-organs—Viṣṇu), is not available to the full ?

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220. VR. interprets *Sevā* as 'the propitiation of the Lord by observing duties prescribed for one's caste (*varṇa*) and stage of life (*āśrama*) and *jñāna* as constituting the worship of the Lord.

22. It is no wonder (at all) that pure devotion to Lord Hari is generated in the hearts of those whose sins have been destroyed by the dust of your lotus-like feet (when constantly served for a long time). For my thoughtlessness and ignorance, rooted as it was in fallacious reasoning, has been completely removed by association with you for a short time (a *muhūrta*).

23. (As it is not known in what form the knowers of Brahman move about in the world, the King pays his respects to them all). Salutations to Brāhmaṇas (knowers of Brahman), who are advanced in age, to those (who are) infants, to the youthful ones, to all down to young boys ! May (blundering) kings like me receive blessings from Brāhmaṇas who wander over the earth as *avadhūtas* (ascetics who have renounced all worldly attachment), giving no indication of their greatness.

Śrī Śuka said :

24. Oh Parīkṣit (son of Uttarā) ! In this way, verily, (Bharata) the son of a Brāhmaṇa sage, who was endowed with the highest glory, explained, out of very great compassion, the real nature of the Self to (Rahūgaṇa) the King of Sindhu, even though he had insulted him. His feet were respectfully bowed by Rahūgaṇa with great remorse. Bharata, whose mind like that of an overful ocean, was unperturbed by waves in the form of senses, wandered over this earth.

25. Even the king of Sauvīra (Rahūgaṇa) who realized the real nature of the Supreme Self as taught by a saintly person (like Bharata), repudiated the false notion of identifying the Soul with the body—a notion superimposed on the mind by Nescience (*avidyā*), Oh King ! Such is, therefore, the greatness of those who resort to the devotees of the glorious Lord.

The King Parīkṣit said :

26. Oh great devotee of the Lord ! The path in the form of *Saṁsāra* of the individual souls has been described in indirect and allegorical language by you who possess very wide and varied knowledge. It will not be easily comprehensible

to people who are not of trained mind. Hence, the same (allegory) which is difficult to understand, be pointed out (explained) by using the proper explanation.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(Explanation of the Allegory of Saṁsāra—Forest)

He (Śrī Śuka) said :

1. Characterised and influenced by special attributes like *sattva* and others, auspicious, inauspicious and mixed types of *karmas* (actions) are being committed by *jīvas* (individual Souls) who wrongly identify the body with the Soul. The group of six senses (five cognitive senses and the mind) act as the portals or media of experience of the beginningless *saṁsāra*, consisting of association with and separation from the series of different bodies, created as a result of those karmas.

Just as a caravan of merchants, intent on making money, loses its way to find itself in a wilderness, this company of *jīvas* (individual Souls) has been set on this difficult path (of *saṁsāra*), hard to travel like a mountain pass, by Māyā (the deluding potency of the Lord) which functions under the Supreme Ruler Viṣṇu. It (the multitude of *jīvas*) finds itself in the wilderness of *saṁsāra*, in-auspicious-most like a funeral ground. It(i. e. the *jīvas*), experiences the fruit of their *Karmas* wrought by means of their bodies. Although all their activities are obstructed by numerous difficulties and rendered fruitless, they do not still betake themselves to the path of bees (votaries of the Lord) who resort to the lotus-like feet of Lord Hari in the form of the preceptor—feet which pacify all the afflictions and agonies of *Saṁsāra*. It is in the forest of *Saṁsāra* that what are called the six senses (mind and five senses) act as veritable robbers in practice.

2. For whatever little wealth a person acquires through great hardships, should be utilised for the sake of *Dharma*. The

wise say that this *Dharma*, characterised by the propitiation of the Supreme Person Himself, is conducive to one's beatitude in the other world.

But the wealth of a man of perverted intellect and uncontrolled senses, which should have been used for the sake of this *Dharma* (worship of God), is wasted in house-holder's life on vulgar pleasures of sight, touch, sound, taste and smell (the five objects of sensual pleasures and in low desires and resolutions (mental tendencies), even as a company of merchants with an unworthy leader of uncontrolled mind is robbed of money.

3. And here (in the wilderness of *saṁsāra*) the so-called members of the family such as wife and children, are nothing but wolves and jackals in actions. They carry away the carefully-guarded wealth of the close-fisted householder, despite his watchfulness and unwillingness (to part with his wealth), like a lamb well-protected (in a pen).

4. For just as a field, the seeds (of weeds, grass etc.) in which are not burnt down, again becomes densely over-grown with a thicket of shrubs, grass and creepers at the time of sowing, even though it is (regularly) ploughed annually, in the same way, the householder's life is a field of *karmas* wherein the seeds of *karmas* are never destroyed. This householder's life is certainly a box of desires (in which seeds of *karmas* are never completely annihilated, just as the smell of camphor persists even after the exhaustion of camphor-tablets from the camphor-box).

5. While there, (in the householder's stage of life), his wealth which is the very external life-breath of man, is squeezed (lit. sucked) by vile people comparable to gnats and mosquitoes, and (food-grains) by locusts, birds, thieves, rats and others. At times, wandering on this road (of *saṁsāra*), his mind becomes eclipsed with ignorance (*avidyā*), lust or desires and actions. Hence being possessed of erroneous views, he looks upon the human world which is as unreal as the (optic illusion of) the city of Gandharvas, to be factually real.

6. There (in the *saṁsāra*), with a passionate desire for vicious habits of drinking, eating, sexual intercourse and the like, he sometimes pursues mirage-like (unreal) pleasures.

7. Sometimes, just as a man intensely longs for (the warmth of) fire, runs after the fire-goblin—the will of-the-wisp, he with his mind overpowered with the attribute *rajas* which is of the same colour as that of gold, ardently yearns to acquire gold which is the abode of all evils and is a kind of excreta of fire.

8. And again, with an earnest desire for dwelling-places, water, wealth and other numerous amenities of life and means of livelihood, it (the company of merchants) runs about here and there in the forest of *saṁsāra*.

9. Sometimes (when) placed on her lap, by a bewitching young woman who is like a whirlwind,his mind is instantly enveloped in ignorance, due to the force of *rajas*, and transgresses the boundaries of virtue[221]. With his eyes filled with the dust of lust, his mind is too much charged with passion to cognize (the existence of) the presiding deities of the directions (who watch him).

10. Occasionally, he perceives spontaneously for a moment the unreality of worldly objects. But as he identifies the Soul with his body, he loses his memory) about the nature of the Soul. With his memory (mind) thus led astray, he intensely pursues those very sense-objects which are (illusory) like mirage.

11. Sometimes, its (the company of merchants) ears and heart are intensely troubled by the extremely harsh and fiercely vehement threats administered directly, like hooting of the owls, by king's officers and indirectly (behind one's back) like the shrill cries of crickets, by enemies.

12. When he has exhausted his fund of merit acquired in the previous life, he is (in the process of) dying though nominally alive. He runs after (for help to) those who are as good as dead though living, and whose wealth is not useful to them either in this world (as they do not enjoy themselves with it) or in the next world (as they do not donate it and earn merit), and who are comparable to poisonous trees and creepers like *kāraskara*, *kākatuṇḍa* and to wells full of poisonous water.

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221. like goblins at night according to v.l. accepted by ŚR., VR.

13. Sometimes, with his mind perverted due to association with evil persons, he takes to the path of heretics which leads him to miseries here and hereafter—(an act which is) like falling into the rocky bed of a waterless river.

14. When he cannot get food for himself even by harassing others, he proceeds to devour those possessing even blades of grass belonging to his father or son or to "eat up" his own father or sons.

15. Sometimes, he reaches home which is like a forest-conflagration—a home devoid of enjoyable objects, full of a series of miseries. There, being scorched with the fire of deep anguish, he becomes extremely depressed in spirits.

16. To him, wealth was dearmost—a veritable life itself. Sometimes he is deprived of it by demon-like officers of the king who have turned hostile (to him) through change of time. He falls in a swoon or appears like a dead man devoid of any symptom of life.

17. Sometimes, imagining as real, the unreal appearance of his (deceased) father, grandfather in fulfilment of his desire, he enjoys (a momentary) pleasure as in a dream.

18. Sometimes he desires to ascend (i.e. perform in a thorough manner) the mountain of extensively detailed duties prescribed for the householder's life. But his mind being distracted with worldly miseries, he sinks into despondency and feels afflicted like one entering (and traversing) a tract full of thorns and sharp-edged gravel.

19. Sometimes, his power and energy being sapped by the (gastral) fire (of hunger raging) within his body, he gets angry with the members of his family.

20. Again, being seized (swallowed) by the boa-constrictor in the form of sleep, and sunk in the blinding darkness (of ignorance), he remains asleep, as if in desolate forest, and he is unconscious of anything else like a dead body cast off by the relatives.

21. Sometimes his larger tooth in the form of his egotism is being broken by venomous reptiles, viz. wicked persons. He does not get sleep even for a moment. His consciousness gets dimmer and dimmer as his heart is (deeply) agitated and

disturbed. And like a blind man, he falls in a dark, covered well (of ignorance and misery).

22. Sometimes, (he is) on the look out for small drops of honey in the form of sensual pleasure. While he is in attempting to snatch away another man's wife or property, he is beaten to death by the King or the husband or the master (of the property) and falls into the bottomless unsurmountable hell.

23. Hence, sages say, that *karman* of both forms (whether Vedic or non-Vedic) performed in this (path of *Pravṛtti*) sows the seeds of future series of births (of the doer).

24. If he (the *jīva*) escapes the bondage (or punishment meted out by the King, the woman's husband or the master of the property), one Devadatta wrests the prize away from him and from him (another fellow), one Viṣṇumitra, takes it away and so on endlessly. (None retains permanently the objects of enjoyment.

25. And sometimes being incapable of warding off miserable conditions like biting cold winds and others caused by super-human agencies, or by elements (or created beings) or pertaining to his body, he sinks down despondently in unending anxieties.

26. Sometimes while transacting business among themselves, if he deceitfully takes away a petty amount, say, twenty *cowries* or even less than that, he incurs the enmity of others due to deceitful dealing in money.

27. On this path (of *pravṛtti*), there are these obstacles (viz. financial losses, difficulties etc. enumerated in Ch. 13.13) and also other ones viz. pleasure and pain, lust and hatred, fear and pride, negligence and madness, delusion and greed, envy and jealousy, insult, hunger and thirst, anxieties and diseases, birth, old age, death and others.

28. Sometimes, (when) embraced with the creeper-like (tender) arms of the woman who is the *Māyā* (deluding divine potency of the Lord) incarnate, he loses his power of judgment and wisdom. He becomes anxious at heart to construct a pleasure-house for her. His heart becomes transported by the (sweet) speech, (affectionate) looks and (winsome) behaviour of his wife and sons, daughters who resorted to him for protec-

tion. Thus, being of uncontrolled mind, he sends himself to the abysmal hell of blinding darkness.

29. Sometimes he gets terrified in his heart at (the thought of) the discus (viz. *kāla*—Time, death) of the Supreme Ruler, Lord Viṣṇu—the discus is alternatively designated as Time and consists of divisions beginning from the minutest point to the period covering two *Parārdha* years (the life-span of god Brahmā). With inexorable velocity consisting of ages (childhood, youth, old age), this unwinking (watchful) discus mows down all created beings from god Brahmā down to a clump of grass while they are (helplessly) looking on. But disrespectfully ignoring the Supreme Lord, the presiding Deity of Sacrifice whose weapon is this eternal discus of Time, he on the basis of unauthoritative canon of the heretics, resorts to the deities of the heretics which are no better than kites, vultures, cranes on the banyan trees (in extending protection against death and hence) which are discarded in the religion of Aryas.

30. When he was devastatingly deceived by those heretics who are themselves deluded, he (returns and) stays within the Brāhmanic fold.

He, however, does not like their pious way of life, propitiation of the glorious Lord of Sacrifices with acts prescribed in the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis* after performance of the thread investiture ceremony. As he is impure (and hence ineligible) to perform duties enjoined by the Vedas, he resorts to the Śūdra community which like the species of monkeys, indulges in copulation and maintenance of the family.

31. Even in that community, he behaves as he likes, without any restraint. The low-minded fellow forgets the limit of his (span of) life in vulgar gratification of senses such as looking at the faces of each other (mutually by husband and wife).

32. Sometimes he enjoys himself in the householder's life which, like trees, yields pleasures pertaining to this world only. He is fond of children and wife and like a monkey[222], he delights in sexual enjoyment.

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222. GD. : "Just as a monkey addicted to sexual enjoyment, becomes negligent (about his safety) and is caught by the hunter while it is indulging in that enjoyment on the trees and is unable to get himself released."

33. Enjoying and suffering pleasures and pain on the path (of *pravṛtti*), he falls into the veritable dark vale of ailments and other calamities and stays (there) constantly in the fear of the elephant in the form of death.

34. Sometimes, when incapable of protecting himself against innumerable miseries such as heat and cold—miseries caused by supernatural agencies, the elements or creatures or by his own body or mind—he sinks (lit. sits) despondently worrying over endless sense-objects.

35. Sometimes, entering into business transactions among themselves, he acquires some wealth through fraudulent monetary dealings.

36. Sometimes, when his wealth is spent up he becomes destitute of (normal necessities of life such as) a bed, a seat, food etc. He then makes up his mind to snatch away the objects which he covets but has not succeeded to acquire till then. Hence, in due course, he is subjected to insult etc. by the public.

37. Although their mutual hostility is enhanced by their covetousness for wealth, they enter into matrimonial relations or break them according to their tendency resulting from actions to the previous life.

38. On this road of *Saṁsāra*, if one is afflicted with innumerable sufferings and obstacles and succumbs to calamities or death, he is definitely abandoned then and there. They take with them the new-born children. They sometimes weep, fall in a swoon, are afraid, quarrel, cry and are overjoyed, sing and are bound down. They are avoided by saintly people and are thus denied pious company. In this way, they continue to go ahead. This caravan of men has not yet returned to the starting point of this journey (viz. God) which the sages say, is the terminus of the road (of *Saṁsāra*).

39. For, he who gets knowledge of and takes to the discipline of Yoga, does not definitely return to the universe or *saṁsāra*. It is only the meditative persons who have renounced all forms of violence (to all creatures) and are firmly given to self-control (and consequent serenity), and who have detached their minds (from worldly objects), reach the Supreme (Self).

40. Even the royal sages who have conquered the elephants guarding all directions and perform sacrifices, do not attain it. Asserting their claim on the earth that it is their own and entering into hostilities for it (its possession), they lie dead on the battlefield, leaving their bodies on the earth (claimed by them) and depart. (These also do not reach the other end of *Saṁsāra*).

41. Supporting themselves by catching hold of the creeper of *karma* and getting out, with great difficulty, from the miserable hell, he is again present on the way of *Saṁsāra*, and rejoins the caravan of men. Similar is the case of men who have gone up to the Heaven.

Thus do they sing of Bharata !

42. Just as a fly cannot, even in its imagination soar up along the path of Garuḍa (high up in the sky), no other King in this world can even mentally follow the path of the high-souled royal sage Bharata, the son of Ṛṣabha.

43. Even while he was a youth, he longed to serve the Lord of hallowing renown (or of Supreme glory), and abandoned like excreta, his wife and children, friends and kingdom, so endearing to the heart and (hence) so difficult to renounce.

44. It is quite befitting on the part of the king (Bharata) that he did not long for the (kingdom of the) earth, sons, relatives, wealth and wife—so difficult to renounce. Nor did he wish for Śrī (the Goddess of Fortune), coveted by great gods, even though She waited for having a gracious look from him. For in the view of the great (Souls) whose minds are devotedly attached to the service of Viṣṇu, even the Final Emancipation is of little account.

45. "Salutations to Lord Hari who is himself the personified *Yajña* (sacrifice), the defender of righteousness, punctilious observance of scriptural injunctions, Yoga *incarnate*, the head (the ultimate, chief principle) of the *Sāṁkhyas*, the controller of the *Prakṛti* (the personified Will or Māyā of the Almighty), who is the shelter of all created beings)", so nobly praised he, at the time of casting off his body as a deer.

46. One who faithfully listens to, recites or praises the history of the royal sage Bharata whose spotless virtues and pure actions are appreciated and eulogised by devotees of the

Lord—the history which brings in good fortune, long life, riches, renown and leads to (the attainment of) the Heaven and Final Beatitude secures all blessings, of his own accord and needs nothing from others.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(*Description of Bharata's Dynasty**)

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. As already narrated (supra 7.3), Bharata had a son called Sumati. He followed the path of Ṛṣabha. In the Kali Age, heretics (non-believers in the Vedas) outside the Aryan fold, will set him up, according to their wicked and perverted intelligence, as a deity n ot described in the Vedic

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* The Bharata Dynasty may be conveniently summarised as follows:

1. Bharata
2. Sumati
3. Devatājit
4. Devadyumna
5. Parameṣṭhi
6. Pratīha Prastotā Udgātā
7. Pratihartā
8. Bhūmā Aja
9. Udgītha
10. Prastāva
11. Vibhu
12. Pṛthuṣeṇa
13. Nakta
14. Gaya
15. Chitraratha Sugati Avarodhana
16. Samrāṭ
17. Marīci
18. Bindumān
19. Madhu
20. Vīravrata
21. Manthu Pramanthu
22. Bhauvana
23. Tvaṣṭā
24. Viraja
25. Śatajit etc. 100 sons

texts. (They will think him to be an incarnation of Lord Buddha).

2. By (queen) Vṛddhasenā, he had a son by name Devajit (conqueror of gods).

3. Then, through Āsurī (Devajit's wife) was born to him a son, Devadyumna; he had by Dhenumatī, a son, called Parameṣṭhī; and then Parameṣṭhī begot on Sauvarcalā a son called Pratīha.

4. Having taught the knowledge of *ātman* (to many), he himself became thoroughly purified, and directly realized the Supreme Soul.

5. From Pratīha, through (his wife, another) Suvarcalā, three sons beginning with Pratihartā were born; all of them were well-versed in the sacrificial lore. Pratihartā begot on (his wife) Stuti, two sons Aja and Bhūman.

6. Bhūman had by Ṛṣikulyā a son called Udgītha. He had (a son named) Prastāva from Devakulyā. Prastāva had a son called Vibhu, through (queen) Niyatsā; Vibhu had Pṛthuṣeṇa from Rati; Pṛthuṣeṇa begot Nakta from Ākūtī. From Nakta and (his wife) Druti was born the eminent royal sage Gaya of noble reputation. Gaya who attained the status of a *Mahāpuruṣa* (an exalted personage) by his possession of characteristics (of greatness) such as self-control, was an *aṁśa* (part or ray) of Lord Viṣṇu himself who, for the protection of the world, assumed a form consisting of pure *Sattva*.

7. He followed his righteous duty as a king by protecting his subjects, supplying them with the means of livelihood, providing them with (amenities of) recreation behaving tenderly with them and by governing them per legal precepts. He dedicated with absolute faith his sacrificial and other pious acts to the glorious great personage viz. the Brahman who is higher than the highest.

By constantly serving the feet of those who have realized Brahman and by cultivating path of devotion to the Lord, his mind and intellect became extremely pure. His mind became completely free from the false identification of the non-Soul (viz. the body and its belongings) with the Soul. Though he realized within him the identification of his Self with Brahman,

he was totally free from pride and as such he protected the earth.

8. Oh descendant of Pāṇḍavas ! Persons well-versed in Purāṇic history sing the following stanzas about him.

9. "What other king, except the one in whom a ray of the Lord has been manifest, can equal Gaya in his achievements ? Who else is there like him, a performer of great sacrifices, so highly respected by all, possessor of extensive scholarship, a defender of religion, one so highly blessed with the Goddess of Fortune, a leader of the assembly of the learned and a devoted servant of the saints.

10. The virtuous daughters of Dakṣa (such as Śraddhā, Maitrī, Dayā) whose blessings always prove true, accompanied the presiding deities of holy rivers (like Gaṅgā) sprinkled him with water (at the time of his coronation) in ecstatic joy. The king, himself was free from desire. But just as the milk begins to flow out of the udders of a cow at the sight of its calf, so at the sight of his excellent virtues, the earth yielded like a cow, milk in the form of the desired objects of his subjects.

11. Though he (Gaya) was above desires, Vedas and the rites prescribed therein blessed him with all enjoyments. (Inimical) kings who were honoured by him with a volley of arrows in the battle, brought him tributes. The Brāhmaṇas who were honoured by him with sumptuous sacrificial fees and donations while performing religious acts, allotted to him one-sixth of their total merit.

12. In his sacrifices, liberal libations of Soma juice were offered. While Indra (the king of gods) became intoxicated (with Soma juice), the glorious Lord who is the Soul of the Sacrifices appeared in person and accepted the fruit of the Sacrifice offered (by the king) in the spirit of unswerving devotion rendered absolutely pure by (unflinching) faith.

13. By pleasing whom (i.e. the Lord) the whole universe from god Brahmā upto gods, men, sub-human beings, creepers and grass, become the Self-same Lord, the very Soul of the universe, who, though ever blissful by nature, became evidently satisfied and delighted at Gaya's performance of sacrifice.

14. Gaya begot on Gayantī three sons, Citraratha, Sugati and Avarodhana. Out of them, Citraratha had by queen Ūrṇā a son called Samrāṭ.

15. From Samrāṭ, thorough Utkalā, was born Marīci. From Marīci and Bindumatī was born Bindumān; he had by Saraghā (a son) named Madhu; Madhu begot Vīravrata on Sumanas; from Vīravrata and queen Bhojā were born Manthu and Pramanthu; of Manthu, through Satyā, sprang Bhauvana; of Bhauvana and Dūṣaṇā was born Tvaṣṭā; from Tvaṣṭā through Virocanā came Viraja; and Viraja had by Viṣūcī a hundred sons, of whom Śatajit was the eldest, and also a daughter.

About Viraja is sung the following stanza :

16. Viraja, the last born son (in the race of Priyavrata) adorned the dynasty of Priyavrata by his glory, even as Viṣṇu embellishes the host of gods.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN*

(*Mythological Geography—The Terrestrial Globe*)

The King said :

1. The whole extent of the globe of the earth on which the Sun shines and where the Moon with the hosts of stars is visible, has been described by you.

2. Within that area, seven seas were formed by the seven (moat-like) ruts, furrowed by the wheels of (king) Priyavrata's

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* This and the following chapters deal with geography. Most of the material is common to other Purāṇas. Purāṇic geography is not all imagination, vide V.S. Agrawala : *A.M.P.—A Study*, pp. 184-215, D. C. Sircar's SGAMI., pp. 17-118, N. L. De's GDAMI. The concept of the earth with four continents (*catur-dvipā Vasumati*) and the details of the lands, mountains, rivers etc. tally a great deal with the details in the East, West and South Asia. –The 'Greater India' of to day was regarded not merely an extension of India but a part of one unit separated by seas. (Vide B. Upadhyaya—*Purāṇa-Vimarśa*, pp. 338-341.

chariot. You have verily suggested, venerable Sir, that the divisions of this earth in seven distinct island-continents is due to those (seas). I am now desirous to know all about the dimensions and characteristics of those continents, in detail.

3. For, the mind, when concentrated on the Lord's gross form—the physical universe, a product of three *guṇas*, becomes capable of entering into and fixing on the attributeless, subtle-most, self-refulgent, transcendent *Brahman* known as Lord Vāsudeva. Oh Preceptor, may you be pleased to describe to me the same.

The sage (Śrī Śuka) said :

4. Oh great King ! No human being, even if it be blessed with the longevity of gods, can adequately comprehend even by mind or (can express) by speech, the extent of Lord's great glories (viz. the universe) displayed through the (product of) three *guṇas* of His *Māyā* Potency. We, therefore, shall mainly describe to you the special features of the terrestrial globe, with the names, position, extent and characteristics.

5. As for this (*Jambūdvīpa*) island-continent (in which we live), it forms the central innermost (the seventh) layer of the lotus-like earth. It is one lakh *yojanas*[223] (eight lakh miles) in extent, and is circular in form like the leaf of a lotus.

6. In this *dvīpa*, there are nine continents (*varṣas*) each nine thousand *yojanas* in extent. They are clearly separated from each other, by eight mountain-ranges forming the boundaries of each (of the *dvīpas*).

7. The inner-continent called Ilāvṛta forms the centre of these continents. At the navel (centre) of this (*Ilāvṛta*) continent stands the all-gold mount Meru, the king of all of mountains. It is as high as the extent of his (Jambū) *dvīpa*. It forms the pericarp of the lotus in the form of the earth. It is thirty-two thousand *yojanas* in extent at the top, and sixteen thousand *yojanas* at its foot, and its root lies under the earth's surface to the same extent viz. sixteen thousand *yojanas*. (i.e. it is 84000 *yojanas* in height from the surface of the earth)

8. To the northern side of Ilāvṛta, are three mountain ranges one after the other—viz. Nīla, Śveta and Śṛṅgavān.

223. Yojana—8 miles.

They form the boundaries between the continents called Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya and Kuru. They stretch in eastern and western directions upto the salt ocean, and are two thousand *yojanas* in breadth. Every outer range (of mountains) is shorter only in length by a little over of one tenth of the next interior range (their height and breadth is the same).

9. In this way, to the south of Ilāvṛta, are the mountain ranges Niṣadha, Hemkūṭa and the Himālayas. They run from the east (to the west) and are ten thousand *yojanas* in height, like Nīla and other mountains (mentioned above). They form the boundaries of Harivarṣa, Kiṁpuruṣa and Bhārata respectively.

10. Similarly, the West and East of Ilāvṛta, upto the mountain Nīla and Niṣadha, run the mountain-ranges called Mālyavat and Gandhamādana, each two thousand *yojanas* in length. These (two mountains) form the boundaries of ketumāla and Bhadrāśva.

11. As side supporters on its four sides to Mount Meru, are the (four) mountain-ranges, Mandāra, Merumandāra, Supārśva and Kumuda—each ten thousand *yojanas* in length and height.

12. There stand respectively on these four mountain-ranges, four great trees, viz. the Mango, the Jambū (rose apple), the Kadamba and the Banyan, like the flags of these mountains. They are more than one thousand *yojanas* in height extending over the same by their branches. The trunk (of each) is one hundred *Yojanas* in circumference.

13. And there are four lakes, of Milk, honey, sugarcane juice and fresh water (one per mountain). The demigods who drink of these acquire natural *yogic* powers, Oh prominent Bharata.

14. There are also four celestial gardens (on them), viz. Nandana, Caitraratha, Vaibhrājaka and Sarvato-bhadra.

15. While listening to their eulogies sung by bands of demigods (like Gandhrva, and Kinnara), prominent gods, heading the bevies of celestial beauties, indulge in sports, in those celestial gardens.

16. From the top of the celestial mango tree eleven hundred *yojanas* in height, fall nectar-like sweet mangoes, as

big as mountain peaks, on the upper side of the Mountain Mandāra.

17. A river, named Aruṇodā(a river of deep red water) is formed. It is so called because it carries as water extremely sweet, fragrant, scented abundant reddish juice of the mangoes (falling from the tree and) bursting open. It falls down from the crest of Mount Mandāra and waters the eastern part of Ilāvṛta.

18. When the damsels of Yakṣa tribe, the female attendants of goddess Pārvatī, enjoy the sweet juice of Aruṇodā, their person becomes so fragrant that the breeze coming in contact with them gets charged with perfume, and it diffuses that perfume over an area of ten *yojanas* (in radius).

19. In this way rose-apples, as big as elephants, and containing very fine seed, fall from a very great height and burst open. The river Jambū formed out of their juice, falls from the peak of Mount Merumandāra, ten thousand *yojanas* in height, down to the ground and irrigates the whole of Ilāvṛta, lying south of the river.

20. The clay on both the banks of that river gets saturated through and through, with that juice (of rose-apples). With the chemical change wrought by the action of the wind and the Sun (on it), it (the clay) is transmuted into gold known as Jāmbunada and it is always used for ornaments by celestial beings.

21. How wonderful ! The gods and other heavenly beings along with their consorts, wear that (variety of) gold in the forms of various ornaments such as crowns and diadems, bangles, girdles and other ornaments.

22. There grows a big Kadamda tree on the Supārśva mountain. From its hollows flow out five currents of honey each five *āyāmas*[224] in dimension. They fall from the tops of Supārśva, they spread joy to the region of Ilāvṛta lying to the west of those currents.

23. The wind (breath) issuing out of the months of those who drink from those currents (of honey), spreads fragrance on an area of one hundred *yojanas* (in radius).

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224. *āyāma*—Vyāma—a measure of length equal to the space between the tips of the fingers of either hands when the arms are extended (*Vyāmo bāhvoḥ sakarayos tatayos tiryagantaram*/—ŚR.)

24. Similary, there stands a banyan tree called *Śata-valśa* on mount Kumuda. From the branches (lit. arms) of that tree flow forth all streams, capable of yielding whatever one desires, such as milk, curds, honey, clarified butter, raw sugar, (delicious) food, garments, beds, seats or chairs, ornaments and others. These streams fall down from the summits of mount Kumuda and flow in the northern part of Ilāvṛta.

25. Subjects (beings) who make use of these river-waters never suffer afflictions from wrinkles, baldness, fatigue, perspiration, bad odours, old age, diseases and death or from cold, heat, paleness and other troubles. They enjoy the highest bliss all through their life.

26. Like filaments on the seed-vessels in a lotus, around the base of Meru, on all sides, there are twenty mountains viz. Kuraṅga, Kurara, Kusumbha, Vaikaṅka, Trikūṭa, Śiś ira, Pataṅga, Rucaka, Niṣadha, Śinī-Vāsa, Kapila, Śaṅkha, Vaidūrya, Jārudhi, Haṁsa, Ṛṣabha, Nāga, Kālañjara, Nārada and others.

27. Mounts Jaṭhara and Devakūta are to the east of Meru. They extend to the north for eighteen thousand *yojanas* in length, and two thousand *yojanas* in breadth, and in height. Similarly to the west (of Meru) stand two mountain-ranges, Pavana and Pāriyātra. To the south are situated Kailāsa and Karavīra which extend to the east. To the north (of Meru) stand Mount Tṛśṛṅga and Makara. Enclosed by these eight mountain-ranges, the mountain of gold (Meru) shines like (sacrificial) fire surrounded by blades of Kuśa grass. (to demarcate its boundaries).

28. Those (who are in know) say that on the summit of Meru, at the very centre, is situated Śāta-Kumbhī, (the city of gold), the capital of god Brahmā. It covers an area of a ten thousand *yojanas*[225] and is square in shape.

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225. *ayuta-yojana-sāhasrīm*: I followed the text as it is. I doubt the interpretation as the area "a thousand times ten-thousand *yojanas*", although some respectable commentators like GD. interpret it this way without suspecting any contradiction between the area of the plateau on Meru and the city built over it, as the area of the plateau on Mount Meru is only 32,000 *yojanas*, vide Bh. P. Supra verse 7 above, which states *Mūrdhani dvātriṁśat-sahasra-yojana-vitataḥ*. ŚR. is conscious that the dimen-

29. Surrounding that city (capital of god Brahmā), there are eight suburbs (or cities) of the eight guardian deities of the world (such as Indra, Varuṇa etc.),[226] They are after the model of Śāta-Kumbhī, and are built in a style befitting their masters, each city being one fourth in extent of Lord Brahmā's capital.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(The Descent of the Gaṅgā)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. In the sacrifice performed by Bali, the Lord (Viṣṇu) himself appeared as Trivikrama.[227]

Standing there (on the ground, he wanted to measure three feet of land donated to him by Bali. He covered the whole of the earth by his right foot. He raised the left foot to

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sion given here conflicts with that given in the VP. 2.2.30 which states fourteen thousand *yojanas* as the area covered by Brahmadeva's capital.

Catur-daśa sahasrāṇi yojanānāṁ mahāpurī|
Meror upari Maitreya Brahmaṇaḥ prathitā divi||

This is plausible in view of the area of the plateau on the summit of Meru which is 32.000 *yojanas*. ŚR.'s explanation that the dimensions differ with different *Kalpas* is not satisfactory. VR. interprets this as *ayuta-yojana-vistarām* i. e. ten thousand yojanas in area. VJ. regards *Śatakoṭi* as the name of Brahma's capital. GD. does not suspect any contradiction between the area of the plateau on Meru and the city built over it. He explains: *ayutāni yāni y jana-sahasrāṇi|* BP. explains: *ayuta-yojana-sāhasrīm* as *ayuta-sahasra-yojana-vistārām* but hastens to add, *atra bhāgatyāga-lakṣaṇayā yuta-sabda-varti-sahasrārtha-tyāgo bodhyaḥ.*

226. GD. and others enumerate the suburbs of Brahmadeva's capital as follows: To the East, Indra's capital Amarāvatī, to the South-East, Fire-god's headquarters Tejovatī, to the South, Yama's city Saṁyaminī, to the South-West, Kṛṣṇāṅganā of Nirṛtas, to the West, Varuṇa's capita Śraddhāvatī, to the North-West, Vāyu's headquarters Gandhavatī, to the North, Kubera's town Mahodayā, and to the North-East, Lord Śiva's capital Yaśovatī.

227. This refers to Vāmana incarnation of Viṣṇu, vide *infra* 8.18-20 (Skandha VIII. Chs 18-20)

measure the heavenly regions) by his foot-step, the upper crust of the shell of the Cosmic egg got cracked by the nail of the big toe of his left foot. Through that opening, rushed in the stream of waters, covering externally the cosmic egg. While washing the lotus-like feet of the Lord, she (the water of the stream) became reddish by the pollen-like dust (on the Lord's feet). She washed away the dirt, in the form of the sins of the whole of the world, by her touch, and yet, herself remained pure (unpolluted by sins). She was, at first, designated directly as *Bhagavatpadī* (Born from the feet of the Lord) to the exclusion of other epithets e.g. Jāhnavī, Bhāgīrathī which may imply any other less important source). After a long period of time measured in thousands of *yugas*, she descended on the top of the celestial regions which the sages call *Viṣṇu-pada*.

2. There (at the *Viṣṇupada*), verily, Dhruva (the son of Uttānapāda) of steadfast vows, the great votary of Lord Viṣṇu, even now bears (i.e. sprinkles) on his head her waters, with utmost reverence. "This water flows from the lotus feet of our family deity". (With this feeling) every moment his heart gets deeply saturated with ever-increasing devotion. Overcome with ardent longing (for the Lord), he forgets himself. Tears of pure love flow down from his half-closed lotus-bud-like eyes, and his whole person bristles with hair standing on their ends through ecstasy.

3. Thenceforth (in the next stage), the seven sages (inhabiting the constellation called *Ursa Major*) who know the greatness of this stream, regard it as the ultimate achievement of their austere penance, and even today, receive it with great reverence on the matted hair (of their heads), as persons desirous of Liberation (*Mokṣa*) would receive Final Emancipation due to their achievement of unswerving devotion unto the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the Soul of all beings. They have grown indifferent to other *Puruṣārthas*, and even to Self-realization.

4. Later on, it (the stream) descends by the path of gods (i.e. sky), teeming with multitudes of thousands of crores of celestial cars, to the sphere of the Moon. After flooding

the lunar sphere, the stream (of the *Bhagavatpadī*) flows down to the city of Brahmā (on the summit of Mount Meru).

5. There, on mount Meru, it is divided into four branches under four names :—Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā,[228] and it (i.e, these branches) flows towards four quarters and enters into the ocean, the Lord of big and small rivers.

6. From the city of god Brahmā, the Sītā[229] flows down from the peaks of mountains like mount Kesara and others and descends on the summit of mount Gandhamādana. Flowing through the continent of Bhadrāśva it falls into the salt ocean on the east.

7. In the same way, Cakṣus (the Oxus or Amu-Daria) comes down from the summit of mount Mālyavān. It rushes with unabated velocity towards Ketumāla,[230] and enters the ocean on the west.

8. And to the north, the Bhadrā descends from the peak of Meru. Passing from the summit of one mountain to that of another, it jumps from the peak of mount Śṛṅgavat. It traverses the Northern Kuru region, and ultimately falls into the ocean on the northern direction.

9. Similarly, the Alakanandā flows down from the south of the city of Brahmā. Passing over from many a mountain peak, one after another, it reaches mount Hemakūṭa. (Thence) it rolls down, with very great velocity, to peaks of the Himālayas. It flows through Bhāratavarṣa on the south and falls into the sea. Men who come for ablutions in this river, easily acquire the merit of performing great sacrifices like the Aśvamedha, Rājasūya and others, at every step.

10. There are hundreds of other big and small rivers flowing through every continent, all daughters of Meru and other mountains.

11. There are types of *Svargas* or celestial places according to their location in the heavens, on the earth and in

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228. The Yarkand river on which the town of Yarkand is situated—N.L. De—GDAMI p. 31.

229. *Sītā*—N.L. De identifies it with the Jaxartes or Sir-Daria (GDAMI, 187). The identification may be correct for the Sītā of the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (ch. 51). But the Sītā in the Bh. P. flows *to the east, through China (Bhadrāśva)*. Hence it is not the same as *Sir-Daria*.

230. *Ketumāla-varṣa*—Turkestan and the lands watered by the Cakṣu or Oxus—N.L. De—GDAMI. p. 99.

the subterranean regions. The celestial spots on the earth are mentioned here).

The wise say that of all these continents (*varṣas*), Bhārata is the only continent which is a *karma-kṣetra*[231] (i.e. a land where men can make or mar their destiny by their actions or a land of religious acts). The remaining eight continents are called celestial spots on the earth which serve as places of enjoyment for celestial beings who return from the heaven with some balance of merit unexhausted.

12. In these continents, the longevity of the inhabitants is ten thousand human years. They are just like gods. They are endowed with the strength of ten thousand elephants; blessed with adamantine frame of the body and power, eternal youth, abundance of sense pleasures and extra-ordinary capacity for conjugal enjoyment, the couples are extremely happy. Their wives show signs of pregnancy only once in the final year of their life of sexual pleasures. In these continents, the Time has characteristic of the Treta Age.[232]

13. In those continents, verily, the lords of gods who are richly worshipped with sumptuous gifts by the leaders of their respective retinue, enjoy themselves at will, to their heart's content, in valleys of these mountains dividing the continents (*varṣas*)—valleys which are teeming with hermitages and mansions and abound in charming forests beautified with creepers and the supporting trees with branches bent low with

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231. The idea that Bhārata-varṣa is a *karma-bhūmi* or *karma kṣetra* is common to most *purāṇas*. MP. 114.6-7 and MKP. 57.60 explain *karmabhūmi* as a land which contained within it the seeds of all pious actions and their fruits, and people in this land were entitled to go to heaven or *Mokṣa* or the earth. Other *purāṇas* repeat the same belief, e.g.

(i) *Prithivyām Bhāratam varṣam karmabhūmir udāhṛtā* /BRP. 27.2.

(ii) *Bhāratam nāma yad varṣam . . . .*
tat karma-bhūmir nānyatra, samprāptiḥ punyapāpayoḥ /MKP. 57.21-22.

(iii) *na tatrāpi Bhāratam varṣam karma-kṣetram uśanti ha* / Devī Bh. P. 8.7.34.

232. According to ŚR. and other commentators, the Tretā Yuga is a period of sensual enjoyment. In the Kṛta Age all are engaged in meditation. In Dvāpara and Kali, people are overwhelmed with miseries.

flowers, bunches of fruit and tender foliage of all seasons. And with their mind and eyes fascinated with the attractive movements, bewitching smiles and sportive glances—all pregnant with love—of the most charming celestial beauties, they (the Lords of gods) amuse themselves at will with acquatic sports and other forms of diversions, in lakes of crystal-clear waters resounding with the warbling and cries of royal swans, waterfowls, ducks (*kāraṇḍavas*), cranes, rudy geese (*cakravākas*) and other birds which are delighted by the fragrant lotuses of various kinds, and (waters) resonant with the humming of different species of black-bees.

14. In all the nine continents, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Person still maintains his presence in his various manifestations (*vyūha*) with the object of showering his grace on the inhabitants thereof.

15. In the Ilāvṛta continent, Lord Śiva is the only one male; no other male person who knows of the curse of the goddess Pārvatī enters it. I shall narrate to you later on (Infra IX Skandha) why a male person entering it (Ilāvṛta continent) is transformed into a woman.

16. There, Lord Śiva is served in every respect by one hundred million thousands of female attendants headed by goddess Pārvatī. He (Lord Śiva) is engrossed in the meditation upon the conceptualized image of Saṅkarṣaṇa, his own source, and presiding deity over the attribute *tamas*, the fourth manifestation of the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Person of Four forms (viz. Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa). He sings of the following prayer.

17. "Salutations to the Supreme Person[233], the symbol of *Parabrahman*, the source of the manifestation of all attributes, (though himself) unmanifested and Infinite[234]. Hail[235] to him.

18. Oh adorable Lord! I take resort to your lotus-like feet which afford shelter to all. You are the Supreme abode

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233. *mahā-puruṣāya*—Whose sport is the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe—VR.

234. *anantāya*—(i) Śiva meditates upon the serpent Śeṣa along with Viṣṇu who is his inner controller—VJ.

(ii) Above the distinction of time, place etc.—GD.

235. The repetition of *Namaḥ* at the beginning and the end of the sentence shows that *namaḥ* or 'salutations' is applicable to all the adjectives included in the sentences– GD.

of all (the six) divine excellences (such as sovereignty over the universe, Omniscience and others). To your devotees you have fully manifested yourself as one who terminates their *saṁsāra* (the chain of births and deaths); but you create (i.e. continue) Saṁsāra (in the case of those who are not devoted to you.

19. What person intent on subduing his senses (and desirous of attaining liberation will not respect you whose vision—unlike that of ours who cannot control the vehemence of anger—is not, even in the slightest degree, affected by the *guṇas* of Māyā (i.e. worldly objects which are the products of the three attributes or *guṇas* of Māyā) and by the activities of the mind and sense, while you supervise them for government and control.

20. To a person of wrong perception,[236] you appear, through your Māyā Potency,[237] intoxicated and terrible with eyes reddened under the influence of spirituous liquors (though as a matter of fact, your form is pure, unalloyed *sattva*, beyond the power of karmas and auspicious). At the touch of your feet, the Nāga damsels get their mind and senses excited and are hence unable to proceed with your worship due to bashfulness (and the feeling that you, the omniscient know their mental agitation).

21. The goddess Lakṣmī and sages or Vedic Mantras declare him (i.e. you) to be the prime cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of this (universe) but as you are Infinite, you are above these states. You do not feel even like a mustard seed where the sphere of the earth is lying somewhere on one of your thousand heads.

22. The principle called *Mahat* (Cosmic Intelligence) was his (i.e. your) first body (manifestation) constituted of (three) *guṇas*. It is based on *sattva* (in the form of *citta*—reasoning faculty), and is said to be (the same as) the glorious

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236. *a-sad-dṛśaḥ*—(i) Who is strongly attached to this unreal or worthless body as his own Self (VR., BP.).

(ii) Whose vision is devoid of the knowledge about your form, excellences etc. (SD.)

237. *Māyayā*—Due to ignorance (of a person with incorrect view about the Lord—VR.

Brahmā (the deity presiding over it). It is from Brahma that I (Rudra) was born. I create through my power (viz. *Ahaṁkāra*—I-ness) consisting of three (*guṇas*) the deities (presiding over the sense-organs and mind—the *sāttvika* variety of *ahaṁkāra*, the gross elements (the *tāmasic* type) and cognitive and conative sense-organs (the *rājasa* kind of *Ahaṁkāra*).

23. We—these aforesaid *Mahat* (principle of Cosmic Intelligence), *ahaṁkāra* (Ego), *vaikārika*, (the abovementioned deities), the elements (the principles of *ākāśa*, *vāyu* etc.) and the (aforesaid) senses—remain under his control like birds cordoned together with a string and carry on this process of creation through his (your) grace.

24. This person (the *Jīva*) deluded by the world, the product of (three) *guṇas*, may possibly know Māyā, (his i.e. your) creation, which binds (the *jīva*) with *karmas* but it (the *jīva*) will never easily know the means of getting over it. My salutations to him who comprises within him the creation as well as the dissolution of the universe (and which as such are his form).

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(Description of Various Continents)

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. So also, there live in the continent of Bhadrāśva, a son of Dharma, Bhadraśravas by name, and the foremost members of his retinue (who are the heads of important families and great votaries of the Lord). They establish in their hearts, with supreme concentration of mind, the beloved form of the glorious Lord Vāsudeva himself, called *Hayaśiras* who is righteousness incarnate. (While muttering the *mantra* : *Om namo bhagavate dharmāyā'tma-viśodhanāya namaḥ.* They sing the following prayer :

Bhadraśravas and his people pray :

2. "Salutations to the glorious Dharma, the embodiment of righteousness, represented by the sacred syllable OM, the purifier of the mind (and *jīva*).

3. Oh wonderful ! How mysterious and strange are the ways (acts) of the Lord ! (Thereby) this world perceives Death, the destroyer of all, and yet fails to cognise it (as such) (For) a man contemplates (to commit) a sin for the enjoyment of insignificant, unreal pleasures and wishes (to continue) to live on the wealth of his father and the son (the old and the young), even after cremating him.

4. The learned persons, assert (on the authority of *Śāstras*) that the world is evanescent. The masters of spiritual science who have realized the Self within them, see (actually) that it is so. They, however, are deluded by your Māyā (Potency), Oh birthless Lord ! (One above the cycle of birth and death). Highly miraculous (and inscrutable) is your working (giving up all the labour of Śāstric studies and meditational processes) I (simply) pay my obeisance to you.

5. The Vedas attribute to you the authorship of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, even though you are not the doer, nor conditioned in any way (by Māyā). This is quite reasonable. There is nothing wonderful in your case as (through your Māyā) you are everything, and the cause of all effects, though factually you are essentially different from all things.

6. He (i.e. you) assumed the form of Man-horse (*Hayagrīva*), and recovered from the nether-worlds the Vedas which were concealed there by the demon (Madhu), at the end of the Yuga (i.e. the time of the dissolution of the universe) and returned them to the suppliant sage Brahmā. I bow to him (you) whose will is never futile."

7. And in (the continent called) Harivarṣa, the Lord abides in the form of Man-lion (Nṛsiṁha). I shall describe to you the reason of his assumption of that form later (in Skandha VII). That beloved form is propitiated by Prahlāda along with the inhabitants of that continent (Hari-varṣa) —Prahlāda who is the abode of the excellent qualities of exalted Souls, a great devotee of the Lord, whose virtuous charac-

ter and behaviour purify the race of Daityas and Dānavas, and who is unsurpassed in uninterrupted and undivided devotion (unto the Lord). He (along with the men of that Varṣa), recites the following prayer :

8. "Salutations to Lord Narasiṁha who is denoted by the sacred syllable OM. I bow to the Light of all lights. Oh Lord, manifest yourself completely. Oh Lord of adamantine claws and adamantlike fangs, completely burn down our latent deeds and desires. Please swallow up all the darkness (of our ignorance). We offer our worship to you (*Oṁ svāhā*). Please confer on me the state of absolute fearlessness. *Oṁ kṣraum* (a mystical syllable sacred to Lord Narasiṁha).

9. May the universe be blissful and happy! May the wicked give up their wickedness and be pure-minded! May all beings wish well of each other! May our mind resort to (the path of) goodness. May our thoughts as well as that of other beings enter into and concentrate on Lord Viṣṇu, without any ulterior motive.

10. May we be unattached to our home, wives, children, wealth and kinsmen. If there be any attachment (at all in us) may it be to the votaries who love the Lord. He who is satisfied with bare means of subsistence, achieves Liberation at no distant future. Not so does one who likes (the objects of) senses.

11* The holy waters remove the external dirt of the body by constant ablutions. But the birthless glorious Lord who enters into the mind through the ears of those who having got into the company of devotees, frequently listen to the extra-ordinary, hallowing exploits of Lord Viṣṇu, removes the impurities of the mind. Who will not then, wait upon such votaries?

* VR. gives an alternative explanation :

The company of his beloved votaries confers the capacity to meditate over the Lord and his extra-ordinary exploits. Those who properly dwell upon his hallowing fame constantly find that the Lord has occupied their minds through the ears (through constant listening to his exploits) and he purifies the mind of (mental) dirt. What man will abstain from listening to and meditating upon Lord Viṣṇu's exploits?

12. Gods with all their excellences (like knowledge, righteousness) abide in the heart of a person whose devotion unto the Lord is not motivated by any desire. How can a person not devoted to Hari possess the qualities of the great Souls, if he runs after worthless external objects of senses, attracted by desires.

13. For the glorious Lord Hari himself is the beloved Soul of all embodied beings just as water being the mainstay of its life is beloved to the fish. Howsoever a person may be otherwise great, if he forgets Hari and is attached to the householder's life, his greatness is like advancedness in age (and not in excellences) as in the case of married couples.

14. Hence, Oh Asuras, you renounce the householder's life which is the root cause (i.e. original source) of passions, attachment, despondency, wrath, pride, desire, fear, humiliation and anguish and which continues the cycle of births and deaths and take shelter at the feet of Lord Narasiṁha, the abode of fearlessness.

15. Even so in the continent called Ketumāla, the glorious Lord abides in the form of the god of Love, with the desire of pleasing the goddess Lakṣmī (his consort) and the rulers of that continent (*Varṣa*) viz. the sons (presiding deities of the day) and the daughters (female deities presiding over the night) of Prajāpati, *Saṁvatsara* (a year) whose number equals the days and nights comprising the full span of human life (i.e. 100 years × 360 days per year = 36000). The embryos (of these daughters) are discharged still born at the end of every year as the minds of the daughters are agitated and terrified at the dazzling splendour of the mighty missile (Sudarśana) of the Supreme Being (Viṣṇu).

16. He (Kāmadeva) delights his own senses while bringing ecstatic joy to goddess Lakṣmī with the splendour of his lotuslike face which is enchanting on account of his beautiful brows which are slightly raised, and by his playful glances and winsome gentle smiles, the charmingness of which is heightened by his extremely graceful gait.

17. At night, in the company of the presiding deities of night, the daughters of Prajāpati Saṁvatsara and at day time accompanied with their husbands (the male deities pre-

siding over the day), goddess Ramā (Lakṣmī) propitiates the blissful form[238] of the Lord, and recites this (the following *mantra*).

18. "Om ! Hrām, Hrīm, Hrūm[239] Om. Salutations to the glorious Lord Hṛṣīkeśa (the Ruler of Senses) symbolised by the sacred syllable Om. You are distinguished by all of your excellent special attributes. You are the Supreme Master of my conative organs and cognitive senses and of my internal organ (consisting of mind, ego, intelligence and understanding) along with their specialities (objects and functions).. You are the Ruler of sixteen *Kalās* (eleven senses and five objects—this is the 'subtle body'.) You are the Vedas incarnate. You are the food that sustains the body. You are the blissful *summum bonum* itself. You are all-pervading and the source of mental strength, physical potency and power. You are the Beloved Lord, Love personified. I bow to you here and hereafter (with the *bīja mantra*: Om ! Hrāṃ, Hrīṁ Hrūṁ !).

19. By observing (various) vows, (unmarried) women propitiate you, the Lord of all senses, and beseech from you another person as a protector (i. e. husband). But they (the earthly 'protectors' or husbands) are really incapable of protecting their beloved child, wealth or life and are hence themselves poor dependents.

20. He is the real husband or protector who himself is above fear from any quarter, and protects, in all respects, other persons stricken with fear. You alone are such a master. You do not regard anything more joyful than the realization of your own self, (otherwise you would not have any independence, if your happiness depended on someone else). There would be fear from each other (if there were more than one independent rulers).

21. A woman who knows that you are such a Lord and loves to offer worship to your lotus-like feet (without entertaining any desire for something in return), secures all her desired objects. But if you are worshipped and sought for a desired

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238. *Māyā-mayaṁ rūpam*—The form which he can assume at will—VJ.

239. Mystical syllables regarded as the seeds of *Mantras*, the utterance of which is supposed to be extremely efficacious. These *bīja-mantras* show the influence of Tāntrism on the Bh.P.

boon, you grant that desired object only. Oh Lord, if, however the sought-for-object (granted by the Lord) is lost or exhausted (in enjoyment), she feels tormented.

22. God Brahmā, Śiva, gods, demons and others whose heart is attached to object of senses, perform austere penance for winning my favour. But no person, except one who is exclusively attached to your feet, attains to me and is favoured by me. For, Oh Invincible one! My heart is set on you (hence, being dependent on you, I glance with favour your devotees only).

23. Oh Acyuta (Lord Viṣṇu)! Your lotus-like hand is lauded as a showerer of desired objects. Be pleased to place that praiseworthy hand of yours on my head—your hand which you have placed, out of grace, on the crown of the head of your devotees. Most excellent Lord! You bear me as an emblem on your chest (which shows that you do not entertain any disrespect for me). But strangely enough you show mere respect to me but extend your highest grace to your votaries). Who can comprehend the working of your divine Māyā ?"

24. In the Ramyaka continent, its ruler, Vaivasvata Manu, to whom the Lord manifested his beloved Fish incarnation formerly (while he was in the birth of King Satyavrata), even still adores him with intense; constant devotion and praises him as follows:

25. "Salutations to the Divine Lord denoted by (the syllable) Om! I bow to him who is the life-giving principle; is pure *Sattva* incarnate; and is (the fountain head of) the power of the senses, the power of the mind and the strength of the body! I pay my obeisance to the Great Fish[240]

26. Though you move about inside (as the vital breath of all beings), and outside (as the atmosphere or wind), making a loud noise (in the form of Vedas), your form is (invisible to and hence) unseen by all the guardian deities of the world. Just as a person controls a wooden doll (by means of strings), you, the Supreme Ruler, have brought this universe under your control, by (the strings in the form of pres-

240. For the Fish-incarnation of the Lord see *infra* Skandha VIII. 24.

criptions and prohibitions given under) the designation of Brāhmaṇas.

27. (You, being the vital breath, are the real Protector and Controller of the creation). Discarding you (the vital breath of all), the guardian deities of the world, being feverish with jealousy, tried but could not protect both severally and jointly, the bipeds and quadrupeds, reptiles and the immobiles —in fact whatever is seen in the world.

28. Oh birthless Lord ! Piloting this earth, the abode of herbs and creepers, along with me (Manu, then in birth of Satyavrata) you sported enthusiastically and vigorously on the ocean of deluge surging with heavy billows. I bow to you who are the controller of all multitudes of beings in this universe."

29. In Hiraṇmaya continent also, the Lord abides assuming the form of the Tortoise. Aryaman, the ruler of the manes (departed forefathers), along with the inhabitants of this continent (*varṣa*) worships this most beloved form (of the Lord) and continuously repeats the following Mantra:

30. "Salutation to the glorious Lord, the (Divine) Tortoise, designated by the symbol Om. Your form is specially characterised by pure *Sattva*. Your position is beyond perception (due to your submarine activities). Bow to you who are above the limit of Time. Obeisance to you who are Omnipresent and the support of all.

31. This visible objective universe which appears in innumerable forms and which cannot be enumerated due to its being an illusion, is really your own form (inseparable from you and) manifested by your Māyā. I bow to you whose form is thus indescribable.

32. It is you alone that are designated as a mammal, a sweat-born being, an oviparous being, a plant, a mobile or immobile creature, a god, a sage, a departed ancestor (*Pitṛ*) a goblin, the world as perceived by senses, the celestial region, the sky, the earth, a mountain, a river, an ocean, an island-continent, a planet and a star.

33. The number (viz. twentyfour principles) has been presumed by sages (like Kapila) in you, even though you possess innumerable specialities, names, forms or shapes. In

the light of true knowledge, the number (automatically) disappears. I bow to you who are of the nature of real knowledge or the real essence of the Sāṅkhya doctrine."[241]

34. Assuming the form of a boar, the glorious Lord, the presiding deity of Sacrifice, stays in the region called the Northern Kurus. The goddess of the Earth along with the Kurus (the inhabitants of that country) adores him with unswerving devotion. She constantly repeats the following, the most sacred, secret mystical *mantra*:[242]

35. "I pay obeisance to the Supreme Lord symbolised by the sacred syllable Om—the Lord who can be truly comprehended only through the *mantras* (Vedic texts); who is of the form of both types of sacrifices—performed with or without the use of sacrificial posts; every limb of whose person is constituted (of different kinds) of great sacrifices[243] (e.g. *aśvamedha*). Salutations to you, Oh Supreme Person. I bow to him (who as a performer of sacrifices) is of pure actions, and who is called *triyuga* (manifest in three *yugas*, due to the absence of sacrifices in the *Kṛta* Age, or their neglect and discontinuance in the *Kali Age*.

36* Just as learned experts (in sacrificial lore) ignite fire latent in pieces of (Śamī) wood, by means of friction, so do sages, eager to see you (i.e. your real form) lying concealed in actions and their results (due to their attachment), find you out in (the discipline of) body and the senses which are the product of *guṇas*. They discover you with the help of the churning rod in the form of the discriminative faculty of the mind. I bow to you who manifest your real form this way.

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241. VR : Salutation to you who are object of true knowledge which removes the idea of the limited numbers (viz. twentyfour).

242. *Oṁ namo Bhagavate mantra-tattva-liṅgāya Yajña-kratave mahādhvarāvayavāya mahā-puruṣāya namaḥ karma-śuklāya tri-yugāya namaste|*

243. In explanation of the different limbs of this Lord of Sacrifices VR. quotes : *sruktuṇḍa āsīt, sruva īśa nāsāyor iḍodare camasāḥ karṇa-randhre |* Supra Bh.P. 3.13.36.

* Learned persons who know the Reality as propounded in the Vedānta realize, after deep thinking, your real form unmanifest yet the controller of the body and its sense organs, a product of three *guṇas* by means of their mind or reasoning faculty .... I salute to you who are designated differently as Indra etc. when invoked in sacrifices—VJ.

37. You, the Supreme Self, are discerned to be an independent absolute reality, distinct from the products of the Māyā, viz. gross matter (elements), sense-activities, the presiding deities of senses, the body, the controller (Time) and ego, by those whose intellect has been sharpened and discerning through deep contemplation and the practice of the (various) stages of *Yoga* (*Yama*, *Niyama* etc.).

38. By means of its *guṇas*, Māyā, though inert (*jaḍa*), brings about the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe through his presence, just as a piece of iron moves about (due to the presence of) a load-stone with its face towards it. This is meant only for the *jīvas* (by you) and not desired for himself. I bow to you who stand a mere witness to the *guṇas* and the working of the *Māyā*.

39. You are the primeval Boar, the cause of the universe. Just as an elephant crushes its rival elephant, you killed the demon (Hiraṇyākṣa) in the battle. Placing me on the tip of your tusk, you emerged from the lowest region in the ocean of deluge, playing (all the while) like an elephant. I pay my obeisance to you the Omnipotent Lord."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

(Description of Kimpuruṣa and Bhārata Varṣas)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. In the continent called Kiṁpuruṣa, the greatest votary Hanumān, who feels pleasure and delight in being near the Lord's feet, worships with uninterrupted devotion—along with the Kiṁpuruṣas (the inhabitants of that continent)—the Primeval Being, the glorious Lord Rāma, the beloved of Sītā and the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa.

2. (There) he listens with rapt attention the most auspicious story of the glorious Lord, his master, melodiously sung of by Ārṣṭinemi and the Gandharvas. And he sings the following to himself :

3. "I bow to the Lord of hallowing reputation who is symbolized by the syllable Om. I salute the Lord who possesses noble qualities, excellent character and conduct. I pay obeisance to him who has perfectly controlled his mind and who is deligent in the service of his subjects. Hail to him who is the touchstone (the utmost limit) of excellent renown. Salutations to the Supreme Person, the king of kings who is a great devotee of Brāhmaṇas.

4. I take shelter with him who is pure consciousness and knowledge incarnate, absolutely one (without a second); who, by his innate divine power, has dispelled (and transcended) all the states (e. g. wakefulness, sleep) caused by the three *guṇas* (of Māyā) and is (hence) perfectly serene; who is (totally) different from the phenomenal world and is above (all) names and forms; who is not touched by egoism, yet is realizable (as Brahman) by wise persons of pure mind.

5. The incarnation of the Almighty Lord, in a mortal body, in this world, is not merely for extirpating the demon race but for teaching (the ideal way of life) to human beings. Otherwise, how could the omnipotent Ruler who abides in his innate blissful self, seem to be distressed for Sītā.

6. Verily, the glorious Lord Vāsudeva (i.e. Rāma) is not at all attached to anything in the three worlds, (for) he is the Soul and the most intimate friend of the wise people (who have subdued their Self). Hence, he cannot suffer from infatuation for a woman (viz. Sītā). Nor would he exile Lakṣmaṇa (for his technical breach of order by allowing sage Durvāsas for Rāma's audience).

7. Neither birth (in a noble family) nor beauty nor eloquence nor (brilliant) intelligence, nor the charming personality pleases (lit. is a cause of satisfaction to) him. For the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa (Rāma) has formed friendship with us, dwellers in the forest who are bereft of these qualities.

8. Hence, whether a god or a demon or a monkey or a human being—whoever he may be—should take shelter with all his heart, with Rāma who is Lord Hari in the human form, and he remembers all good deeds done to him. And he carried (the people) in the Northern Kosala (with him) to Heaven."

9. In the continent of Bhārata also, the Lord under the name Nara-Nārāyaṇa, remaining in an unmanifested form, continues to perform penance to the end of the *Kalpa*. (It is) for compassionately bestowing his grace on self-controlled persons. His penance is such as enhances righteousness, knowledge, renunciation, mystic powers, sense-control, freedom from I-ness (*ahaṁkāra*) ultimately consummating in self-realization.

10. The revered (sage) Nārada intended to initiate the sage Sāvarṇi (the prospective Manu presiding over the future *Manvantara*) in the *Pañcarātra* doctrine (describing the glories of the Lord) along with Sāṅkhya philosophy and practice (or *karma-yoga*—unattached practice of *karmas*) as expounded by the Lord (himself). He (Nārada) along with the inhabitants of all classes (*varṇas*) and stages of life (*āśrama*) in (this) Bhārata, adores him with the feeling of utmost devotion and sings (mutters) the following (*mantra*) :

11. "I pay respects to the glorious Lord who is symbolised by the sacred syllable OM. (I bow to him) who is perfectly serene by nature and (absolutely) free from *ahaṁkāra* (ego). Salutations to the foremost sage Nara-Nārāyaṇa who is the property of the property-less. I bow again and again to him who is the preceptor of *Parama Haṁsas* (the highest order of recluses) and who is the Master of those (saintly persons) who find delight in the Soul.

12. I bow to him who is (completely) detached and (hence) is not bound by the egotistical feeling of being the creator or even though he is the Master of the creation (etc. of the universe); who is distinct (from the body) for though he resides in the body, he is not affected by the bodily conditions, (and needs like hunger, thirst etc.); who is (an impartial) witness whose vision is not biased by the *guṇas* like *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

13. Oh Lord of Yoga ! This is stated to be the highest proficiency in Yoga by revered god Brahmā (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) that, at the time of death, one should give up one's (Soul's) identification with this evil body and fix his mind in you who are attributeless (or untouched by the *guṇas* of *Māyā*).

14. (It is only) a fool who, being addicted to the pleasures both of this world as well as those in heaven, feels anxiety for his son, wife and wealth (at the time of death). If like (such) a fool, a learned person be afraid of the death of this contemptible body, all his (intensive) studies (in *Śāstra*, of this learned person) is no better than (wasteful and onerous) labour.

15. Therefore, Oh Lord Viṣṇu, confer on us that (*bhakti*) *Yoga*—which is your natural attribute—whereby we can quickly cut asunder (and give up) the feeling of identity and mineness felt for this contemptible physical body due to Your Māyā—i.e. a bond very difficult to sever."

16. Even in this continent of Bhārata, there are many rivers and mountains, namely, Malaya, Maṅgalaprastha, Maināka, Trikūṭa, Ṛṣabha, Kūṭaka, Kollaka, Sahya, Devagiri, Ṛṣyamūka, Śrī-Śaila, Veṅkaṭa, Mahendra, Vāridhāra, Vindhya, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣagiri, Pāriyātra, Droṇa, Citrakūṭa, Govardhana, Raivataka, Kakubha, Nīla, Gokāmukha, Indrakīla, Kāmagiri and other hundreds and thousands of mountains. There rise in these (mountains) innumerable big and small rivers.[244]

17. The peoples of Bhārata-varṣa touch with their body (use for their personal needs) the waters of these rivers, the names of which purify them even by pronouncing (their names).

18. The great rivers (in Bhārata varṣa) are : Candravaśā, Tāmraparṇī, *Avatodā*, Kṛtamālā, Vaihāyasī, Kāverī, Veṇī, Payasvinī, Śarkarāvartā, Tuṅgabhadrā, Kṛṣṇā, Veṇyā, Bhīmarathī, Godāvarī, Nirvindhyā, Payoṣṇī, Tāpī, Revā, Surasā, Narmadā, Carmaṇvatī, Sindhu; two mighty rivers : Andha (Brahmaputra) and Śoṇa—Mahānadī, Vedasmṛti, Ṛṣikulyā, Triśāmā, Kauśikī, Mandākinī, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī, Gomatī, Sarayū, Rodasvatī, Saptavatī, Suṣomā, Śatadru, Candrabhāgā, Marudvṛdhā, Vitastā, Asiknī, Viśvā and other great rivers.

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244. For the identification of these mountains and rivers etc. mentioned here and in the next two verses, vide D.C. Sircar—SGAMI, pp. 48-74 and N.L. De—GDAMI under relevant heads.

19. It is in this very continent only that men who are born here can, through the white (*sāttvic*), red (*rājasa*), and black (*tāmasa*) acts commenced by them, attain to the numerous celestial, earthly and hellish existences (births) according to the serial order of their *karmas*; for all (everyone) get the proper type of birth according to (the nature of) their *karmas*. And the Liberation is achieved by the (unattached) performance of the duties prescribed for each class of society.

20. Liberation is characterised by Yoga of motiveless devotion solely directed to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Soul who abides in all beings as their self; is above prejudices and defects (like love, hate), and beyond the range of speech, and not dependent on any other support. It is attainable by intimate association with great personages, viz. devotees of Lord Viṣṇu—association which can be formed when the knot of ignorance which leads to different kinds of births, is cut down completely. For gods sing this very praise of human life as the means of attaining all *puruṣārthas* (highest goals in human life).

21. Oh ! What (wonderful) meritorious deed has been done by these ! Or Lord Hari of his own accord has bestowed his grace on them. In the land of Bharata, these have got birth in the human species which is useful as a means of serving Lord Mukunda. How strongly we yearn for this !

22. Of what use are the performances of sacrifices, austere penances, observances of vows, charitable donations—all so very difficult to perform ? Or of what avail is this worthless attainment of heaven (as a result of merits earned) where the remembrance of the lotus-like feet of Nārāyaṇa is wiped out in the excessive enjoyments of sensual pleasures.

23. It is preferable to attain (birth in) the land of Bhārata with its momentary span of life to achieving those regions where beings are blessed with a life span of a *Kalpa* but whence return to birth (in *saṁsāra* is inevitable . For the wise resolute mortals (in Bhārata-varṣa) dedicate at Hari's feet, their acts in a moment and attain to the region of Hari, free from the fear of *Saṁsāra*.

24. The region, even if it be the residence of god Brahmā, the Supreme Controller of gods, is not worth resort-

ing, if there be no river of nectar in the form of discourses on Lord Viṣṇu, flowing, and if there is no saintly votaries of the Lord entirely depending on it[245], and where sacrifices in the form of the worship of the Lord of sacrifices, accompanied with the celebration of festivals (like music and dancing based on his episodes) are not performed.

25. But those *jīvas*, who, even after getting birth here, in the human race, endowed with the power of knowledge and discrimination, the capability of doing actions to attain it, the plentitude of substances necessary for securing it, do not verily exert to attain to Liberation whence there is no return to the mundane existence, enter again into the bondage (of *saṁsāra*) like forest birds (which after getting freedom from the fowler's net carelessly play on the same tree on which they were formerly caught and thus get into the bondage again).

26. (How blessed are the inhabitants of Bhārata varṣa). When in performing a sacrifice, they (people of Bhārata) set apart for various deities their due share of oblations and with faith offer these oblations to the sacrificial fire in the proper manner, reciting the relevant *mantras* and offering the substances according to prescriptions laid down, he is the One Lord, perfect in all respects and a bestower of blessings but who, invoked under different names gladly accepts them.

27. It is true that when prayed, the Lord confers the desired object to him who implores him for it. But certainly he does not confer on them the real blessing as they are again brought to the position of a supplicant. But to those who adore him without any ulterior motive, he, of his own accord, offers his foliage-like tender feet which cover (satisfy) all their desires.

28. If after exhausting our merits in enjoying celestial life, there be some balance of merit accruing from a duly performed sacrifice, a religious discourse preached or any other pious act done, we pray for a birth in the continent called Ajanābha (Bhārata Varṣa) retaining our remembrance of the

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245. Or Votaries of the Lord who are the sources (i.e. the participants) of the nectarine discourses on Hari.

Lord. For glorious Lord Hari extends his blessings to those who worship him*.

Śrī Śuka said :

29. Oh King ! Some people describe eight minor sub-continents attached to Jambū-dvīpa. They are said to have been created by the sons of Sagara who excavated the earth on all sides in their search for the sacrificial horse.[246]

30. They are as follows: Svarṇa Prastha, Candra-Śukla, Āvartana, Ramaṇaka, Mandāraharinṇa, Pāñcajanya, Siṁhala and Laṅkā.

31. In this way, the divisions of the Jambūdvīpa into continents have been described to you (exactly) as I was taught.

* D.S. Yande's edition of the Bh.P. gives the following eight verses as additional, recorded in some editions. ŚR. has not commented on them. But they are translated here in case their genuineness be proved in some subsequent critical edition of the Bh. P.

1. Hence even gods desire to be born on this earth in the Bhārata Varṣa with a view to accumulating noble, inexhaustible, pure, auspicious merit.

2. They wish : "When shall we be able to be born in the land of Bhārata ? When can we attain to the highest abode of Viṣṇu by (our) great merit ?

3. When can we, by charitable donations, performance of various kinds of sacrifices, and austerities, adore Lord Hari who is reposing in the cosmic ocean, and reach his abode which the wise sages visualize(directly).

4. The noble Soul who, by nature, is inclined to sing in praise of Hari, or is dear to his votaries or who renders service to his great devotees, deserves to be paid respects by us.

5. The great person whose mind is keenly interested in hearing the exposition of the Vedas as well as in listening to the Purāṇas or in the company of the pious persons, deserves our obeisance.

6. After being born in Bhārata, if a person is averse to pious acts, he (is like a person who) discards a pitcher (full) of nectar and desires to have a pot of poison.

7. He who, abandoning the worship of Vāsudeva, indulges in various acts, (is like a person who) neglecting a wish-yielding cow, desires to drink the milk of the *arka* plant."

8. In this way, the denizens of heaven eulogize the land of Bhārata. Those who, attaining birth herein, indulge in sensual pleasures, are really deluded by the Māyā of Lord Hari.

246. Vide infra ix.8. 8-9.

CHAPTER TWENTY

*(Description of the remaining six Dvīpas)**

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Hereafter the division of *Plakṣa* and other *Dvīpas* into *Varṣas* is being detailed, with special reference to their dimensions, distinguishing characteristics and relative position.

2. Just as mount Meru is surrounded by *Jambūdvīpa*, this *Jambūdvīpa* is engirdled by the salt sea of the same dimension as the *dvīpa* itself. Just as a moat is surrounded by an outlying garden, the Salt Sea is enclosed by a *dvīpa* called Plakṣa, which is double in dimension of the Salt Sea. There stands the great Plakṣa (the Indian fig) tree equal to the Jambū (Rose apple) tree (in Jambūdvīpa). It is of gold and it gave its name to the *dvīpa*. At its foot, dwells the god of fire, of seven tongues. Its ruler is Idhmajihva, the son of Priyavrata. He divided his *dvīpa* into seven continents. Having entrusted them to his sons bearing the same name as that of the Seven Varṣas, he became liberated from *saṁsāra* by practising union with the Soul.

3. The continents (Varṣas) are called Śiva, Yavasa, Subhadra, Śānta, Kṣema, Amṛta and Abhaya. It is said that there are seven wellknown mountains and seven famous rivers in each (continent).

4. The seven mountains forming the borders of the Varṣas are Maṇikūṭa, Vajrakūṭa, Indrasena, Jyotiṣmān, Suparṇa, Hiraṇyaṣṭhīva and Meghamāla. The principal rivers are Aruṇā Āṅgirasī, Sāvitrī, Suprabhātā, Ṛtambharā and Satyambharā. The four classes of people (*varṇas*), called Haṁsa, Pataṅga, Urdhvāyana, (and) Satyāṅga use the waters of these rivers and wash away (the effects of) their *rajas* and *tamas*. They live a thousand years; their form is (free from fatigue, sweat etc.) like that of gods, and they beget progeny like them. With the rituals prescribed in the three Vedas, they worship the Ātman, the glorious Lord—Sun, the gate of heaven, who is described in the three Vedas.

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* Some commentators like GD. seem to have followed a text with different order of verses. Here the text adopted by ŚR is accepted.

5*. (They meditate upon him as follows:) "We resort to the Sun-god who is the manifestation of the ancient god Viṣṇu; who is the presiding deity of *Satya* (righteousness to be practised) and *Ṛta* (the divine law), the Vedas, the dispenser of good and evil fruits."

6. In the five continents (*dvīpas*) commencing with Plakṣa, all persons, without any distinction are, from their very birth, blessed with long life, soundness (conative and cognitive) of sense-organs, virility, lustre, physical power, intellectual capacity and bravery.

7. *Plakṣa dvīpa* is encircled by a sea of sugar-cane juice equal in extent to the (*Plakṣa-dvīpa*) itself. So also Śālmalī-dvīpa, double in dimension (of the sea of the sugarcane juice) stands shining with the sea of wine equal to Śālmalī *dvīpa* in width, surrounding it.

8. Here (in Śālmalīdvīpa) stands the Śālmalī (the silk cotten) tree which has the same dimension as that of the Plakṣa tree. The sages proclaimed that on that tree is the nest (abode) of the worshipful Garuḍa, the King of birds who praises the Lord with his wings consisting of the Vedas. And this tree is regarded as the origin of the name of the *dvīpa*.

9. The Lord of the dvīpa, Yajñabāhu, the son of Priyavrata, divided the seven subdivisions (*Varṣas*) of that *dvīpa* among his seven sons who gave their names severally to the (seven) Varṣas, viz. Surocana, Saumanasya, Ramaṇaka, Devavarṣa, Pāribhadra Āpyāyana and Avijñāta.

10. In those *Varṣas* (continents), the continental mountains (forming the boundaries) and the rivers are seven each. (The names of the boundary-mountains are:) Svarasa, Śataśṛṅga, Vāmadeva, Kunda, Mukunda, Puṣpa-varṣa and Sahasra-śruti. And names of the rivers are: Anumati, Sinivālī, Sarasvatī, Kuhū, Rajanī, Nandā and Rākā.

11. Men in this Varṣa are divided in classes designated as Śrutadhara, Vīryadhara, Vasundhara and Īṣandhara; with

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* VR. : *ṛta*—meritorious act. *mṛtyu* and *amṛta*—Bondage and Liberation. *pratna*—the beginningless cause of the universe. This excludes *'īvas* etc. which have a beginning. *Satya*—unchangeable.

Translation : "We take asylum with the unchangeable Sun-god who forms the body of Viṣṇu who is the beginningless cause of the universe and the cause of bondage and liberation and leads *jīvas* to the course of *dharma*."

Vedic hymns they worship the glorious *ātman*, the Moon-god who is Veda incarnate.

12. "May the Moon-god who, dividing (the month into) dark and bright fortnights, by his rays distributes food to the manes, gods (respectively in the dark and bright fortnight) and to all created beings, be our ruler"[247].

13. Likewise beyond the Sea of Wine (Suroda) and double its size, lies Kuśa-dvīpa which, like the previous (Śālmalī) *dvīpa*, is surrounded on the other side by the Ocean of Ghee of dimension equal to it (Kuśadvīpa). In that *dvīpa* stands a dump of Kuśa grass planted therein by the Lord. It has given its name to the *dvīpa*. It (the clump of Kuśa grass) is refulgent like another Fire-god, and it illuminates all directions by the lustre of its tender shoots.

14. The (first) ruler of that *dvīpa* was the son of Priyavrata, Hiraṇyaretas by name. Dividing his *dvīpa* proportionately (in seven parts) he distributed them to his seven sons namely Vasu, Vasudāna, Dṛḍha-ruci, Nābhi-gupta, Stutyavrata, Vivikta and Vāmadeva, and he himself took to austere penance.

15. In those *Varṣas* the boundary mountains and rivers are well-known to be severally seven: Cakra, Catuḥśṛṅga, Kapila, Citrakūṭa, Devānīka, Ūrdhva-roma, Draviṇa mountains, and the Rasakulyā, Madhukulyā, Mitravindā, Śrutavindā, Devagarbhā, Ghṛtacyutā and Mantramālā rivers.

16. With the waters of these rivers, the inhabitants of Kuśadvīpa denoted by (the classes—Varṇas) Kuśala, Kovida,

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247. (i) VR. emphasizes that but for the division into dark and bright fortnights by the Moon-god, there would have been no food-offerings to the manes and gods. May the Moon-god bring happiness (*amṛtam* = *sukham*) to us.

(ii) VJ. : May the inner controller of the Moon-god whose rays are full of nectar, distribute Soma to manes and gods and food to us all in both dark and bright fortnights. May he bring happiness (*somam* = sukham) to us.

(iii) BP. attributes the division into dark and bright fortnights to the Moon-god. By his rays he distributes food to the manes (in the dark fortnight) and to gods (in the bright fortnight). May that Moon-god be our king and bring us happiness.

Abhiyukta, Kulaka (corresponding to our Varṇas like Brāhmaṇa etc.) worship the glorious Lord in the form of Fire by their proficiency in sacrificial rituals (or skilfulness in work).

17*. (They pray):"Oh Fire-god! You are the carrier of oblations directly to the Supreme Brahman (Lord Hari). Worship the Supreme person by sacrifice (sacrificial oblations) offered to gods who are the limbs of the body of the Cosmic Man (just as what is offered to the part of the body e.g. a hand is as good as given to the person himself)."

18. Similarly, beyond the Sea of Ghee (Ghṛtoda), there is the *Krauñca-dvīpa* twice as extensive (as Ghṛtoda) and encircled by the Ocean of Milk (Kṣīroda) equal to it (Krauñca-dvīpa) in dimension, just like Kuśa-dvīpa by the Sea of Ghee (Ghṛtoda). Here the chief mountain is called Krauñca which gives its name to the *dvīpa*.

19. Though the projecting ridges and bowers were devastated by the weapon (javelin) of Kārttikeya, it (Krauñca) became free from fear as it was sprayed over by the surges of the ocean of Milk and was protected on all sides by god Varuṇa.

20. Even in that Dvīpa was its (first) ruler, a son of Priyavrata, Ghṛtapṛṣṭha by name. He divided his (Krauñca) *dvīpa* in seven continents. In those continents bearing the names of his sons, he installed his seven heirs (sons) as the rulers of those Varṣas, and he himself resorted to the lotus-like feet of the glorious Lord Hari (the destroyer of the Bondage of Saṁsāra) who was his *Antarātman* (Inner Controller) and whose glory was supremely auspicious.

21. The sons of Ghṛtapṛṣṭha are : Āma, Madhuruha, Meghapṛṣṭha, Sudhāman, Bhrājiṣṭha, Lohitārṇa and Vanas-

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*Other interpretations are : (i) VR. : "Oh Fire-god ! You form a part of the body of the transcendental Brahman. You are the carrier of sacrificial oblations to gods and thereby to the Inner Controller in the bodies of gods. Convey our sacrificial oblations offered to gods who are but limbs of the body of the Supreme Man, to him who is also the *Antarātman* (Inner Controller)".

(ii) VJ. : "Oh Omniscient (Fire-God) ! You are the carrier of sacrificial oblations to Śrī Nārāyaṇa as well as to gods who are members of his Person. Staying near us, you make us worship Śrī Hari (called Yajña) by the performance of the act called Sacrifice."

pati. The mountains demarcating the *Varṣas* are seven, viz. Śukla, Vardhamāna, Bhojana, Upabarhin, Nanda, Nandana, and Sarvatobhadra. And the rivers are known to be seven only, viz. Abhayā, Amṛtaughā, Āryakā, Tīrthavatī, Vṛttirūpavatī, Pavitravatī and Śuklā.

22. The inhabitants of that Varṣa (classified into Varṇas) called Puruṣa, Ṛṣabha, Draviṇa and Devaka (corresponding to the Varṇas such as Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya) use the sacred, purifying waters of those rivers, and propitiate the Lord in the form of water, by offering water with the hollow of their joined palms filled with water.

23. (They pray the waters thus :) "Oh waters! You are endowed with powers by the Supreme God. Hence, you purify the three worlds, viz. the heaven, the earth and the intervening space. As you are naturally capable of destroying all sins, purify our bodies as we touch you."

24. Similarly beyond the ocean of milk (*Kṣīroda*) and surrounding it lies the Śākadvīpa, thirtytwo lakh *Yojanas* in extent. It is encircled by the sea of liquid curds equal to it in length. Herein stands a tree called Śāka which has given its appellation to the *dvīpa*. And its extremely fragrant smell perfumes the (whole of the) *dvīpa*.

25. Even of that *dvīpa* also, a son of Priyavrata named Medhātithi is the (first) ruler. He also divided it in seven continents (Varṣas) bearing the names of his sons. In them, he installed, as rulers, his sons, viz. Purojava, Manojava, Pavamāna, Dhūmrānīka, Citrarepha, Bahurūpa, Viśvadhara by name. And concentrating his mind on Lord Ananta, he himself entered Penance-forest (for performing austerities).

26. In these continents, the boundary-mountains and (main) rivers are only seven each. The mountains are Īśāna, Uruśṛṅga, Balabhadra, Śatakesara, Sahasrasrota, Devapāla and Mahānasa. The rivers are Anaghā, Āyurdā, Ubhayaspṛṣṭi, Aparājitā, Pañcapadī, Sahasrastuti, Nijadhṛti.

27. The inhabitants of that continent, (classified in Varṇas) called Ṛtavrata, Satyavrata, Dānavrata and Anuvrata who have washed off their *rajas* and *tamas* by Prāṇāyāma (breath-control) propitiate the glorious Lord in the form of Vāyu through perfect concentration of mind.

28. (They pray as follows :) "May the glorious Lord who is the Inner Controller of all beings, and who, entering (the body in the form of the chief vital breath), sustains all the beings by his five functions of inhalation and exhalation, and under whose control the whole of the universe exists, protect us."

29. So also beyond the ocean of (liquid) curds is situated *Puṣkaradvīpa* which is double the extent (of the ocean of curds), and which is encircled by the sea of sweet water equal in dimension to it (*Puṣkara-dvīpa*). Herein grows a gigantic lotus of hundred million petals of burnished gold, shining like the flames of fire. It was intended to be the throne of Lord Brahmā (who has a lotus-flower as his seat).

30. In the middle of the *dvīpa*, stands only one mountain called Mānasottara. It demarcates the boundary between the eastern and western continents (*Varṣas*). It is ten thousand *Yojanas* in its height and length. Here (on this mountain), in the four directions, are built the four capital cities of Indra (and other) guardians of the world. Over it (the *Mānasottara* mount) revolves the (other) wheel, in the form of a year (*Saṁvatsara,*) of the chariot of the Sun-god. It goes round mount Meru within the limit of a day and night of gods (each of which consists of six months of human beings).

31. The ruler of that continent was the Prince of Priyavrata, named Vītihotra. He had two sons Ramaṇaka and Dhātaki by name. He installed them as the rulers and protectors of the Varṣas, and like his elder brothers, he devoted himself solely to the service (worship) of the Lord.

32. The inhabitants of that continent propitiate the Lord in the form of god Brahmā, with (mental) acts leading to the region of Brahmā (the *Sālokya* type of liberation), and recite the following (*Mantra*) :

33* "We pay obeisance to that serene glorious Lord who is (regarded as) the fruit of all righteous actions, and a con-

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*(i)VR. : Salutations to Lord Hiraṇyagarbha! May people differentiated by castes (*varṇas*) and stages in life (*āśramas*) worship with unswerving devotion (*śkāntam=avyabhicāritam*) that which forms the body of the Supreme Brahman, and is known through Vedas, and which is full of activities like the creation of the world etc., as the one reality.

crete means which leads to (the knowledge of) the Brahman; whom all people should adore (with the master-servant relation) ; who is established in the one Supreme Reality (Brahman) and is (hence) one without a second."

The sage (Śuka) continued :

34. Beyond that sea of sweet water and encircling it, is a ring of mountain-range called Lokāloka which divides the *Loka* i.e. the region illuminated by the light of the Sun, and the *Aloka*—the region which gets no light of the Sun.

35. Beyond the ocean of Fresh water, there is a tract of land which is in extent as wide as the distance between the mountains Mānasottara and Meru. Beyond that stretches a land of gold which is (shining) like a sheet of mirror. Nothing that goes or is dropped there ever returns and hence it is avoided by all living beings (as it is reserved for gods).

36. The mountain is called Lokāloka, as this mountain stands between the regions lighted by the Sun (*Loka*), and those not lighted by him (*Aloka*).

37. The mountain-chain has been laid beyond and round all the three worlds, by the Almighty Lord. It is so high and extensive that rays of the innumerable heavenly luminaries from the Sun to the Pole-star illuminate only the three worlds on this side (of the mountain), but cannot penetrate to the other side.

38. This much disposition of the world with reference to its (details of) dimensions, characteristics and relative position has been considered by sages. The whole of the terrestrial globe is calculated as fifty crore Yojanas in extent, out of which the land from Meru to the Lokāloka mountain occupies onefourth (i.e. twelve and half crores of Yojanas).

39. The Lords of elephants viz. Ṛṣabha, Puṣkaracūḍa, Vāmana and Aparājita have been posted in four cardinal points over (and beyond) that (Lokāloka mountain), by the

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(ii) VJ. : Oh Lord ! Your form, possessing all auspicious characteristics, is realized by the performance of sacrifices. People adore your being manifested in the form of Brahmā, as distinct from the rest of the world, and absolutely one without a second.

(iii) VC. : *ekānta* : One whose absolute devotion is in the Lord.

Self-born god (Brahmā), the preceptor (or the eldermost one) of the whole of the world. They are the cause of (i.e. have the responsibility of) maintaining the stability and balance of all the worlds.

40. For infusing and increasing the various powers of the elephants and the guardian deities (like Indra) who are (the manifestations of) his own part, and for the welfare of all the worlds around, the glorious Lord, the supremely Exalted Person, the Lord of all great Powers, the Inner Controller (of all), abides on all sides on the great mountain (Lokāloka.) He manifests his form of pure (unalloyed with *rajas* and *tamas*) *sattva* distinguished by (his excellences like) Supreme righteousness, knowledge, renunciation, sovereignty and the great eight-fold mystic powers. With his powerful arms adorned with his superb weapons, he stays surrounded by his prominent attendants like Viśvaksena and others.

41. It seems that the Lord has assumed the above-described form to the end of this Kalpa, for the protection and maintenance of the careers of the different worlds evolved by his *Yoga-māyā* (mystical creative potency).

42. By the extent of the area falling with (i.e. on this side of) the Lokāloka mountain, the extent of Aloka (regions not receiving solar light) which is beyond the Lokāloka mountain, is explained. The sages say that the extremely holy region lying beyond Aloka can be travelled only by masters of Yoga (as was done by Kṛṣṇa to bring back the dead son of a Brāhmaṇa—vide infra Bh. P. X).

43. The Sun is located in the middle position of the great Egg of the universe which is at the centre of the space between the earth and the vault of the sky. The distance between the Sun and the circumference of the universe is twentyfive crore of Yojanas.

44. As the Sun was in this inanimate egg of the universe, he got the epithet *Mārtaṇḍa*. He is also called *Hiraṇyagarbha* as he was born of the golden Egg (of the universe).

45. It is by the Sun really, that the cardinal points, the sky, the celestial region, the earth, regions of pleasure (*bhuvarloka* and *svar-loka*) and Liberation, the infernal regions and the

nether worlds (e.g. Atala, Vitala etc.) and all others, are divided.

46. The Sun god is the Soul, and the deity presiding over the eyesight of gods, sub-human beings, men, reptiles and plants as well as of all species of living beings.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

(*The Stellar Region*) *

Śrī Śuka said :

1. To this extent (viz. 50 crore *Yojanas* diameter and 25 crore *Yojanas* height) has, the disposition of the terrestrial sphere, been described, with reference to its dimensions and characteristics.

2. Experts in this (science) describe the dimensions (etc.) of the heavenly sphere with reference to this (extent etc. of the sphere of the earth, as being symmetrical in dimensions) just as the size etc. of one of the two halves of beans is known from that of the other half. Between the two (the heavenly sphere and the globe of the earth) is the *Antarikṣa* (Intermediate region) which is joined by the two (by the earth from below and the heaven from above).

3. Situated in the centre (of the sky), the glorious Lord of luminaries gives warmth to the three worlds with its heat,

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* This chapter deals with the old astronomical ideas current at the final redaction of this Purāṇa. It is a popular statement of a scientific subject. We find similar topics discussed in *Devī-bhāgavata* VIII 5-20, *Matsya P.* 124-128, VP. II. 8-12 and the astrological aspect in *Garuḍa* P. 59-64, *Agni P.* 121 etc. The statements given in these Purāṇas are to be taken broadly, as modern astronomical exactness should not be expected in such works. Thus the increase and decrease in the duration of days and nights and the rate of this variation as given in verse 4 here is roughly correct, though actually it is not so uniform mathematically. Other statements are to be taken in a broad sense. The commentators profusely quote from Purāṇas, Tantras on old astronomy which cannot be summarised here. --

and illumines them with its lustre. It proceeds by slow, rapid and regular movements known by the (technical) terms *Uttarāyaṇa* (the period of the Summer Solstice, when the Sun appears moving to the North of equator), *Dakṣiṇāyana* (the period of the winter Solstice, when the Sun moves to the south of equator) and *Vaiṣuvata* (period of Vernal or Autumnal equinoxes), and also in higher, lower and middle positions, according to seasons.

4. When the Sun traverses the signs of *Meṣa* (Aries) and *Tulā* (Libra), the days and nights are of equal duration. When it traverses the five zodiacal signs from *Vṛṣabha* (Taurus) to *Kanyā* (Virgo), the days go on lengthening and the duration of the night goes on decreasing one *ghaṭikā* (24 minutes) per month.

5. When it traverses the five signs from *Vṛścika* (Scorpio) to *Mīna* (Pisces), days and nights are in the reverse order (and days go on decreasing and nights increasing).

6. Days go on increasing in duration, till the *Dakṣiṇāyana* begins, while nights do the same, till the commencement of *Uttarāyaṇa*.

7. The learned say that a distance of nine crores and fiftyone lakh *Yojanas* is thus traversed by the Sun in its revolution round the Mānasottara mountain. (They say that) on that mountain, to the east of Meru, is situated the capital city of Indra (presiding deity of the eastern direction), called Devadhānī; to the South (of Meru) is the capital of Yama (the presiding deity of the Southern direction) by name Saṁyamanī; to the West, the city of Varuṇa (the god presiding over the Western quarter), called Nimlocanī; and to the North is the capital of Soma (presiding deity of the northern direction), named Vibhāvarī. When the Sun passes through these cities, there is Sunrise, Midday, Sun-set and Midnight on the four sides of Meru (respectively). These serve as the special time of activity and cessation of activities for living beings.

8. To the dwellers on Mount Meru, it is always the Mid-day. And though the Sun (with its face towards the stellar sphere, actually moves to the eastern direction) with Mount Meru on its left side, it appears (to move to the West and) to keep the Meru on its right (because the wind called

Pravaha which always blows with the Meru on its right, forces the stellar spheres including the Sun which goes from east to west to move in the opposite direction[248].

9. It is said that just on the diametrically opposite side of that point where the Sun rises (or appears in view), it sets (goes out of view). If at any point, it troubles people with heat and makes them perspire, exactly on the opposite side of the point, it makes them sleep (as it is midnight). Those who see it shining (brightly in their place), do not see it when it is at the (diametrically) oppoiste point.

10. When it starts from the capital of Indra, it traverses in fifteen *ghaṭikās* (six hours) the distance of two crores and a quarter, twelve lakhs and a half and twentyfive thousand (i. e. 23775000) *Yojanas*, and arri es at the city of Yama.

11. In this way, it roceeds to the city of Varuṇa, to that of the Moon-god and gain to the capital of Indra (all the cities are equidistant). So also, in the stellar region, all planets such as the Moon and others, rise as well as set together along with the stars.

12. In this way, the chariot of the Sun which is the Vedatriad incarnate, covers in a *muhūrta* (48 minutes) a distance of thirtyfour lakh and eight hundred *Yojanas* and travels through the four capital cities (in the abovementioned serial order).

13. It is traditionally said that the chariot has one wheel in the form of a year with twelve spokes (i. e. twelve months), six tyres (viz. six seasons) and three navels (three parts of four months each). Its axle-tree is fixed (at one end) to the top of Mount Meru and the other end is placed on the Mānasottara mountain. Fixed to it, the wheel of the Sun's chariot rotates like the wheel of an oil mill over the Mount Mānasottara.

14. Into that axle, there is another axle-tree measuring onefourth of the first. It is like the axle of an oilpress with its upper end joined to the Polestar.

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248. *Nakṣatrābhimukhatayā svagatyā Merum vāmataḥ kurvannapi, pradakṣiṇāvartapravahākhya-vāyu-bhrāmyamāṇa-jyotiścakra-valāt pratyaham dakṣiṇataḥ karoti* —ŚR

15. The seat of the chariot is thirty-six lakh Yojanas in extent. The yoke of the Sun's chariot is of the same extent. Yoked to it by Aruṇa, are seven horses bearing the names of (Vedic) metres (viz. Gāyatrī, Bṛhatī, Uṣṇik, Jagatī, Triṣṭubh Anuṣṭubh and Paṅkti). And they carry the god Āditya (the Sun).

16. They say that, entrusted with the duties of a charioteer, sits Aruṇa in front of the Sun-god, but with his face turned towards the west (i.e. to the Sun-god to show respect).

17. Appointed to sing the Vedic hymns, the sages called Vālakhilyas, sixty thousand in number and of the size of the fourth part of a thumb,—who are placed in front of the Sun—sing the praise of the Sun-god.

18. And other sages, Gandharvas (celestial musicians), *Apsarasas* (Divine damsels), Nāgas (serpents), Yakṣas (demi-gods), Yātudhānas(demons) and gods—fourteen in all if taken one by one, and seven if taken in pairs—have different and varied names. And they, two at a time, serve the Lord, the Self in the form of the Sun, bearing different names; they perform their several duties and serve the Ātman in the form of the glorious Sun, every month. (For details vide infra 12.11, 33-34).

19. The circumference of the terrestrial sphere is nine crores and fifty lakh *yojanas*. Out of this, he crosses the distance of two thousand and two *yojanas* in a moment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

(*Description of the Moon and other Planets*)

The King (Parikṣit) enquired :

1. Your revered Self has described that while the glorious Solar deity, facing the stellar sphere moves forward (through the signs of the zodiac) with Meru and Pole Star to the left but appears to traverse keeping Meru and the Pole-Star on its

right side (vide supra 21.8). How are we to reconcile (and understand) that statement ?

He (Śhrī Śuka) said :

2. When a potter's wheel is rotating, the movement of ants and other (insects etc.) which dwell on it is quite different (and independent from that of the wheel even though they are carried along with it), for they are found in the different parts of the wheel (even while it is in motion). Similarly, (although) the wheel of Time consisting of constellation of stars, signs of zodiac as a whole, revolves with great velocity, keeping Mount Meru and the Pole-Star to the right, the Sun and other planets depending on it (i. e. the Time-Wheel), their course of movement is also different (from that of the Time-Wheel with which they move); for they are observed in conjuction with different constellations of stars and signs of zodiac (at different times).

3. He (the Sun) is the very same glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa, the First Person (the Prime cause of the universe). He is enquired into by learned sages with the help of the Vedas. For the well-being of the people and for the purification (and timely performance) of ritualistic acts, he divided his body which is an embodiment of three Vedas, into twelve parts. He creates the respective characteristics (such as heat, cold) in the six seasons like the spring etc., for enjoying fruits of Karmas.

4. In this world, people who follow the path of duties prescribed for different classes of society (*Varṇa*) and stages in life (*āśrama*), in the three Vedas, devoutly worship him through different rituals, high or low, as laid down in the Vedas, and through the practice of Yogic meditation with faith, attain the eternal bliss.

5. Now, this Soul of the worlds[249] (or living beings), viz. the Sun moves along the Wheel of Time in the middle of the sky, midway between the earth and the heaven and enjoys twelve months known by the signs of the zodiac as (twelve) divisions of the year. The learned teach that a month consists of two fortnights (one bright and the other dark), or a day and night (of the Pitṛs) or a period required (by the Sun) for traversing two constellations and a quarter in the space

249. Cf. *Sūrya ātmā jagatas tasthuṣaśca*/RV. 1.115.1

It is (further) instructed that the season (*ṛtu*) is that period (division) of the year in which the Sun traverses one sixth part (of his orbit).

6. And the period which he (the Sun) takes to traverse one half of his path through the sky is called an *Ayana*.

7. The learned have laid it down that the period in which the Sun, with his slow, rapid and moderate motions, completes his circuit in the orbit (through the whole extent of the sky) along with heavenly and earthly spheres, is called *Saṁvatsara*, *Pari-vatsara*, *Iḍāvatsara*, *Anuvatsara* and *Vatsara*. (*Vide Supra* 3.11.14).

8. Similarly the Moon is observed to be a hundred thousand *Yojanas* above the rays (orb) of the Sun. As it is faster in velocity (than the Sun), it goes ahead (of the Sun). It covers in two fortnights the circuit made by the Sun in one (complete) year; in two days and a quarter of that distance which the Sun traverses in a month; and in one day the distance the Sun requires a fortnight to cover.

9. It is by the waxing of its digits in the case of gods and in the waning of its rays in the case of manes that the Moon makes the day and night of gods and manes, by means of its first (bright) and the second (dark) fortnights.[250] The Moon (as the king of plant-life and as such a food-giver) is the very life (-breath) of all species of living beings and (hence is called) the life. He is in conjunction with each of the constellation of stars for thirty *Muhūrtas* (24 hours).

10. And this glorious person comprising of sixteen digits (in his fullness) viz. the Moon, is the presiding deity over

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250. The construction of the SK. text is significant. It wants to emphasize the Śruti text :

Tasmād apūryamāṇāḥ pakṣe yajante /

which enjoins worship etc. of gods in the bright fortnight and the injunction *apara-pakṣe pitṛṇām* about the suitability of the dark-fortnight for the worship etc. of the manes. GD. points out the contradiction of the statement 'bright and dark fortnights make the day and the night of gods' in the above verse with that of *supra* 3.11.12. which states 'the *ayanas* are called the day and night of the Svarga'. He reconciles by explaining that the bright fortnight is called the day of gods for it is regarded as suitable for the worship etc. of gods and the dark fortnight as the night of gods due to its unsuitability for worship and other functions pertaining to gods.

the mind, the ruler (and giver) of food and an embodiment of nectar. The sages describe him as one with all, as he is, by nature, the nourisher of the life of all gods, manes, men, goblins, beasts, birds, reptiles, plants and creepers.

11. The Almighty god has placed twentyeight constellations inclusive of Abhijit[251], three lakh *Yojanas* above thc Moon. They are fixed by him on the Time-Wheel. Hence they revolve with Meru on their right side.

12. Above these (constellations) at a height of two lakh *Yojanas*, is observed Venus. It revolves with rapid, slow and even velocity like the Sun, and is found either ahead of or at the rear of or along with the Sun. As it (overcrosses the constellation in the serial order and thus) marches rapidly, it generally brings showers of rain and is always favourable to the world. And (in combination with some other constellations) it is observed to counteract the unfavourable influence of planets (like the Mars obstructing rainfall.

13. The Mercury (Budha) becomes described (in its variations of motions etc.) by the description of the Venus. Budha or the Mercury, the son of Soma (the Moon) is observed to be two lakhs of *Yojanas* above the Venus. It generally sheds beneficent influence. When it surpasses the Sun (and becomes independent), it indicates dangers like stormy winds, cloudy weather, drought and other calamities.

14. Two Lakh *Yojanas* higher up (than the Mercury) (i.e. eleven lakh *Yojanas* higher than the earth) is the Mars traversing each sign of the zodiac in three fortnights, it completes its revolution through the twelve signs, unless it takes retrograde course. It is an inauspicious planet in general portending evil.

15. At a height of two lakh *Yojanas* above the Mars is the glorious Bṛhaspati (Jupiter). Unless it takes to retrograde course, it moves through each sign of the zodiac in one year. It is generally favourable to Brāhmaṇas.

16. The Śanaiścara (the slow-mover i.e. the Saturn)

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251. ŚR. notes that this constellation is supposed to be on the conjunction of the Uttarāṣāḍhā and Śravaṇa constellations. It is supposed to be an independent constellation due to its astrological implications. In his support, he quotes a Śruti passage : *Abhijin nāma nakṣatram upariṣṭād Aṣāḍhānām adhastāc-Śroṇāyāḥ /*

is observed to be two lakh Yojanas above Bṛhaspati (Jupiter). Lingering for thirty months in one house of the zodiac, it takes as many (thirty) years to complete its revolution through all the signs of the zodiac. It generally portends evil and anxiety to all.

17. At a height of eleven lakh *Yojanas* from the Saturn are seen the (seven) sages (the *Ursa Major*). Always contemplating (and wishing) the good of the world, they go round the most exalted region of Viṣṇu, keeping it to their right.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

(*Description of Viṣṇu-pada*—the position of Dhruva *and Śiśumāra Cakra*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Now at a height of thirteen lakh *Yojanas* above the *Ursa Major*, lies what they call the highest abode of Viṣṇu. Here dwells the Supreme Votary of the Lord Dhruva, the son of Uttānapāda. The stars presided over by Agni, Indra, Kaśyapa Prajāpati and Dharma respectfully go round him keeping him on their right,—all moving simultaneously (as stars). He is still the support of those whose span of life is upto the end of a *Kalpa* (till the time of deluge).

2. He (Dhruva) alone shines perpetually as he is decreed by God to support like a post all the hosts of luminaries, planets, constellations of stars, etc. which are set in motion by the ever vigilant almighty Time of incomprehensible velocity.

3. Just as oxen, employed in treading ears of corn, are tied to the post in the middle of the threshing ground, with strings short, long and medium in length, walk round in their respective spheres in three circles (at a distance of short, long

and midway between the two according to the length of the string with which they are fastened), similarly posts of celestial bodies, planets etc., fastened to the Wheel of Time in the inner circle or in the outer circle, and impelled by the Wind (called *Pravaha* in supra 21.8), and with Dhruva (the Polar Star) as their support (central pivot), go on revolving to the end of the *Kalpa*, in three courses (marked by the periods of *Uttarāyaṇa* or northerly course, *Vaiṣuvata* i.e. along with the equator and *Dakṣiṇāyana* or Southward course). Just as clouds and birds like hawks with the support of air and piloted by their past actions move about (afloat) in the sky, similarly, the host of these heavenly luminaries which are *jivas* which are favoured with those shining bodies by the union of matter and spirit and whose velocities (and directions of motions) are controlled by their past actions, do not fall to the ground.

4. Some persons describe this system of heavenly luminaries as being supported by the mystical Yogic powers of Lord Vāsudeva who has assumed the form of a Gangetic porpoise.

5. The Pole-star is located at the end of the tail of this porpoise that lies coiled with its head downward. (Just below it) on the tail are located the four stars called Prajāpati (the sage Kaśyapa) Agni (the Fire-god), Indra (the King of gods) and Dharma (the presiding deity of righteousness). At the root of the tail, are fixed the star, Dhātā and Vidhātā, and the Seven Sages (the *Ursa Major*) on the hip; on the right side of its body which coils from left to right are located the fourteen constellations of Stars (from *Abhijit* to *Punarvasu* which mark the northern course (*Uttarāyaṇa*) and the fourteen constellations marking the Southern Course (*Dakṣiṇāyana*)—viz. from the *Puṣya* to *Uttarāṣāḍhā*—are located on its left side. This is just like the porpoise whose coiled body has equal number of members on its either side. (He mentions further details of the positions of the constellations:). On its back is the Ajavīthī (the group of constellations called Mūla, Pūrvāṣāḍhā and Uttarāṣāḍhā) and the heavenly Ganges (the Milky Way) is at its belly.

6. (The constellations) *Punarvasu* and *Puṣya* are located on its right and left loins; *Ārdrā* and *Āśleṣā* on its right and left

hind-legs; *Abhijit* and *Uttarāṣāḍhā* on its right and left nostrils; *Śravaṇa* and *Pūrvōṣāḍhā* at its right and left eye respectively while *Dhaniṣṭhā* and *Mūla* are at its right and left ears. (The group of) eight constellations beginning from *Maghā*, which mark the Southern Course (*Dakṣiṇāyana*) are located on the ribs of its left side while the eight constellations from *Mṛgaśīrṣa* (the Orion) and others marking the northern course (*Uttarāyaṇa*) are on its ribs on its right side, but in the reverse order (i.e. from *Pūrvābhādrapadā* to *Māgaśīrṣa*). One should locate the remaining two, viz. *Śatabhiṣā* or *Śata-tārakā* and *Jyeṣṭhā* on its right and left shoulders.

7. (One should locate) the star *Agasti* on its upper chin and (the star called) *Yama* on its lower chin; the Mars in the mouth and the Saturn on its generative organ and the Jupiter on its hump, the Sun on its chest and *Nārāyaṇa* at the heart; the Moon in the mind; the Venus in the navel, the pair of Aśvinīkumāras on the nipples (of its chest), the Mercury in its inhalation and exhalation, (the shadow-planet) Rāhu at the throat and Ketus at all members of the body and the (remaining) stars all over the hairs of its body.

8. This is verily the manifestation of the form of glorious Lord Viṣṇu consisting of all gods. Silently and with concentration of mind one should watch it every evening and adore it with the following Mantra :

"We bow to the Supreme Personage, the Lord of all gods, (who assumed the form of) the Time Wheel, the support of all heavenly bodies, We meditate upon him."

9. This form of the Supreme God embodying all planets, constellations of stars and other heavenly luminaries washes off the sins of those who repeat the above Mantra three times (morning, mid-day and evening) a day. The sin committed in the past, present and future of a person who bows to him or remembers him three times a day is destroyed immediately.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

(Rāhu's Position and the Subterranean Regions)

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. According to some (experts in *Śāstras*) at a distance of ten thousand *Yojanas* below the Sun, Rāhu makes his revolution like a lunar mansion. Though himself a wretched Asura, a son of Simhikā, it was through the grace of the Lord that he attained the status of a planet, even though he did not deserve it. We shall describe his birth and deeds later on (in the VI and VIII Skandhas), Oh child.

2. They say that the sphere of the burning Sun is ten thousand Yojanas and that of Rāhu, thirteen thousand Yojanas. Rāhu continues to entertain a grudge against the Sun and the Moon since their interruption (in his opportunity of drinking nectar by exposing his demonic identity), and attacks them on full-moon and new-moon days.

3. Having come to know of it, the venerable Lord has deployed his favourite missile called Sudarśana by the sides of them both. Rāhu stands for a period of Muhūrta facing the discus of irresistible blazing splendour which constantly revolves round them (the Sun and the Moon). Overcome with sorrow, trembling with his heart full of fear, he goes back even from a distance. It is this occurrence that people call an eclipse.

4. Below that (region of Rāhu), at a distance of the same (ten thousand) Yojanas, lie the regions of Siddhas, Cāraṇas (Heavenly singers) and Vidyādharas (celestial artists).

5. Below these is the space serving as a sporting ground of the hosts of Yakṣas, demons, goblins, spirits (*pretas*) and ghosts. It ext ..ds downwards to the level where the wind blows or the clouds are met with.

6. Below that, at a distance of one hundred yojanas lies this earth up to the height to which the prominent birds such as swans, vultures, hawks, eagles and others are soaring.

7. Description of the earth with respect to its situation and arrangement (of its continents etc.) has already been

given (to you). Below the earth there are seven sub-terranean regions, each at a distance of ten thousand *Yojanas* from the other, and equally so (ten thousand *Yojanas*) in length and breadth. (Their names are :) Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala and Pātāla.

8. In these subterranean regions are veritable heavens. Therein reside Daityas, Dānavas and Serpents (sons of Kadrū) in extremely rich mansions, gardens, parks and play-grounds which surpass the heavenly world in their exuberance of sensuous enjoyments, affluence, joy and richness. They are householders whose affectionate wives, children, relatives, friends and servants always enjoy a highly delightful life. Their desires are never thwarted even by the lord of gods. They divert themselves with their skills in Māyā (miraculous powers).

9. Oh great King! Maya, (the architect) of miraculous powers has built cities in these regions. They (the cities) shine resplendent with wonderful mansions, defence-walls, gates, town-halls, temples, big quadrangles and houses constructed with excellent precious-stones of various types, and with palatial buildings of the lords of these subterranean regions, the terraces of which are teeming with couples of Nāgas (serpents) and Asuras (demons) and with pigeons, parrots and *sārikās*.

10. The gardens thereof also superbly excel the splendour of the land of gods, with their glorious beauty, giving delight to minds and senses :—Beauty of trees embraced by tender creepers, the branches of which (trees) are weighed down with clusters of flowers and fruits and lovely foliage of ponds and lakes full of translucent waters teeming with couples of various species of birds; (these are charmingly vocal) with the varied sweet warblings of birds that have made their homes in the beds of lilies, lotuses, Kalhāra—blue and red lotuses—and lotuses with hundred petals, in the water of those lakes (etc.) when they (waters) get agitated by the leaping of fishes—all these provide feast to one's senses.

11. It is said that here (in this netherworld) no fear is noticed (to have been caused) due to the divisions of time such as day and night.

12. The crest jewels on the hoods of great serpents dispel all the darkness there.

13. Due to the intake of herbs, saps, elixirs, food, drinks and bath of miraculous efficacy, the inhabitants of these regions do not suffer from mental worries and physical ailments. They are immune from wrinkles, grey hair and old age. Nor are they affected by paleness of body complexion, bad bodily odour, perspiration, fatigue, nervousness or bodily changes due to age (from childhood to old age).

14. These blessed souls have no fear of death from any source except from the Lord's power, called the discus (Sudarśana), the Lord's might.

15. When it (Sudarśana) enters those regions the embryos in the wombs of Asura women are miscarried or aborted through sheer terror.

16. Now in region called Atala resides the demon Bala, the son of Maya. The learned say that he has verily created ninetysix varieties of Māyā (magical tricks) sbme of which are still practised by jugglers. As he yawned, three groups of women—*svairiṇīs* (who enter into sexual intercourse with men of their caste), *kāminīs* (who copulate with men not belonging to their caste) and *Puṁścalīs* (the most fickle minded of the Kāminī group)—came forth from his mouth. They administer a liquid preparation called *Hāṭakarasa* to a man who enters their subterranean region and make him sexually capable. They give him amorous pleasure at their will indeed, by their sportive seductive smiles, lovely conversations, embraces, etc. When the elixir is imbibed, the man feels that he is a veritable god endowed with mystical powers and possessing the physical strength of ten thousand elephants. He goes aboasting like one mad (blind) with intoxication.

17. Below that (*Atala*), in the subterranean region called Vitala, dwells god Śiva, designated as Lord Hāṭakeśvara, surrounded by his retinue, the legions of goblins. With the object of multiplying the creation of Prajāpatis (proginators) he, under the name Bhava (the procreator), remains united with his divine consort, Bhavānī (Pārvatī). From him has issued the great river called *Hāṭakī* which is charged with the energy of them both. There, the Fire kindled by Wind, drinks

vigorously that water of the river. What is spit out by Fire is the gold called *Hāṭaka*. Males and females in the harem of the kings of Asuras wear that gold in the form of ornaments.

18. Below that (*Vitala*), in the region called *Sutala*, lives (the demon king) Bali, the son of Virocana of wide fame and hallowing renown. He was deprived of his sovereignty over the three worlds by Lord Viṣṇu who, with a desire to oblige the great god Indra, was born of Aditi and approached Bali, in the form of a dwarf celibate (*Brahmacārin*). It was by the Lord's grace that he was accommodated here, and is again blest with overflowing wealth and prosperity not possessed by Indra and others. Immune from all fears he even now continues to propitiate the most adorable Lord by performing his righteous duties.

19. It is not at all the direct result (fruit) of the donation of land (viz. three worlds) that Bali was blest with the sovereignty and fortune in the subterranean world : the gift that was duly given with absolute faith and devotion, with utmost reverence and perfectly serene mind to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Soul, the principle of life and the inner controller of all species of living beings, the holiest and the most worthy recipient who has ever approached. Bali's donation was thus a gate-way directly leading to liberation (*Mokṣa*).

20. (The learned sages say) that if a person who while losing his control (and becoming helpless or unconscious) utters but once his name while sneezing, falling or tumbling down or in any such condition, he instantaneously cuts asunder the bonds of Karma, for removing which people desirous of attaining to the Final Beatitude, try various other means (except remembrance of his name and are not successful).

21. The sovereignty, prosperity etc. which implies mere worldly pleasure—*viṣayānanda*—cannot be the fruit of the bestowal of the Land, viz. three worlds on the Lord as it was given to the Lord as being his own Self—the Lord who is the Self of all beings and who dedicates his own Self to his devotees and to those who have realized him.

22. As a matter of fact, the Lord has not really confer-

red any favour on him[252] (i.e. Bali). He extended to him sovereignty, pleasures of senses which are of illusory nature and which, on the contrary, deprive him of the constant remembrance of Himself. (But Viṣṇu's presence near him as a door-keeper is the real fruit).

23. It is quite well-known that when it was found by the Lord that there was no other alternative (to deprive Bali of his sovereignty of the three worlds), He adopted the pretext of begging (three paces of land for sacrifice). When Bali was deprived of the sovereignty of three worlds (and had nothing with him) except his body, and was securely bound down with the cords of Varuṇa and was thrown into a mountain-den, he (Bali) actually exclaimed the following words:

24. "It is a pity that Indra, learned as he is, is certainly incapable of knowing his real interests—This Indra who has appointed the sage Bṛhaspati as an advisor to counsel him in all matters, ignored him[253], and instead of requesting for the service of the Lord (Upendra) begged for himself through the Lord (Vāmana or Upendra) my blessings viz., the sovereignty of the three worlds. (When the Lord is pleased, he is to be sought and not the worthless kingship of three worlds). Of what value is this Lordship of three worlds which terminates at the end of a *manvantara* which is quite an insignificant part of Time which is of infinite duration.

25. (Only my grand-father Prahlāda knew his real interest) for though after his father's (Hiraṇyakaśipu's) death, he was offered by the Lord (*Nṛsiṁha*) the throne of his father which had no danger from any quarters (then), my grand-

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252. *amuṣya*—this vague pronoun has confused the commentators. VC., VD., GD. think that this implies Indra and the translation will be : "Nor did the Lord confer any real favour on Indra, for he extended to him.....himself". Though ŚR. mentions no name after *amuṣya*=*amum* "him", his quotations from Parāśara.

Vāsudeve mano yasya japa-homārcanādiṣu /
tasyāntarāyo Maitreya, Devendratvādikam phalam //

probably hints at Indra which VD., VC., SD., GD. endorse. I think that in the present context *amuṣya* refers to Bali as interpreted by VR., J.G., & BP. as it is a continuous discussion about Bali. I however concede that *amuṣya*=Indra is not impossible though rather out of context.

253. VD. : Even that Bṛhaspati is not clever inasmuch as he did not advise Indra properly and etc.

father (Prahlāda) preferred his service only to the throne as he knew that it was something different from the Lord.

26. He (Prahlāda) was a noble Soul while a person like me has his passions unsubsided, nor is blessed with the grace of the Lord. How can such a person hope to approach the path trodden by him (Prahlāda)?''

27. His (Bali's) history will be narrated to you in details later on (in the VIII Skandha). At his (Bali's) door, the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Preceptor of the whole world (who hence deserves to be adored and not to be made to stand guard), whose heart is full of compassion for his devotees, stands with a mace in his hand. (It was) by him that Rāvaṇa (the ten-headed demon) who came there in the course of his expedition of conquering all the quarters (of the world), was kicked away to a distance of ten crores of Yojanas, simply by his toe.

28. Below that region (*Sutala*), in *Talātala*, dwells the king of Dānavas, by name Maya, the Lord of three cities. His three cities having been burnt down by the venerable Lord Śiva (the destroyer of the enemy cities or of the demon Tripura), with the desire to bring about the happiness of three worlds, he secured this position through his (Śiva's) grace. This great master of all experts in magic is protected in every respect by the great god (Śiva) and hence, being free from the fear of Sudarśana (Viṣṇu's discus), he is greatly respected (by the inhabitants of Talātala).

29. Below that, in the subterranean region *Mahātala*, there lives the tribe of many-hooded serpents called *Krodhavaśa*. Their prominent members are Kuhaka, Takṣaka, Kāliya, Suṣeṇa and others, all possessing huge bodies. They, however, live in fear of Garuḍa (the over-Lord of kings of birds), the vehicle of the Supreme Person. It is on a few occasions that they sport in company of their wives, children, friends and members of their families.

30. Lower still, in *Rasātala*, there dwell the descendants of Diti and Danu (the two wives of Kaśyapa, the proginator), called Paṇis who are also known as Nivātakavacas, Kāleyas and the residents of Hiraṇyapura. These enemies of gods are from their very birth, very powerful and daring in spirit. They live

like reptiles in holes as their arrogance of power is subdued only by the refulgent discus Sudarśana of the glorious Lord Hari whose majestic splendour spreads over all worlds. It is traditionally learnt that they are afraid of Indra due to the Vedic text uttered by the female dog, Saramā, the messenger of Indra[254].

31. Still lower down is the region called Pātāla. With Vāsuki as their king, there reside the chiefs of the Nāga (Serpent) race like Śaṅkha, Kulika, Mahāśaṅkha, Śveta, Dhanañjaya, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Śaṅkhacūḍa, Kambala, Aśvatara and others possessing extensive hoods and extremely impetuous by temperament. It is reported that the big effulgent crest jewels on the hoods of serpents possessing five, seven, ten, hundred and thousand heads, dispel by their splendour the mass of darkness in the hollow of the nethermost world (*Pātāla*).

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

(*Description of Saṅkarṣaṇa—the Serpent Śeṣa*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. At the lowest extreme below Pātāla, at a distance of thirty thousand *Yojanas*, abides a part-manifestation of the Lord which is dominated by the *Tamas* only. It is also well-known as Ananta. Followers of the Sātvata School call it Saṅkarṣaṇa as, being characterised by ego and presiding over by 'I'-ness, it brings about the unification between the subject (the Seer) and the object (the seen).

2. This terrestrial globe, supported on one out of the thousand heads of the Lord who manifested himself as Ananta, appears like a mustard seed.

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254. ŚR. mentions the Vedic legend that when the Paṇis stole the cows and concealed them under water, Indra sent the female dog Saramā to trace them. She discovered them but when Paṇis tried to have a treaty type of understanding with her, she cursed them : *Hatā Indreṇa Paṇayaḥ Śayadhvam*—"Oh Paṇis ! Lie down (dead) slain by Indra !"

3. It is said that when He desires to withdraw (destroy) this world at the (predestined) time, from between his agitated eyebrows knit in wrath, yet charming, was manifested Rudra (god of destruction) called Saṅkarṣaṇa (one born of Saṅkarṣaṇa). He manifested his eleven forms, each three-eyed and holding a trident.

4. When the kings of serpents along with prominent devotees (Sātvatas) bow down with intense and unswerving devotion (his feet), they certainly look with an overjoyed mind, their most attractive faces with cheeks beautified with the splendour of their refulgent ear-rings, in the reddish, spherical nails, shining like rubies, on his pair of lotus-like feet.

5. Seeking blessings from him only, they say, that unmarried Nāga princesses besmear with pigment of *aguru*, sandal wood and saffron, his bright, long, fair-complexioned, beautiful, charming arms like silver-pillars, beautifully set up in the sphere of his beautiful body. Their minds being agitated with the touch of his body, they put on winsome smiles as the god of Love stealthily enters their hearts. They really cast bashful glances at his lotus-like face as his reddish eyes swim with inebriation and cast a merciful glance at them.

6. He is that very glorious Lord Ananta, the ocean of infinite excellences, the primeval Deity. Restraining the vehemence of His impetuosity and wrath (as it is inappropriate and unnecessary for the maintenance of the worlds), he abides for the well-being of all the worlds.

7. He is being contemplated upon by hosts of gods, demons, reptiles (Nāgas), Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and sages. Due to continuous exhilaration under intoxication his eyes were swimming restlessly. He was giving delight (lit. feeding) the leaders of His attendants and gods with his nectar-like winning speech. Clad in blue garments and wearing only one ear-ring, he has placed his blessed, beautiful hand on the top of (his special weapon) the plough. Just as the majestic elephant (Airāvata) of the great Indra is decorated with a girth of gold, the glorious Lord of gracious and beneficient deeds wears his *Vanamālā* (a wreath of forest flowers) called *Vaijayantī*[255], the

255. *Vaijayantī* wreath consists of the shoots of the *Tulasī* (Basil) plant, flowers of *Kunda*, *Mandāra*, *Pārijāta* and lotuses.

charm and gracefulness of which was heightend with the melodious humming of the bees inebriated with the sweet scented honey of fresh and new Tulasī blossoms of unfading beauty.

8. When this (Saṅkarṣaṇa) (as traditionally described by one's spiritual guide) is listened to and meditated upon, he enters the hearts of those who seek Liberation (from Saṁsāra). He instantly cuts asunder the knot of ignorance (avidyā), fored at (his devotee's) heart, due to the impressions created in the sub-conscience by the beginningless *karmas* and consisting of the attributes (or modes of Prakṛti) viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The venerable sage Nārada, the son of god Brahmā, accompanied by Tumburu (the famous celestial singer), described (in a musical composition his glorious prowess, in the assembly of god Brahmā.

9. Who can comprehend the way[256] (the truth) of the Lord (who is Brahmā himself)—the Lord by whose glance (i.e. desire to create) *sattva* and other attributes of Prakṛti[257] which are respectively the cause of the creation, preservation and destruction (of the universe) became capable (of executing their function); whose form is eternal (infinite) and beginningless, for One as he is, he contains in himself the universe characterised by many-ness.

10. Out of unlimited grace for us, he assumed a form consisting of (pure) *sattva* unalloyed with *rajas* and *tamas*, wherein appears the unmanifest and manifest[258] universe. The Lord who possesses unbounded energy like a lion, exhibited his faultless sports (e.g. creation of the universe etc.) for attracting the minds of his devotees.

Tulasī-Kunda-Mandāra-Pārijātāmbujais tu yā
Pañcabhir grathitā mālā Vaijayantīti kathyate ||

256. *vartman*—(i) The truth about—ŚR.
(ii) The working of—VJ.
(iii) The reality about or the way of attaining to—VC., GD.

257. VR., BP. note that the factual order implied herein is *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas* as the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe are mentioned in a series in the text.

258. *Sadasad* (*idam*) : (i) Intelligent and unintelligent—VR.
(ii) Subtle and gross—VJ.
(iii) Manifest and unmanifest.

11. Even if a person either in distress or fallen from the righteous path accidentally or in joke utters his name as heard (from the spiritual teacher or any other person), he instantly annihilates completely the sins of (other) men. Hence to whom else than the glorious Lord Śeṣa, will a man desirous of Liberation, resort ?

12. On one of the heads of the thousand-headed Lord lies like an atom, the terrestrial globe with all its mountains, rivers, seas and the living beings (inhabiting it), owing to the infiniteness of the immeasurable and innumerable exploits of the Almighty Lord, who can, even if endowed with a thousand tongues, hope to count completely all his herioc acts ?

13. Of such prowess is the glorious Lord Ananta. His energy and excellent attributes and potencies are limitless. Unsupported by anyone else, he stays at the bottom of the earth bearing it easily for the preservation and wellbeing of the entire creation.

14. These are, verily, the regions to be attained to by people desirous of enjoying pleasures. These are created to accord with their respective *karmas*. These are described to you as it was traditionally taught to me (by my preceptor).

15. Oh King! I have described to you according to your queries, these various, high and low regions attained by men as a fruit of the *karmas* performed by them. On what other topic should I discourse now?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

(*Description of Hells*)

The King enquired:

1. Oh great Sage! How is it that there is such a diversity (in regions attained to by people) in the word?

The Sage (Śrī Śuka) replied:

2. The courses (and results) of *karmas* are varied according to the faith of the performer of the action which

differs according to the (dominance of) particular mode of *Prakṛti* (e.g. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) influencing him.[259] All these are attained (at different times) by everyone (in more or less degree according to the influence of a particular *guṇa*).

3. Thus in the case of perpetrators of unrighteous atcs of a prohibited character, the fruits according to them are of dissimilar nature according to the variety of the faith of the perpetrator. Now we shall describe in details (some prominent states out of) the thousands of hellish states which are the results of the (commission of) prohibited sinful acts committed by those who indulge in desires (of various kinds) due to the influence of *avidyā* (ignorance) dominating them from time immemorial.

The King asked:

4. Are the infernal regions some particular parts of this world ? Or are they somewhere outside the worlds or are they somewhere in the space inside these worlds ?

The Sage (Śrī Śuka) replied:

5. They (the infernal regions) are within the three worlds. They lie in the Southern direction below the earth and above the waters. And in this direction reside the groups of Pitṛs (manes) called Agniṣvātta and others. Meditating on God with utmost concentration, they continue to invoke auspicious blessings on their descendants.

6. It is reported that it is really true that the venerable, king of the manes (*pitṛ*), Yama (son of the Sun-god) who never violates any command of the Lord, dwells here along with his retinue. And to the departed souls brought to his region by his messengers he inflicts punishments in proportion and according to the gravity of the sin committed.

7. Some learned have enumerated that there are twentyone—hellish regions. Oh King, I shall now serially describe them to you according to their name, form (or function) and character (nature of the sin expiated.) They

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259. Cf. the characteristics of the *sāttvic*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa* acts (BG. 18.23-25) and the three types of the performers of acts (BG. 18. 26-28).

are as follows: Tāmisra, Andha-tāmisra, Raurava, Mahā-raurava, Kumbhī-pāka, Kāla-sūtra, Asipatra-vana, Sūkara-mukha, Andha-kūpa, Kṛmi-bhojana, Sandaṁśa, Tapta-sūrmi, Vajra-kaṇṭaka-śālmalī, Vaitaraṇī, Pūyoda, Prāṇa-rodha, Viśa-sana, Lālābhakṣa, Sārameyādana, Avīci and Ayaḥ-pāna. Moreover, (there are seven in addition) viz., Kṣāra-kardama, Rakṣogaṇa-bhojana, Śūlaprota, Daṇḍaśūka, Avaṭa-nirodhana, Paryāvartana and Sūcimukha. These twentyeight infernal regions are the places where (*jīvas* are subjected to) tortures of various kinds.

8. The person who takes away another person's wealth, children or wife, is certainly bound down with mortal cords of death and is forcibly hurled into the Tāmisra hell by the terrible servants of Yama. In that hell of utter darkness, the being is subjected to various kinds of torment such as denial of food and water, belabouring with cudgels, holding out threats, and ultimately overcome with torment he instantaneously drops down unconscious.

9. In the same way, a person who enjoys the wife (property etc.) of another person by deceiving him, is thrown into the Andhatāmisra hell. Here the embodied being who is subjected to tortures loses his sight and consciousness due to torments, just like a tree the roots of which are being cut down. Hence they call this hell 'Andha-Tāmisra' due to its blinding effect.

10. Verily, he who wrongly identifies his body with his Soul and regards his wealth (wife etc.) as his own and every day contributes to the nourishment and comforts of his family by maliciously treating other beings, falls, after leaving his body etc. in this world, into the Raurava hell due to the sin (perpetrated in his malicious dealings).

11. The creatures which have been tortured and killed by him in this world, are born in the world as Rurus and while he (their murderer) undergoes torments inflicted by Yama, kill him in the same way (as done to them by him). *Ruru* is the name of a creature much more cruel than a serpent. Hence this hell is called Raurava.

12. Similar is the hell called Mahāraurava. He who is given solely to the nourishment of his body by any unscru-

pulous means etc.) enters this hell. Here the Rurus are *Kravyādas* (carnivorous, flesh-eaters) which kill him for the sake of his flesh.

13. In the hell, called Kumbhīpāka, the servants of Yama fry in boiling oil that hard-hearted man who cooked living beasts or birds in this world and was censured for his cruelty even by cannibals (or demons).

14. He who bears malice towards his parents, Brāhmaṇas and the Vedas is hurled into the hell called Kālasūtra. It is a plain of a copper-sheet ten thousand *Yojanas* in area. The sheet of copper is heated by fire from below and the Sun from above. The creature is being burnt within and outside his body by hunger-thirst. Due to restlessness, he sometimes sits, sometimes lies down and rolls and sometimes stands up and begins to run about. Thus he suffers for as many thousand years as there are hair on a beast's body.

15. They (servants of Yama) throw in the hell called *Asipatravana* (a forest of trees with sword-like leaves) a person who, while in this world, abandons his Vedic way of life even when there was no calamity and embraces a heretic sect. They strike him with a whip. And while he runs hither and thither (to avoid whipping), all the limbs of his body are cut down by the two-edged sword-like leaves of the palm trees thereof. Crying with excruciating pain, "Alas ! I am killed", he falls in a swoon at every step. A renegade from one's own faith he reaps the fruit (punishment) suitable for the sin of embracing a heretic creed.

16. In this world, verily, a king or a king's servant inflicts punishment on those who did not deserve it (being innocent), or subjects a Brāhmaṇa to corporal punishment, that sinful fellow falls into the hell Sūkaramukha in the next world. While his limbs are being crushed with very powerful hands like a sugarcane (in a crusher) in this world, he laments in a piteous tone and sometimes he becomes unconscious like innocent persons confined in jail by him (while) in this world.

17. But a person whose course of life in this world is prescribed by God and who is capable of understanding agony caused to others, causes pains to creatures whose feeding upon

human bodies is determined by God but which are incapable of being aware of causing pains to others, falls into the hell *Andhakūpa*. He is hated and troubled there by beings like beasts, deer, birds, reptiles, mosquitos, lice, bugs, flies and others. Being harassed on all sides in the darkness, his sleep and mental peace are disturbed. Being devoid of rest, he wanders in darkness even as the *jīva*, the embodied soul, lives restlessly in a diseased body.

18. A person who, without performing five daily great sacrifices[260] (prescribed for a householder) eats whatever comes to his lot without sharing that with others (stranger-guests, his elders, dependents etc.) is spoken of as (comparable to) a crow. After his death, he falls in the most wretched hell called *Kṛmibhojana*. There he is born as a worm in a pool of worms, of hundred thousand Yojanas in extent. Being himself preyed upon by worms, he continues to feed himself on worms. He who thus enjoys his earnings without offering (a portion of it) to others or to gods, subjects himself to these torments for as many years (one hundred thousand) as the Yojanas of the extent of that hell or till his sin is expiated.

19. He who, in this world, without being in (a justifiable) emergency or calamity, steals or robs by force the gold, jewels etc, of a Brāhmaṇa or of any other person, gets the skin of his body cut with red-hot iron balls or tongs by the servants of Yama in the other world, Oh King.

20. To a man who indulges in a sexual intercourse with a woman whom he should not have approached or to a woman who does so with a man unworthy of such an approach, the

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260. The following are the 'great sacrifices' enumerated in the *Manu-smṛti* 3.70-71 :

(1) *Brahma-yajña*—Propitiation of ancient seers-ṛṣis by teaching and learning of the Vedic lore

(2) *Pitṛ-yajña*—Propitiation of one's forefathers by offering libations of water or *Pitṛ-tarpaṇa*.

(3) *Deva-yajña*—Propitiation of gods by offering oblations in sacrificial fire.

(4) *Bhūta-yajña*—Offering a portion of one's meals to sub-human creatures.

(5) *Nṛyajña*—Sharing one's food with a stranger who by chance comes to the door for food or shelter (*atithi-pūjana*).

servants of Yama lash them with a whip and make the man or woman embrace the red-hot iron image of that woman or man respectively.

21. He who (indiscriminately) indulges in sexual intercourse with all (including sub-human beings) is placed on a silk-cotton tree with thorns of adamants in the hell (called *Vajra-kaṇṭaka Śālmalī*) in the next world, and is dragged (down on those thorns).

22. Those persons who are born as Kṣatriyas or officers of king who are of noble descent (and have joined the heretic sect) transgress the bounds of religion, fall into the (river) Vaitaraṇī after death. Those transgressors of the restrictions (laid down) in religion are being bitten (eaten) by the aquatic animals of that river which forms the moat of the infernal regions. They are not disunited with the Soul but are sustained with life by their sins. Remembering the result of their sin, they continue to be tormented in the river which carries a flood of excretion, urine, pus, blood, hair, nails, bones, fat, flesh and marrow.

23. Those who (though born in higher caste but) keep low-caste women, neglect purity, righteous conduct and self-discipline and shamelessly lead a beastlike life, fall after their death in (the hell called *Pūyoda* which is) a sea full of pus, excretion, urine, phelgm and dirt and eat nothing but these most detestable things.

24. The Brāhmaṇas and others who keep a pack of hounds and donkeys, find delight here in hunting and kill animals on occasions other than those prescribed in the *Śāstras*, become, after death, targets of the discharge of arrows by the servants of Yama who pierce them with arrows (in the hell named *Prāṇa-nirodha*).

25. Verily those hypocrites who kill beasts in sham sacrifices in this world, fall in the *Vaiśasa* hell in the next world. There the Lords of that hell torture them and finally cut them to pieces.

26. The sinful twice-born (*dvija*) who, being blind with passion makes his wife of his own caste drink his semen, is thrown in the next world in a stream of semen (in the *Lālā-bhakṣa* hell) and is made to drink semen.

27. In this world the dacoits (who loot the property of others), perpetrators of arson and poisoning—be they kings or king's servants and soldiers—plunder villages or caravans of merchants, servants of Yama (in the form of) seven hundred and twenty hounds with teeth like adamant voraciously eat them up when they die (and enter the *Sārameyādana*).

28. Again, a person who utters any lie at the time of deposing evidence, money-transactions (e.g. barter, sale, purchase) or donating a gift, enters after death a supportless hell called *Avīcimat*. In that hell, he is hurled down headlong from a (steep) mountain top one hundred Yojanas in height to a place with rocky surface appearing as water. Hence, it is called *avīci-mat* (A place with hard surface but appearing like water with ripples). His body is shattered to very small pieces but he does not die. He is again taken up and hurled down.

29. If a Brāhmaṇa or his (Brāhmaṇa) wife or anyone who has taken a sacred vow, drinks wine through mistake or if a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya (who are not eligible to drink Soma) drink the Soma juice, they are taken to the hell (called *Ayaḥ-pāna*) where, the servants of Yama, pressing a foot on their bosom pour molten iron into their mouth.

30. If a person belonging to the lowest strata of the society does not duly pay respect to those that are superior in birth (heredity), performance of austerities, learning, righteous conduct, caste and stage of life, out of esteem for himself, he is as good as a dead (while alive). After death, he is hurled down with head downwards into the hell called *Kṣāra-kardama* where he is subjected to endless tortures.

31. (When) men who, in this world, verily propitiate (gods like Bhairava) by offering human sacrifice and the women eat the human victim so offered, the human beings so sacrificed become a battalion of demons (Rākṣasas) in the region of Yama (in the hell called *Rakṣo-gaṇa-bhojana*). There Rākṣasas torture their former slayers in many ways, cut them into slices with their axes like butchers, drink their blood, dance and sing merrily just as those who ate them (as human victims) did on the earth.

32. Those persons who, in this world, attract by means

of allurement innocent people in the forests or in villages and inspire confidence in them to come near and then torture them in various ways by transfixing them on an iron pike or by binding them with ropes even though they strongly desire to survive—such (cruel) persons after death, at the time of being tortured by Yama (in the hell called *Śālaprota*) are transfixed on iron pikes. When they are distressed with hunger and thirst, they are attacked and pecked on all sides by hellish birds like Kaṅka, Vaṭaka of sharp beaks. It is then they remember their own sins.

33. Those people who are of a ferocious nature like serpents, torment other beings in this world, they fall even after death in a hell called *Dandaśūka* where serpents with five and seven hoods (mouth) approach them and devour them like mice.

34. Those who actually confine living beings in dark holes, granaries or caves in this world, (the servants of Yama) in the other worlds shut them up into similar places (in the *Avaṭanirodhana hell*) full of poisonous fire and smoke.

35. A householder who in this world often gets angry with and looks with burning eyes at the guests who have arrived at his door, gets his sinful eyes forcibly plucked out by birds of adamantine beaks like vultures, crows, *kaṅka Avaṭa*.

36. If a person, in this world is proud of his wealth and full of egotism, looks askance at others and is suspicious about all, and if his heart and mouth are withered by the anxiety of the expenditure or loss of that wealth and if, without any peace of mind he guards his treasure like a goblin, after death he becomes transformed into a devil for he accumulates sin in earning, supplementing and preserving wealth. He falls into a hell called *Sūcīmukha*. There the servants of (Yama-) dharma, like tailors, stitch the body of this devil-like protector of wealth, on all sides.

37. Oh Protector of the earth ! There are hundreds and thousands of such and the like hells in the abode of Yama. Some of them have been described here and some are not. All persons following an unrighteous path, enter into them in due course. Similarly, those who follow (the path of) religion

enter elsewhere (in the heaven). They are again reborn to this world with some balance of sin and merit with them.

38. The path of *Nivṛtti* (cessation from worldly activities) has been propounded to you in detail at first[261]. Of this extent is the Brahmāṇḍa (egg-shaped universe) which is divided into fourteen regions in the Purāṇas. It is the grossest form of the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Person. It comprises of the attributes of his Māyā (viz. *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*). He who full of faith and devotion reads, listens to and recites to others this account as narrated by me, begets in him faith, devotion and pure intelligence and realizes the incomprehensible Supreme Self.

39. Having listened to the gross as well as the subtle form of the glorious Lord, a self-controlled person, after successfully concentrating the mind on the gross form, should gradually comprehend the subtle form by his intelligence.

40. Oh King ! In this way the disposition of the world with its divisions (*dvīpas*), sub-divisions (*Varṣas*), the rivers, mountains, the sky (aerial region), the seas, the nether-world, the subterranean regions, the quarters and the hells as well as the heavenly bodies and various regions have been described to you by me. It is the gross form of the Lord, the asylum of all species of beings.

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261. Viz. *Vaiśvānarah yāti* etc. in Supra 2.2.24—SR.

SIXTH SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

(The Story of Ajāmila)

The King (Parikṣit) said :

1. The path of cessation from *karmas* (*nivṛtti*) has been already described in detail, by your respectable self, in the beginning.[262] By that path, Brahmā (i. e. the region of Brahmā) is gradually attained through different stages[263] (such as passing through the abode of fire-god etc.). The Liberation is attained along with god Brahmā.

2. And (you have also described in detail)—the path characterised by worldly activities (*pravṛtti*), the object of which is to attain happiness in heaven and other pleasures which are themselves the product of *guṇas*[264] and which, in the case of *jīvas*, not disassociated with *Prakṛti*[265], results in constant re-embodiment of the *jīvas* for repeated enjoyments of such pleasures.[266]

3. The various infernal regions which are characterised by unrighteousness (as their cause) have been described in detail (in the fifth Skandha). And the first period of Manu, (presided over and hence) named after Svāyambhuva Manu, has also been described (in the fourth Skandha).

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262. *Vide Supra* 2.2.24 in *Vaiśvānaraṁ yāti* and 3.32.5 in *Ye svadharmān na druhyanti.*

263. *Karma-yoga* : (i) Through the path of action (*Karma*), knowledge (*Jñāna*) and devotion (*Bhakti*)—VR.

(ii) Remembrance of the Lord, visualization of the various members of the Lord's Person and visualization of the full divine form—VJ.

(iii) Birth in a good family, residence at a holy place, association with saintly persons (S.D.)

(iv) *dhyāna* (contemplation), *dhāraṇā* (concentration) and *samādhi* (realization of identity with Brahman.) GD.

264. *traiguṇyaṁ svargādisukhaṁ tadeva viṣayaḥ prāpyaṁ yasya—ŚR.*

265. *alīna-prakṛteḥ—avinaṣṭa prakṛti Sambandhasya/—VR.*

266. *guṇa-saṅgaḥ—bhogārthaṁ dehārambha-rūpaḥ (yo mārgaḥ)—ŚR.*

4-5. The dynasty of Priyavrata and Uttānapāda and the life-stories of (both of) those kings (have been narrated by you). You have also described the (division of the earth in important) island-continents (*dvīpas*), their subdivisions (*varṣas*), oceans, mountains, rivers, gardens, the disposition of this spherical earth with reference to its divisions, their special characteristics and dimensions and also those of heavenly bodies and subterranean regions, as they were created by the Almighty Lord.

6. Oh illustrious holy sage ! Now be pleased to explain in detail, the way which may save a man from falling into the infernal regions of various unbearable tortures.

Śri Śuka said :

7. If a man does not perform expiation (as prescribed in the *dharma śāstra*), in this very life, for the sin committed by him with his thought, word and deed, it is said that he definitely goes to the hellish regions after death. And those regions of severe tormentations have been described to your honoured self by me.

8. Hence, before one is overtaken by death and not incapacitated in body (or while one is not entangled in difficulties) one should immediately (after the commission of the sin), try to atone for the sin, with a controlled mind, according to the gravity or simplicity of the nature of the fault, just as a physician expert in diagnosis of the disease, promptly adopts remedies or dosage of the medicine (according to the nature of the disease).

The King said :

9. In spite of the full knowledge that (commission of) a sin is against his interest as evidenced by what he has seen (viz. punishment meted out by the king for an offence) and has heard (for example internment in hellish region as described in Purāṇas), he loses the control over himself, commits it repeatedly after the act of expiation. Hence (under these circumstances), how can there be any (real) expiation at all, if the tendency to commit sins, persists.

10. Sometimes he refrains from committing a sin; on

other occasions, he does it again. Hence, I think that the act of expiation is meaningless like the washing of an elephant (which besmears its body with dust again after washing).

Śrī Śuka said :

11. It is not laid down that there is the total and final annihilation of sin by the action of expiation (such as bodily mortification), for only the ignorant (i.e those who wrongly identify body with the Soul) are eligible for it. (But as the ignorance about the Soul and non-Soul—*avidyā*—is not dispelled, the particular sin may be atoned for, and the man again relapses into sinful ways). Knowledge (i.e. self-realization) alone is the real expiation (as it removes the ignorance—*avidyā* which is the real root-cause of the sin).

12. Just as diseases do not attack a person who eats only wholesome food, (on the contrary they recede gradually if they had already affected that person), a person who observes regular spiritual discipline (e.g. penance) becomes, step by step, eligible for the *summum bonum* (which annihilates sin and leads to realization of the self), Oh King.

13-14. Through concentration of the mind and sense-organs, practice of (eightfold) celibacy, the control of the mind and external organs, charitable gifts, truthfulness, purity (both bodily and mental), the vows of non-violence etc. and observances like *japa* (muttering the sacred syllable OM), the wise (who bear with equanimity the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain) who understand (real principles of) righteousness and are full of faith, rid themselves of the most grievous sin committed by thought, word or action, just as the fire destroys even a big cluster of bamboos.

15. Just as the Sun completely dispels the mist, a few persons absolutely devoted to Lord Vāsudeva, annihilate their sins thoroughly (from its very root of *avidyā*) merely through their unswerving devotion to the Lord (without performing penance etc. But the number of such devotees is scarce).

16. Oh King ! A sinner is not purified to that extent through performance of penance and expiatory acts as a person who has dedicated his life to Lord Kṛṣṇa (and regards Kṛṣṇa as

his last resort, without worrying over the punishment in hell) does so by rendering service to his devotees.

17. Certainly this path (of devotion) is the correct and the best one in this world, as it is blissful (annihilating all miseries), and quite safe (with no danger or fear from anything). Kindly-disposed and desireless devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa are found on this path (to help one in need, but there is nobody to do so in the paths of knowledge and action).

18. Oh King of Kings ! Performance of all acts of expiation do not thoroughly purify a person who has set his face against Lord Nārāyaṇa, even as all the rivers (taken together) cannot purify a pitcher of wine.

19. Those who have even once in their life here, set on the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, their mind which felt an attachment for (and not knowledge or complete comprehension of) his excellent qualities, have by this (very temporary attachment and devotion) performed all expiatory acts. And they never see Yama (god of death) or his servants with a noose in their hands, even in their dreams.

20. And on this topic, the learned one narrate (by way of illustration) this ancient legend consisting of a conversation between the messengers of Viṣṇu and those of Yama. Listen to it from me.

21. In (the city of) Kānyakubja (modern Kanauj), there lived a certain Brāhmaṇa called Ajāmila. He married a maid-servant and got polluted through his association with a female slave, and he neglected the pious way of life (including the religious duties prescribed for a Brāhmaṇa).

22. He maintained his family by adopting a reproachful way of life consisting of holding captives for ransom, gambling, committing frauds and thefts. That sinful fellow tortured creatures (before killing).

23. A long period consisting of eighty-eight years of his life thus elapsed in maintaining himself that way, and fondling the children of that Dāsa woman.

24. The old fellow (Ajāmila) had ten sons (by that woman). The youngest of them was a boy named Nārāyaṇa. He was extremely doted over by his parents.

25. He (Ajāmila) had set his heart on that sweet lisping child. The old man was highly delighted while witnessing the child's plays.

26. Bound by filial love for child, he used to feed it while he was eating, make it drink at the time of his drinking. In this way, the fool did not know that the hour of his death had arrived.

27. Thus, the ignorant Ajāmila led his life. When the time of death actually arrived, he thought of his young son called Nārāyaṇa.

28. (Then) he saw that three extremely terrible male figures with wry faces, and with the hair on their bodies standing erect, and with nooses in their hands, had come to take him away.

29. With his senses greatly agitated, he called out in a prolonged loud voice, his son named Nārāyaṇa who was absorbed in his play-things at a distance.

30. Having heard the repetition of the name of Lord Hari, their master, uttered by the dying man, the servants of Nārāyaṇa immediately rushed forward, Oh great King.

31. Angels of Viṣṇu (intercepted and) forcibly stopped the messengers of Yama who were dragging (the *jīva* of) Ajāmila, the husband of the maid-servant, from the interior of his heart.

32. Thus prevented (from carrying out their duty) the messengers of Yama demanded, "Who are you who thus defy the order of Yama, the god presiding over righteousness.

33. Whose servants are you ? Whence have you come ? Why do you prevent his being taken away ? Are you gods or demigods or are you some prominent Siddhas ?

34. (Please do not get offended for our ignorance about you). All of you have eyes like lotus-petals, wear yellow silken garments and are adorned with diadems, ear-rings and shining lotus garlands.

35. You are all in the full bloom of youth. All of you possess four beautiful arms. (Each of) you appears majestic with (your lustrous) bow, quiver, sword, mace (*gadā*), conch, discus and lotus.

36. By your personal splendour, you dispel darkness

from all quarters and out-shine the lustre of others. Why do you prevent us, the obedient servants of Yama, the protector of the moral law?"

Śrī Śuka said :

37. When the obedient servants (who execute the commands) of Lord Vāsudeva were asked thus by the messengers of Yama, they laughed heartily, and replied as follows to them, in a voice deep like the thunder.

The Messengers of Viṣṇu replied :

38. If you are really the executors of the orders of the King of Righteousness, tell us what is the true nature of righteousness and what is the distinguishing character of Dharma.

39. How (on what principles) is punishment given? What (who) is regarded as the proper object? Who deserve punishments? Whether all of them are punishable or some of them?

Servants of Yama replied :

40. What is ordained in the Vedas is *dharma* or righteousness. What is against the prescription of the Vedas is *a-dharma* (*un*-righteousness). We have heard it traditionally said that the Vedas are Nārāyaṇa incarnate and they, being the breath (flowing out naturally from the nostrils) of the Lord[267] are self-existent.

41. It is the Lord (Nārāyaṇa) by whom all these living beings which are constituted of the attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and which are severally discriminated and distinguished by their qualities (e.g. quiescence), designations (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya etc.), activities (study, teaching etc.) and forms (social classes, stages of life—*varṇas* and *āśramas*), are supported properly in his own Form (Being).

42. The Sun-god, the Fire-god, the Sky, the Wind-god, cows, the Moon-god, the twilights, days and nights, cardinal points, the presiding deities of Water and the Earth, Time and (the god) Dharma—all these are the witnesses (of the acts) of the embodied beings.

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267. Cf. *asya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam etad yad Ṛgvedaḥ* /

43. (Acts of) unrighteousness as evidenced by these is judged to be the proper reason for awarding punishment. All the perpetrators of (evil) actions deserve punishment according to the nature of their acts.

44. Oh sinless ones! Actions, meritorious or sinful are being done by active persons as they are associated with attributes (like *rajas*, *tamas*). For nobody invested with a body can be actionless.

45. The same person enjoys the fruit of the same sinful or a meritorious act in the next world in the same manner and to the same extent according to the manner and extent to which that (sinful or meritorious) act has been done by him in this world.

46. Oh great gods ! (As you know it by your omniscience) Just as here (in this world) there is found a three-fold variety[268] in living beings due to the diversity in the peculiar qualities (or mixtures of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* attributes exhibited in their pious, sinful or mixed acts), the same may be inferred about them in the next birth[269]. (Otherwise such a diversity cannot be explained).

47. Just as the present period of time is the index of the characteristics of the other periods that precede and follow it[270], similarly the present life (of human beings, prognostically) indicates the righteous and sinful actions committed in the past and (likely to be committed) in the future existences as well.

48* Staying in his own capital (Saṁyaminī), the god Yama-dharma clearly visualizes by his mental power, the pre-

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268. ŚR. states that this is the *arthāpatti* (circumstantial inference) to explain re-birth. He explains the three-fold variety as follows :

1) of quiet, ferocious or dull nature.

2) experiencing a happy, miserable or mixed type of life.

3) of righteous, vicious or mixed nature.

According to VJ., they are the best, worst and middle types of beings according to dominance of guṇas—*sattva*, *tamas* and *rajas*.

269. In the next world.—VR.

270. Just as the present season, e.g. the spring indicates the characteristics regarding flowers, fruits etc. of the past and future Spring-seasons.—ŚR., VJ.

*(i) ŚR. : The Inner Controlling Self (*antaryāmin*) staying in the city in the form of body etc.

(ii) VR. thinks that this verse refers to the Supreme Soul who stays as *antaryāmin*.

(iii) VJ. : Lord Nārāyaṇa staying in the body of the living beings, sees the past and future form, as also the merits and sins of the *Jīva*.

vious form (e.g. god, sub-human being or the merits, sins etc.) of the *jīva* (departed Soul), and deeply reflects what the *jīva's* future state should be, by his reasoning capacity; for his Lordship is omniscient like god Brahmā.

49. Just as a sleeping person in the dream-state regards that he is identical with the body manifested in the dream, and does not know his body in the pre-dream state or the body to be assumed in the next dream, similarly the ignorant *jīva* conditioned by *avidyā* knows his present body as manifested by the actions of his previous existence and not the previous form assumed in the past incarnation nor the future body (of his future existence) due to the loss of memory of his past lives.

50. With five conative organs, the *jīva* carries out his (physical) functions (e.g. locomotion, exchange); with five cognitive senses, he perceives (knows) the five objects of senses. The single *jīva*, the seventeenth, combined with the sixteenth, i.e. the mind[271] experiences all alone, three-fold objects presented by the cognitive senses, conative organs and the mind.

51. This subtle-body (*liṅgam*) constituted of the sixteen parts (enumerated above) and possessing three potencies (of the attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) is beginningless. It continues to hold down a man in *saṁsāra* which gives him joy, grief, fear and sufferings.

52. The ignorant embodied being who has not subdued the group of six (viz. five cognitive senses and the mind is forced (by his subtle body) to perform actions despite his unwillingness. Like a silk-worm covering itself in its cocoon, he covers (entangles) himself in the net of *karmas* and fails to see the way out.

53. Verily, nobody can ever remain actionless even for a moment; for everyone is helpless and is forced to do some act by passions like attachments etc. born of (the three) attributes (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) which are the results of the impressions of past actions.[272]

(iv) SD. : It is the Supreme God (*Parameśvara*) abiding in the body yet unaffected by birth etc. connected with the physical body, dispenses the fruits of merits and sins through god Yama and he never interferes.

271. And the other fifteen constituents are the ten sense-organs, five subtle *bhūtas* forming the bases of objects of senses—ŚR.

272. This is *verbatim* the same as BG. 3.5

54. With *avyakta* (unmanifested destiny—*adṛṣta*) as the instrumental cause, the gross physical body and the subtle *liṅga-śarīra* are formed. According to the powerful impulses of the *jīva*, he becomes moulded like his mother's form or like his father's personality.

55. This contrary state of the *Puruṣa* (viz. involvement of the (*puruṣa* into *saṁsāra*, miseries suffered despite the Soul's blissful nature, due to his false identity with his body) was due to the contact with *Prakṛti*. It (this contact) dissolves completely within a short time through his devotion to God.

56. This (Ajāmila) was really studied in the Vedic lore; (was) the very abode of good nature, righteous conduct and virture; was a strict observer of vows, gentle, self-controlled truthful, master of mystical formulae, pure (both in mind and body).

57. He used to serve his preceptors, the sacred fire, the guests and elderly relatives advanced in age. He was untouched by pride (full of humility), a friend to all living beings, a man of few words; he was a saintly person, not jealous of anyone.

58. One day, this Brāhmaṇa who obediently used to carry out his father's orders, went to the forest. He returned therefrom taking with him fruits, flowers, sticks for sacrificial fire and *Kuśa* grass.

59-60. On his way back, he saw a certain shameless, libidinous Śūdra who had drunk wine (called *Maireya*—distilled from meal) in the company of a harlot whose eyes were also swimming due to intoxication. With that woman who was standing by him, with the knot of her *Sari* loosened (hence in a semi-naked condition), the shameless Śūdra was courting, and singing and joking nearby.

61. Seeing her embraced in arms which were erotically painted with unguents, Ajāmila was instantaneously infatuated and succumbed to passionate love.

62. Despite his attempts to control himself with all (the power of) his reasoning capacity and scholarship, he was unable to stabilize his mind and calm down his heart, which was agitated by the god of Love.

63. Being possessed by the devil in the form of passionate

desire for her, he lost (the balance of) his mind. Brooding over her in his mind, he desisted from performing his prescribed religious duties.

64. With his entire ancestral property, he tried to propitiate her by vulgar carnal pleasures (appealing to her) so that she may be pleased with him.

65. The sinful fellow whose judgment was paralysed by the side-glances of that wanton woman, soon abandoned his regularly wedded young Brāhmaṇa wife who was born in a good family.

66. This stupid fellow (after squandering his ancestral property) got money from any place, by fair means or foul, and maintained the family of this woman (now his housewife).

67-68. Inasmuch as this fellow violated all the Śāstric injunctions and led a licentious life censured by noble persons, and lived a sinful life for a long time in an impure condition and eating dirty (polluted by a harlot's touch) food, we (servants of Yama-dharma) shall therefore carry this sinner who did nothing for expiating his sins, to the presence of Yama (the god wielding the rod of punishment). There he will get purified through (undergoing the prescribed) punishment.

CHAPTER TWO

(Exposition of the Bhāgavata Dharma; Efficacy of the Lord's Name and Ajāmila's Ascension to Viṣṇu-loka)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having thus carefully heard the exposition addressed (to them) by the messengers of Yama, the angels of Lord Viṣṇu who were pastmasters in philosophy and ethics, replied to them, Oh King.

The messengers of Viṣṇu said :

2. Oh What a pity ! Injustice (or unrighteousness) influences the assembly of those who should see through (the real

nature of (righteousness. There, punishment is wrongly inflicted by these (custodians of righteousness) on persons who are not sinners and do not (hence) deserve it.

3. To whom can created beings go for a shelter, if injustice particularly enters into their fatherly protectors and teachers like rulers who are expected to be well-disposed, righteous and impartial?

4* Whatever a superior person does is emulated by other common people. Whatever he sets up as a standard or regards as an authority the masses (ordinary people) follow it.

5. A common man, like unto a brute, does not understand, of his own accord, what is righteousness and unrighteousness. Placing his head confidently on the lap (of a fatherly protector like Yama-dharma), he sleeps resting without any anxiety.

6. How is it proper that if the latter is really deserving of confidence of all beings and has some compassion (and scruples), he can be so treacherous to one who has completely surrendered himself in faith, and cherishes friendship, and is unaware (verging on unconsciousness).

7. That this man (Ajāmila), even in a helpless stage uttered the name of Hari which (not only expiates sins but) leads to the Final Beatitude, has atoned for all the sins committed by him even in crores of his past incarnations.

8. For, by the very act that he uttered the four syllables NĀ—RĀ—YA—ṆA (while calling his son 'Oh Nārāyaṇa come'), this sinner has already completely atoned for all his sins.

9-10** A thief, a wine-drinker, perpetrator of treachery to one's friend, a murderer of a Brāhmaṇa, one who violates his preceptor's bed (i.e. has illicit relation with one's preceptor's wife), the slayer of a woman, a king, a parent or a cow and other types of sinners—to all these sinners, the utterance of the name of Viṣṇu is the most effective expiation, for Lord's

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* A verbatim quotation from BG. 3.21.

** VR. and VC. write long discourses on the importance of God's name which may be read in the original. V.J. points out that the condition precedent is that the name of the Lord is to be uttered with ardent devotion.

mind gets attracted to the sinner uttering his name (or the sinner's mind is attracted to the Lord).

11. A sinner is not so thoroughly purified to that extent, by performing the expiatory acts and observances of vows prescribed by the masters of the Vedic lore (like Manu and others), as by the utterance of the mere syllables of the names of Hari (without adding 'I bow to'), as his name is suggestive of the excellences of the glorious Lord. (The effect of Lord's name does not exhaust and disappear immediately after dispelling the sin as is the case with the penances like *Kṛcchra* and *Cāndrāyaṇa*.[273]

12. For if the mind again runs (is attracted) to the evil path even after going through the process of expiation, that act of atonement is not thorough (in destroying sin). For those who desire to annihilate (the effects of) their (sinful) acts, repeatedly extolling the merits (by uttering the names) of Hari is the sure remedy, as it (actually) purifies the mind.

13. Hence, do not carry him (the *jīva* of Ajāmila) by the wrong way (the sinner's path leading to Yama's abode). He has completely expiated all his sins. (When even a syllable of the Lord's name is sufficient to annihilate all sins), he has uttered the complete name of the Lord when he was about to die (and there is no time and hence possibility of committing a sin after articulating the Lord's name).

14. (As to the objection that Ajāmila called his son and and not Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu's messengers explain). The experts in *Śāstras* say that utterance of the Lord's name even if taken to denote another person, or in a friendly joke or as an insertion during the recitation of a song, or in (an outward, apparent) disrespect[274], completely annihilates all sins.

15. If a person unconsciously (and involuntarily) utters the Lord's name (Hari or any other) while he falls, tumbles down, gets maimed, is bitten (by a serpent), heated (by fever etc.) and struck (by a stick), he does not deserve to be tormented in hell.

16. (Proportionately) heavy (difficult) and easy processes of atonement for sins of grievous and light natures have

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273. VC. adds—This is the omnipotence of the Almighty Lord.
274. But real disrespect for God's name is a great sin.

been thought over and laid down by the great sages (like Manu and other writers on the *Dharma-Śāstra*). (But there is no such differentiation in case of Lord's name, as by merely remembering Lord Viṣṇu, one is absolved of all sins).

17. Those (different kinds of) sins are washed away by the austerities, charitable acts, mutterings (of prayers or *mantras*) and such other (expiatory) processes. But the heart of the sinner (or the subtle residual forms of the sins called impressions or *saṁskāras*) are not thereby purified. Even that is achieved by the service of the feet of the Lord. (All the sins are annihilated by the very name of Hari, but *vāsanā* or the impressions unconsciously left on the mind by past actions are wiped out by the vision of Lord Viṣṇu—the Great Man etc.).

17a*. This Dharma, characterised by the repetition of the name of the Lord, is the highest and the ancientmost, and has been thus laid down. If practised, it purifies the mind day by day, like clothes washed on every day.

17b*. As the individual soul (*jīva*) has no independence in relation to the acts he performs, the expiatory acts cannot completely purify the *jīva's* mind (due to his dependence on God's will). Desisting from forbidden acts, he should therefore worship Hari by continuous singing and repetition of his name.

18. Irrespective of a man's knowledge or ignorance (about the efficacy and potentiality of the Lord's name for purifying thoroughly all the sins), if Lord Viṣṇu's name is sung or muttered repeatedly, it burns down all the sins of man, like fire (even though ignorantly thrown by a child on a heap of fuel) burns the fuel completely.

19. Just as a medicinal drug of the highest potency, even though taken by chance, without being aware of its efficacy, is bound to show its remedial effects, similarly the sacred formula (*mantra*) consisting of the Lord's name, even when muttered by chance, without knowing its highest purificatory power) shows its efficacy (in annihilating all sins). (Inherent power or potency does not require faith etc. in showing its efficacy).

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*17a & 17b are additional verses in VJ's text.

*19a. Oh messengers (of Yama)! If you still entertain any doubt about the righteousness (of this), you consult (enquire) with your Lord, for the glorious god Yama knows the most secrets of (what is the real) *Dharma*.

Śrī Śuka said :

20. Oh King! Having thus logically and convincingly explained the path of the Lord (the *Bhāgavata dharma*) and after liberating him (Ajāmila's *jīva*) from the noose of Yama, they (Viṣṇu's messengers) got him released from (the clutches of) Death.

21. The messengers of Yama who were thus (discomfited and) expelled, approached god Yama and faithfully reported the whole matter to King Yamadharma, Oh vanquisher of enemies!

22. Being completely extricated from the noose of Yama, the Brāhmaṇa overcame his fear, and became his own former normal self.[275] Feeling delighted at their sight, he bowed to the servants of Viṣṇu with his head.

23. Perceiving that he was desirous to speak to them, the servants of Lord Viṣṇu instantaneously disappeared on that very spot, while he (Ajāmila) was (simply) looking on, Oh sinless King.

24. Ajāmila also heard separately from the conversation of the messengers of Yama and of Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the (ritualistic) Dharma as propounded in three Vedas and based on *guṇas* (as the fruit of this Dharma, viz. celestial pleasures are a product of *guṇas*), and also the Pure Dharma pertaining to (and consisting of absolute devotion to) the Lord, and transcending the three *guṇas*.

25. Having heard the great glories of Lord Hari, he immediately conceived earnest devotion to the Lord. Remembering his evil past, he felt deeply remorsed.

26. "Alas! How extremely deplorable it was of me who could not subdue my (lower) Self, and procreating myself in the form of sons from a Śūdra woman, I have desecreted my Brahminhood.

* An additional verse in the text of VR. and VJ.

275. Resumed his previous pious way of life.—VJ.

27. Fie upon me who am condemned by good people as a sinful wretch, a dark stigma on my family—I who abandoned my virtuous young wife, and went to an unchaste wench given to drinking.

28. Alas! An ungrateful vile fellow that I am, I have forthwith deserted my supportless, poor, aged, afflicted parents who had no relative to protect them.

29. I, who am of that nature, shall obviously fall into that terrible-most hell wherein lustful violaters of the path of righteousness undergo tortures inflicted by Yama.

30. Was this a dream or was it a reality that I witnessed a miracle here? Where have the noose-bearers who dragged me (out of my body) today, gone now?

31. Again, where have gone those four beautiful-looking Siddhas (demi-gods) who released me while I was being taken noose-bound, down to the subterranean (infernal) regions?

32. In spite of my being a wretched person (in this birth), there must have been some auspicious (deed done in previous birth) inasmuch as I had the vision of those foremost gods and due to which my mind feels serene and peaceful now.

33. Otherwise (but for such auspicious acts in my previous birth) the tongue of an impure, sinner like me who kept a Śūdra woman, could be capable of uttering, at the time of death, the name of Lord Viṣṇu.

34. Oh! What a contrast between a shameless rogue and a sinner like me! I have violated (destroyed) my Brāhmaṇahood and the auspicious name of the Lord 'Nārāyaṇa'.

35. Though I be such, I who have controlled my mind, cognitive and conative organs and breath, shall endeavour that way whereby I shall not plunge myself in the blinding darkness in the form of transmigration of the Soul.

36. Having freed myself from the bonds (for household and relatives) due to *avidyā* (wrong identification of the body with the Soul), lust (for enjoyment of pleasures) and actions (binding the doer to this world and the next), I shall be a friend to all beings, serene, friendly, compassionate and self-controlled.

37. I shall liberate myself who am completely possessed

by Lord's Māyā in the form of a woman (my Śūdra keep) by whom, wretched as I was, I was made to dance and play like a deer kept for amusement.

38. Having given up the notion of 'I' and 'mine' with reference to my body, (belongings, property etc.) and with my thought concentrated on the real substance, I shall fix my mind on the Lord. My mind has been purified by singing of the name of the Lord (and other modes of *bhakti*)."

Śrī Śuka said :

39. In this way, through a moment's association with the pious (servants of Viṣṇu), he felt a thorough aversion to worldly life (and its pleasures) and freeing himself from all ties (to his mistress, children and property), he proceeded to Gaṅgādvāra.

40. Settling down in that sacred place (the abode of God), he betook himself to (the path of) Yoga. He withdrew (from worldly pleasures) all his senses and organs, and concentrated his mind on the self.

41. Then, he dissociated his self from (the product of) the *guṇas* viz. the body, sense-organs etc., and by concentrating his mind, he fixed it on the Supreme Brahman, which is the essential form of the Lord and is the embodiment of consciousness, and bliss.

42. When his mind and intellect were thus (thoroughly) stabilised in the Brahman, the Brāhmaṇa visualized before him those very male figures (messengers of Viṣṇu), and recognizing them as those as having been seen before, he stood up and bowed down his head (to pay respect).

43. After that vision, he cast off his body at the sacred place (Haridvāra) in the Gaṅgā and immediately assumed the (angelic) form of the attendant of the Lord.

44. Along with the servants of Lord Viṣṇu, the Brāhmaṇa ascended the heavenly car made of gold and proceeded through heavens to the abode of the Lord of Śrī (i.e. Viṣṇu).

45. (Ajāmila), the husband of the maid-servant (of a low caste), who had thereby deluged (violated) all religious duties and flouted his vows (of fidelity to his wife etc.) and had (thus) fallen from Brāhmaṇahood by his reprehensible acts (like stealing) and was consequently being hurled into the hell

(by Yama's servants), was released (from the noose of Yama) the very moment he uttered the name of the Lord.

46. There is no better efficacious remedy to cut down the roots of sin, for persons wishing *Mokṣa* (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*) than the continuous chanting of (the glories and) the name of the Lord of hallowing feet (god Viṣṇu). By having recourse to remembrance (and repetition) of the Lord's name, the mind is not attached again to acts (*karmas*); but by any other (expiatory) acts (except the chanting of the Lord's name) it becomes tainted with *rajas* and *tamas*.

47-48. He who listens with deep faith and reverence this esoteric legend which is capable of destroying (all) sins and he who devoutly recounts it (to others), never, verily, goes to hell, nor is even eyed by the servants of Yama. Howsoever inauspicious (and sinful) the mortal may have been (in this world) he is greatly honoured in the region of Viṣṇu.

49. By (merely) calling out the name of Hari addressed to his son at the time of his own death, (even a sinner like) Ajāmila attained to Lord Viṣṇu's abode. What should be said of a person who takes his name with faith and devotion. (He would certainly ascend to Viṣṇu's abode).

CHAPTER THREE

(Yama explains Viṣṇu's greatness)

The King asked :

1. What did the god Dharmarāja (Yama, the presiding deity of righteousness), to whose authority this world is subject, and whose order was thus flouted by the servants of Viṣṇu (Murāri) reply to his servants, on hearing their report of that incident ?

2. Oh Sage ! The quashing of the penalty or order of god Yama was never heard of at any time or from any person. It is my firm conviction, Oh Sage, that nobody else than you, can clear this doubt in the popular mind.

Śrī Śuka said (in reply):

3. Oh King ! The servants of Yama whose attempts (to execute Yama's order) were foiled by the messengers of Viṣṇu represented to their Lord Yama, the master of the city of Saṁyaminī.

Yama's messengers said :

4. Oh Lord ! How many controllers are there of the world of living beings who perform three types of action (meritorious, sinful and mixed)? And how many are there who can dispense (lit. are the cause of the manifestation of) the fruits thereof ?

5. If there be a number of rulers invested with the powers to dispense justice (lit. wielding the rod of punishment) who would (i.e. nobody would) suffer death, i.e. the result of sin leading to hell or enjoy nectar (i.e. the fruit of merit conferring celestial happiness) [in case these rulers of the world disagree], and who would not suffer both, i.e., hell and heaven, (in case they agree, one condoning an act and conferring heavenly bliss, and the other condemning the same act and dispensing suffering in hell, and both consenting to each other's decision).

6. (It may be argued that there is no hitch, if several rulers dealing severally with the acts of these large numbers of beings are postulated. But in the case of postulating a plurality of rulers for dealing with vast numbers of beings engaged in multifarious activities, rulership will be (reduced to) nominal formality like that invested in tributary princes under an emperor (the real absolute ruler being different).

7. (Due to the untenability of plurality of controllers) you are, therefore, (according to us) the only one Supreme ruler of all beings including the gods. You are the sole controller and the judge to decide the good and evil actions of beings and the dispenser of reward and punishment (lit. wielder of the rod of justice to award heaven and hell).

8 Such as you are, your authority (lit. awarding of punishment) is null and void and has ceased to exist in the world today; for your order has been superseded (lit. tricked off) by four wonderful Siddhas (demi-gods).

9. While, in compliance of your order, a sinner was being taken by us to the torture-houses (infernal regions), they perforce cut asunder your nooses (fastening the sinner) and liberated him.

10. As soon as the word 'Nārāyaṇa' was uttered (by the sinner), they hastened in saying, "Do not be afraid". So we wish to know from you who they are, if you think it is in our interest to know them (otherwise by showing disrespect to them through ignorance, there may be a trouble to you).

Śrī Śuka said:

11. Thus enquired, god Yama, the controller of all created beings was pleased, and calling upon mentally, the lotus-like feet of Hari, replied to his messengers.

Yama said:

12. Quite different from me is the Supreme Ruler of the mobile and immobile creation. (Who transcends it. As his servant, I control the mobile beings, especially the human beings among them and more especially the sinners among men, while he is the Supreme Ruler of all). Into him the universe lies woven warp and woof, like a piece of cloth. It is from his parts (*aṁśas* viz, gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) that the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe take place. The whole world remains under his perfect control like a bullock controlled by a string pierced through its nostrils.

13. Just as one keeps bullocks tethered together to a long rope, he binds people to his word (viz. the Vedas) by designating them (into classes as Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas etc.) and prescribing to each his respective duties. These people who are thus tightly regulated by their denominations and duties are afraid of him and bear him worship (by scrupulous performance of their prescribed work).

14-15. I (and the guardian deities of other cardinal points like) the great Indra, Nirṛti, Varuṇa, the Moon-god, the Fire-god, God Śiva, the Wind-god, as also the Sun-god, Brahmā, the (twelve) sons of Aditi (the monthly rotational solar presidents during a year), the Viśve-devas, the (eight) Vasus, demi-gods called Sādhyas, the (fortynine) Wind gods,

the group of (eleven) Rudras along with the Siddha tribe of demi-gods, and other progenitors of the universe (like Marīci), rulers of gods (i.e. ruler-like highly respected persons like Bṛhaspati), Bhṛgu and others who are not tainted with *rajas* and *tamas*—all these though dominated by the attribute *sattva* but are touched (deluded) with his Māyā do not understand his intentions—What of others? (Others can never fathom it).

16. *Jīvas* (individuals) verily cannot visualize him or comprehend him by means of their cognitive senses, mental faculties or vital breaths (which actuate the conative organs) or by means of speech (or Śāstras composed of words) even though he exists within their hearts and pervades them all (as the inner controller), even as the forms (which are the objects of the sight) cannot visualize the faculty of vision (which reveals them). He is beyond them all.

17. Generally, the messengers of Hari, the Supreme Soul, the self-dependent Supreme Ruler, the transcendent Lord of the Māyā go about in this world. They have attractive personalities and the same form, attributes and disposition as of their Lord.

18. The messengers of Viṣṇu are worshipped by gods. Their most wonderful forms cannot be easily perceived. They protect the mortal devotees of Viṣṇu from enemies, from me and from all (sides and people) as well.

19. The (secret of the) doctrine as enunciated by the Lord himself could not be comprehended by (persons dominated by the attribute *Sattva* like the sages, gods and prominent *Siddhas*. How can it be understood by demons and men—much less by demi-gods like Vidyādharas and Cāraṇas.

20-21. We twelve—god Brahmā, (the heavenly sage) Nārada, god Śiva, Sanatkumāra, Kapila (the founder of the Sāṅkhya doctrine), Manu, Prahlāda, Janaka, Bhīṣma, the demon Bali, Śuka (the son of Vyāsa) and we ourselves—know the essence of the Dharma (the esoteric doctrine) as expounded by the Lord. It is extremely sacred, pure, secret and difficult to comprehend. One who knows it attains immortality (Final Liberation—Mokṣa).

22. That alone has been remembered (prescribed in the

Dharma Śāstra) as the highest Dharma (sacred duty) of all men in this world, viz., that they should cultivate devotion unto the Lord through the utterance of his name (and other forms of *bhakti*).

23. Look at the great efficacy of the utterance of Hari's name, my boys. It is due to that, that even (a great sinner like) Ajāmila was rescued from the clutches (lit. noose) of death.

24. That even a great sinner like Ajāmila, while on the point of death (when one's faculties could not be concentrated on the Lord), simply shrieked out (and not devotionally chanted) for his son (and not for Lord Viṣṇu) as 'Nārāyaṇa' and attained Liberation shows that (mere utterance of Lord's name—*nāmābhāsa*—is enough to annihilate all sins and that glorification of the Lord's attributes and deeds and chanting of the Lord's name—all these are not required for mere destruction of the sins (but they are needed for cleanly wiping out the impressions (*vāsanās*) left over by sins.

25. (As this esoteric doctrine was grasped by only a dozen persons and remained a great secret to others, these great men) like Manu(most probably did not know that) the (efficacy of Lord's name) is this (as described above). Alas! Their mind is sufficiently deluded by the goddess Māyā. Their intellect is focussed on (and entangled in) the three Vedas promising in flowery language attractive fruits (of sacrifices and other rituals). And they engage themselves in great exhibitory performances of sacrificial acts. (The exhibitory attraction of sacrifices as contrasted with the chanting of the Lord's name in a solitary place, or due to their lack of faith in the efficacy of the Lord's name leads people to performance of sacrifices etc.

26. Having reasoned in this way, persons of good intelligence certainly perform with concentrated mind, acts (such as chanting of the Lord's name etc.) conducive to the loving devotion to the Lord of infinite attributes. They do not deserve punishment at my hands (as they are sinless). Even if sin is committed (inadvertently) by them, it is destroyed by their singing the glory and chanting the name of the Lord (who is widely sung by the Vedas).

27. Do not (even) approach those good souls who have resorted to the Lord and entertain equal outlook toward all and whose holy stories are (therefore) sung by gods and Siddhas. For they are protected by the mace of Hari and neither we nor the Time-spirit is competent to punish them.

28. Bring (only) those wicked persons who are averse to the sweet fragrant honey of the lotus-feet of Mukunda (Lord Viṣṇu) which is incessently tasted by multitudes of Paramahaṁsas (ascetics of the highest order, or noble Swans) who possess nothing of their own and are expert connoisseurs of sweetness (of Lord's lotus-feet). Bring also those who have set their hearts on their households, which is the way to hell.

29. Bring those fellows (to me) whose tongue does not describe the excellent attributes of the Lord or utter his name; whose mind does not remember his lotus-like feet; whose head does not even once bow down to Lord Kṛṣṇa and who have rendered no service to Lord Viṣṇu.

30. May the Venerable Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Ancient-Person, pardon me for the offence committed by my men who are his men. For his devotees who are ignorant, folding of palms in reverence to the great persons is the way of requesting forgiveness. I bow to the perfect Person."

31. The singing of Viṣṇu's name and glory is, therefore, auspicious and blissful to the whole world. Oh King of the Kuru race ! Please understand this to be a thorough expiation of the greatest[276] of sins.

32. The mind is not purified to that extent by observance of vows (e.g. fasting) as it does by the properly-developed devotion of those who constantly listen to and sing of the great exploits of Lord Viṣṇu.

33. He who has tasted the sweet honey in the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa does not find pleasure again in objects offered by Māyā which he has contemptuously discarded as leading to sin and miseries (of hell). But the other person who is ignorant about the blissfulness of devotion is overcome with passions, desires to wipe out the sin in his heart by performing

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276. *mahatām*—Or 'Of great persons'. Translate : 'It deserves to be observed by great persons for the complete expiation of their sins, Oh Parikṣit.'

another *karma* which in its turn leads to (the creation of) another sin (like the proverbial bath of an elephant which covers itself with dust after coming out of water.

34. Oh King ! The servants of Yama were not wonder-struck in the mind as they remembered (their realization by personal experience) the greatness of Lord Viṣṇu as described to them by their master (Yama). Being afraid of persons who have resorted to Viṣṇu (Acyuta) they do not dare even to look at them since that day onwards.

35. The venerable Agastya (the sage born from a pitcher) who was seated (on the peak of) Malaya mountain, worshipping god Viṣṇu, narrated to me this secret historical legend.

CHAPTER FOUR

(*History of Dakṣa, the son of Pracetas*)

The King (Parīkṣit) said:

1. You have briefly described the genesis of gods, Asuras (demons), men, serpents, beasts and birds during the (first) Manvantara period presided over by Svāyambhuva Manu.

2. I desire to know from you the details of that creation (as to) how and with what power the transcendental, glorious Lord brought for the subsequent creation, Oh venerable sage.

Sūta said:

3. On hearing this excellent query from the royal sage (Parīkṣit), the great Yogī Śuka, the son of Bādarāyaṇa, expressed his appreciation and spoke unto him, the noblest of sages.

Śrī Śuka said:

4. When the ten Pracetasas, sons of king Prācīna-barhis emerged from within the sea (-like lake) they saw that the earth was covered with trees.

5. Being enraged at the trees and with their wrath flared up by austere penance, they blew out fire and wind through their mouth, with the intention of burning down the trees.[277]

6. Finding the trees being reduced to ashes by them both (the fire and the wind), the great Moon-god, the ruler of the vegetable kingdom, addressed them with a view to appeasing their anger.

7. "Oh highly fortunate Princes! It does not behove you to bear enmity to the poor trees. You are regarded as the protectors of the beings the special promotion of whose growth should be your concern and desire.

8. Oh Princes! The immutable glorious Lord Hari, the ruler of progenitors of all creatures has created the trees and the annual plants (cereals) for fruits and food-grains (or the food of the manes and food for gods).

9. The immobile ones (trees, plants etc. i.e. their produce like fruits and flowers) are food for the mobile creatures; the footless (i.e. grass etc.) the food of those having feet; the handless ones (e.g. the fish) are the food of those endowed with hands; and the quadrupeds (e.g. deer, boar etc.) are the food of the bipeds (human beings).

10. Oh sinless ones! Inasmuch as you are commanded by your father (Prācīnabarhis) and by the god of gods to procreate beings how is it proper for you to burn down trees (which form the food of creatures).

11. Please follow the path of the righteous which was adopted by your father, grandfather and great-grandfather and control your intensified wrath.

12. The parents are real friends (guardians of interests) of children; the eyelashes are of the eyes; the husband is of a woman; the king is of the subjects; the householder is the true friend of the mendicants and the teacher or the wise person is that of the ignorant. (The protectors of beings are hence the true friends of the creatures; you should not therefore, destroy the food or the means of livelihood of your subjects).

13. The Soul that dwells within the bodies of the creatures is Lord Hari, the Supreme Controller; please note

277. Vide Supra 4.30.44ff.

(carefully) that the entire creation is his abode. Hence, it is thus that he will be propitiated by you.

14. He, who, with a desire to know the real nature of the Soul, controls (within himself) sudden explosion of wrath within the cavity of his heart, goes beyond the *guṇas* which are the cause of the miseries of Saṁsāra).

15. Enough of the helpless trees that are (so far) consumed with fire. (Spare the remaining ones). May the surviving trees and yourselves live in bliss. Here is this excellent girl (Māriṣā by name) brought up by the trees. May she be accepted by you as your wife."

16. Having pacified them (the Pracetasas) thus and having offered that beautiful daughter (with fine hips) of the Apsaras (Pramlocā) to them in marriage, the king Soma (the Moon-god) returned. They then married her according to religious rites.[278]

17. Dakṣa, the son of Pracetasas, they say, was born of her from them. The three worlds are fully populated by his progeny (and their descendants).

18. Now listen to me attentively how Dakṣa who was so affectionate to his daughters procreated beings by his mind (mental faculty) as well as with his semen (physical body).

19. In the beginning, it was by his mental faculties that he procreated these beings, viz., gods, demons (*Asuras*), men and such other creatures dwelling in the sky, on the earth and in the water.

20. Finding that this creation of beings was not growing prolific, the progenitor (of creation) approached the hills near the foot of the Vindhya mountain and performed very austere penance.

21. There was an extremely holy lake efficacious to destroy sins. It was called Aghamarṣaṇa (efficacious to wash off sins). He bathed three times a day (in the morning, midday and evening) in the lake and propitiated Lord Hari with his austere penance.

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278. Vide supra 4.30. 13-16. As Soma brought her up by nectar from his index finger, he had the fatherly right to offer her in marriage. As Lord Viṣṇu commanded them all to marry her, religious sanction was automatically received for this polyandric marriage.

22. He praised the glorious Lord Viṣṇu with the *Haṁsa-guhya* hymn. I shall now recite that hymn with which Hari was pleased with Dakṣa.

Prajāpati (Dakṣa) said:

23. I pay obeisance to the transcendental Lord whose power of consciousness is not unreal; who is the controller of *jīva* (the individual Soul as reflected through the three *guṇas* of Māyā) and the Māyā (the cause or the basis of such reflection); whose form or true nature is invisible to those who look upon *guṇas* or objects of senses as real; who is beyond all the means of knowledge (e.g. inference etc.) who is beyond limit of time and space, and Self-effulgent.

24. I bow to the Supreme Lord who is the friend of the *jīva* inhabiting the same city (body) along with him but of whose friendliness (in activating the sense-organs and the mind) the *jīva* is not aware. He is the seer of the world (and hence unseen by the world) just as a *guṇa* (the object of cognition) cannot perceive the possessor of the *guṇa* (viz. the cognitive ability of the cognizing sense).

25. The body, the vital breaths, the senses, the internal organs or mental faculties, the five *bhūtas* (gross elements) and their *tanmātrās* (subtle forms e. g. sound, touch etc.) do not know either themselves or the others and their presiding deities who are beyond them all (as all these have no consciousness). The *jīva* (being consciousness by nature) knows all the *guṇas* (the root cause of the above-mentioned list). But the *jīva* who knows them (the above) does not know the Omniscient Lord who is Infinite. Him I praise.

26. When the mind which cognizes the world of names and forms ceases to function due to the loss or obsolescence of all cognition and memory, in the state of *samādhi* or complete absorption in the self, he (the Supreme Brahman) reveals himself through his inherent existence, consciousness and bliss. I offer my salutations to him whose abode is the pure heart.

27. With their purified intellect, the self-controlled, discerning persons discover (and meditate upon) him (as distinct from *ahaṁkāra*) as enthroned in the innermost heart,

even though he lies unmanifest by his nine powers[279] (viz. Prakṛti, *mahat* or cosmic intelligence, *ahaṁkāra* or ego, mind and *tanmātras* (five subtle *bhūtas*) and (by mind, five gross elements and ten sense-organs) and influenced by three *guṇas* (viz. *Sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*). (The above-mentioned wise persons do so) just as the experts in sacrificial lore separate (by friction) the sacrificial fire latent in the (piece of) wood by reciting the fifteen Sāmidhenī verses[280] (in the course of churning out fire).

28. He is realized as the highest bliss in meditation by the negation of Māyā which creates all distinctions and differences. Verily he bears every name, and assumes all forms. He possesses within him innumerable potencies which are beyond the power of words to describe. (May the Lord be gracious unto me).

29. Whatever is described in words, concluded (to be true) by the intellect, perceived by the senses or imagined by the mind, is only a phenomenon of the (three) *guṇas* and cannot be his essential nature; for he is verily characterised by the creation or dissolution of *guṇas* (i.e. their product, the universe).

30. It is Brahman on which everything depends; from it everything is caused; it has created everything from itself with itself. Everything is for it and belongs to it. Whatever it makes and causes others to make is Brahman. It is the ultimate cause of all causes both earlier (e.g. god Brahmā) or later. As the primary cause. it is known to have preceded all causes. It is one without a second, whether of its own kind or of another category. It is Brahman to whom I bow[281].

31. (If Brahman is the cause of the universe, why do

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279. VJ. mentions a different list of nine potencies, viz., *Vimalā*, *Utkarṣaṇī*, *Jñānakriyā* etc. and the three powers (*trivṛdbhiḥ*) are Will, Knowledge and Action (Kriyā).

280. Viṣṇu is called the fifteenth Principle (*Pāñcadaśya*). The remaining fourteen are: Ten sense-organs (*indriyas*), mind, intelligence (*buddhi*), vital airs (*Prāṇa*) and *Pradhāna*. Viṣṇu controls these—VJ.

281. VR. takes the Viśiṣṭādvaita position in which Īśvara is the Soul and *jīva* and *jagat* (unintelligent matter) form his body. The different cases in this verse show the intimate relation of Īśvara with others.

the different schools of thoughts like the followers of Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya, indulge in disputation?). It is his potencies (such as Māyā) which have verily become the grounds (causes) for disputations and concurrence for various eloquent theoreticians (of different schools of thought) and which (in spite of the exhortations of the knowers of the truth to these disputants) delude their minds now and again. I bow to him, the omnipresent Lord of infinite excellences.

32. (Yoga, as a science of divine worship, conceives of God as a cosmic person with Pātāla, subterranean regions, as his feet, while Sāṅkhya which is the Science of Knowledge or self-realization regards him as formless without any hands or feet.) The Yoga and Sāṅkhya systems of philosophy which proclaim faith in one and the same Reality predicate the existence and nonexistence of (two) distinct and mutually contradictory attributes to be subsisting in the same Reality (viz. possession and non-possession of feet etc.). But the common basis on which they agree and (is thus beyond dispute) is the existence of God—a Reality beyond dispute. It is the great thing—Brahman (to whom I bow).

33. May that glorious Supreme Lord of infinite attributes be gracious unto me—the Lord who though above material names and forms, invested himself with (absolutely pure *sāttvic*) forms by incarnating himself, and assumed names by his (wonderful) deeds, for the sake of bestowing his grace on those who seek shelter at his feet.

34. May that Supreme Ruler grant me my desired object (s)—the Supreme Lord who abiding in all bodies as the (formless) Inner controller, manifests himself in the forms of different deities to people according to the tendencies (formed by impressions of the actions of their previous births) and their paths of worship of recent origin, just as a breeze of wind (though itself devoid of the characteristics of the earth, viz. fragrance or colour) bears different kinds of smells according to the fragrance of the flowers with which it comes into contact or looks whitish, the attribute of dust mixed with it.

Śrī Śuka said :

35. Thus praised (with the hymns), the glorious Lord who is affectionate to his devotees manifested himself to Dakṣa

while he was extolling him in the sacred lake called Aghamarṣaṇa, oh foremost Kuru.

36. Riding with his feet flung on both the shoulders of Garuḍa, he wielded in his extraordinarily long and mighty arms a discus, a conch, a sword, a shield, an arrow, a noose and a mace (in each respectively).

37. He was clad in yellow silken garment with complexion dark like a cloud, his countenance and eyes were beaming with pleasure and joy. His person was adorned with *Vanamālā* (a garland of forest-flowers) and bore the mark called Śrīvatsa and the valuable gem Kaustubha.

38. He wore a very costly crown and bracelets and radiant pair of crocodile-shaped ear-rings. He was adorned with zones, rings, bracelets, anklets and armlets.

39. The Lord of the three worlds manifested a beautiful form captivating the three worlds. He was surrounded by Nārada, Nanda and other attendants and by protectors of the worlds (like Indra, Varuṇa). He was eulogized by Siddhas, Gandharvas and cāraṇas (the celestial singers and others) who followed him singing.

40. On seeing that most wonderful form (of the Lord), the progenitor Dakṣa was overcome with awe, but his heart was overjoyed. He lay prostrate before him on the ground (like a rod) and bowed to him.

41. Just as rivers are overflooded by streams, his senses were too full with intense joy to be able to speak. Thus, on account of excessive joy he could not utter a word.

42 Lord Viṣṇu who knows the minds of all created beings spoke thus to the progenitor devotee Dakṣa who had laid himself prostrate that way before him and was desirous of procreating progeny.

The Venerable Lord said :

43. Oh highly fortunate son of Pracetas! You have achieved the objective of your austere penance inasmuch as you have cherished supreme devotion unto me through your unswerving intense faith in me.

44. Oh Lord of created beings! I am pleased with you as the growth of the universe is the aim of your penance. It is

also my desire that there should be all round growth and prosperity of all created beings.

45. God Brahmā, Śiva, you all Prajāpatis (Lords of created beings), Manus (progenitors of human beings who preside over certain epochs or *Manvantaras*) and the foremost deities—all are my special incarnations for the prosperity and procreation of created beings.

46*. Oh Brahman (Dakṣa) ! Contemplation (accompanied with disciplines of *Yama* and *niyama*) is my heart. The spiritual lore (the internal repetition of *Mantras* with the specific technique of *nyāsa* etc. which results in concrete meditation and my realization) is my body. The activities pertaining to contemplation is my form. Accurately performed sacrifices are the limbs of my body. The merit (accruing from the well-performed sacrifices) is my Soul. Gods (the recipients of oblations in the sacrifices) form my very life.

47. At the beginning of creation, I alone existed (without any activity). There was nothing else as internal (the seer or knower) or external (the seen or the object of knowledge). I was pure consciousness and unmanifested. There was (as if) deep sleep (no activity) everywhere.

48. In me who am Infinite and endowed with an infinite number of attributes, there evolved through Māyā (constituted of three *guṇas*) this universe (a product of *guṇas*). At that time the selfborn Brahmā, the First Person (the creator of all) arose (along with the universe).

49. When the great god Brahmā, though supplied with my energy, became engaged in the work of creation, he felt that he was not sufficiently competent for it.

50. Then as per my command, the god Brahmā performed very austere penance. Empowered by it, he created nine progenitors of created beings including you (in your previous birth) in the beginning.

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*. VR., SD. explain that Lord wants to emphasize the importance of contemplation, sacrifices etc. as they are dear to him.

GD. explains that the Lord reminds Dakṣa of his previous birth and proficiency in sacrifice by calling him 'Brahman'.

51. Oh dear child! Here is the daughter of the progenitor of creatures, Pañcajana. Her name is Asiknī. Accept her as your wife, Oh Lord of created beings.

52. You have to follow the righteous course of sexual union between a duly married couple. You will procreate progeny in large numbers from her who will also observe the same righteous duty (of sexual intercourse between the duly married) like you.

53. All created beings after you will be born through sexual intercourse with women, under the influence of my Māyā and they will offer worship.

Śrī Śuka said:

54. Having addressed him [thus, Lord Hari the prime cause of the universe vanished on that very spot like an object seen in a dream, while Dakṣa was looking on.

CHAPTER FIVE

(Dakṣa curses Nārada)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Being imbued with the energy of Viṣṇu, Dakṣa became powerful and begot through that (above-mentioned) Pāñcajanī ten thousand sons called Haryaśva.

2. Oh King! All those sons of Dakṣa were of the same nature and similarly righteous in conduct. When they were commanded by the father (Dakṣa) to beget children, they went to the western direction.

3. They went to a sacred lake called Nārāyaṇa-saras[282] situated in the area where the river Sindhu meets the sea—a holy place resorted to by a number of sages and Siddhas.

4. At the very touch of that (sacred water of the) lake, their hearts were cleansed of all impurities and they found their

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282. A lake at the mouth of the Indus at the western extremity of the Runn of Kacch, 18 miles south-west of Lakhpat—CDAMI 138.

mind attracted to the righteous way of life of the Paramahaṁsas (the highest order of ascetics).

5. Being restrained by the command of their father for begetting prolific progeny, they practised severe austerities. It is then, they say, that the celestial sage Nārada saw them.

6. And he (Nārada) spoke unto them:

'Oh Haryaśvas! How is it that without seeing the limits of the earth you want to create children. You are certainly childish (foolish). It is a pity that protectors (of the subjects) as you are, you are really childish.

7-9. Without seeing a kingdom inhabited by only one man, and without knowing the hole with (apparently) invisible outlet, the woman who can assume different forms (at will), and the man who espouses a harlot, a river flowing in both directions, a wonderful house constructed of twentyfive materials, at one place a swan telling miraculous tales, an independent, revolving (strong, sharp) disc made of adamants and razors, and without properly understanding the implication of the command of your omniscient father, how will you proceed with your job of creation?

Śrī Śuka said:

10. Having heard the enigmatic words of the divine sage (Nārada), the Haryaśvas, with their ow ninborn reasoning capacity, began to investigate with their intelligence.

11. The earth (*bhū*) is that field (or the *liṅga-śarīra*—the subtle body—which causes pleasure, pain, merit, demerit etc. like an agricultural farm yielding crop of cereals) designated as *jīva*. The subtle body is (practically) beginningless (existing from times immemorial) and it acts as a bondage to the Soul. Without seeing how it becomes extinct, what is the use of impious *karmas* (which do not lead to Mokṣa).

12. The only one (man in the country) stands for the Sole Almighty ruler (of the universe). He is (beyond and) witness to all mental states, viz., *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājña*) and hence is called the fourth—the omnipresent. He is self-dependent supreme (the cause of everything else). Without seeing that birthless (eternally free) Lord, what purpose can be served by acts not dedicated to him?

13. Just as a person who has gone to the subterranean heaven (*pātāla*) does not return (to the earth in the same body), a man does not return to *saṁsāra* after attaining to the self-illuminating Brahman within him. To a man who has not realized (lit. is ignorant of) the Inner Light—Self-effulgent Brahman, worthless *karmas* (which may lead to heavenly happiness and other transitory pleasures) are of no avail.

14. Like a loose wanton woman wearing various attractive forms and gifted with (many attractive) qualities, the intellect of man assumes shapes of objects of lower type of pleasures (like form, taste and other objects of senses) and is influenced by *guṇas* (like *rajas*, *tamas*). To a person who has not put an end to (i.e. transcended) such a multiple-interested intellect, what can be achieved through hot pursuit of such activities?

15. What can be achieved through acts done without discernment and knowledge by a *jīva* (man) who does not understand the loss of his independence (and non-attachment) by his association with such (above-mentioned) intellect and is like a husband of a loose wife, follows her ways (characterised by pleasure and pain).

16. What can be gained from activities influenced by Māyā which causes both the creation and destruction (and is like a river flowing both ways). (In order to prevent people fallen in it from reaching the banks) it rushes forth with great velocity (assuming the form of anger, egotism etc.) at the ghats, and its banks (in the form of penance, learning etc.).

17. Puruṣa (the Inner Controller abiding in the body) is a wonderful basis and mirror[283] reflecting the twentyfive categories (enumerated by Sāṁkhyas). Of what use are the acts (done with a false sense of independence) by one who has not realized that he (Puruṣa) presides over the body (the aggregate of the categories—a collection of cause and effect).[284]

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283. ŚR. reads *adbhuta-darśana* 'One who is of wonderful form' (*āścarya-rūpa*).

284. Sāṁkhyas differ : According to Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Prakṛti is uncreated (without any cause). The next seven categories from *mahat* to *tanmātras* are both cause (of the next category) and the effect (of the previous category) and the next sixteen : mind, 5 gross elements, 10 sense-organs are effects only. Puruṣa is neither the cause nor effect.—Sāṁkhyakārikā 3.

18. (This explains *kvacid haṁsaṁ citrakatham* in verse 8 above). What purpose will be served by acts oriented to the external phenomenal world if one neglects (the study of) the *śāstra* (philosophic teaching) which establishes the existence of the Almighty Ruler by distinguishing between the intelligent principle (the Soul) and inert matter and shows the (nature of) bondage and (Final) Liberation (like a swan drinking milk only from the mixture of milk and water) ?

19. (The explanation of *kṣaurapavyaṁ svayam bhramim*—verse 8 above).

The wheel of Time which is relentlessly and eternally revolving is sharp like razor-blade. It is absolutely independent (and hence uncontrollable). It destroys the whole creation. To him who does not know this (nature of Time), of what use are the worthless acts (done under the false presumption that their fruits are eternal).

20. (The inner significance of verse 9 above).

How can anyone who does not understand the precept of desisting from worldly activities, given by his father, the *śāstra* (which gives him the second birth by the *upanayana*, investiture of the sacred-thread-ceremony and tenders salutary advice) and who entertains faith in the path of worldly activities (*Pravṛtti-mārga*) based on *guṇas*, go ahead with the work of creation? (As Dakṣa ceases to be a father after *upanayana*, you can disregard his order without incurring a sin if you follow the precept of *śāstra*, your father, and follow the path of renunciation—*Nivṛtti-dharma*).

21. (Being convinced by Nārada) Haryaśvas unanimously resolved thus, and circumambulating him (Nārada, by the right side as a mark of respect) went the way (to liberation) from which there is no return, Oh King!

22. The sage Nārada, who has concentrated (lit. entered) his undivided mind in the lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu (Hṛṣīkeśa—the Master of sense-organs) as revealed in *Svara-Brahman* (*Brahman* in the form of notes of the musical scale on his lute), went about (his own way in) the world.

23. Having heard that his sons, so excellent due to their righteous character, have disappeared and are lost to their original duty (of procreating children) due to the advice of

Nārada, Dakṣa was tormented with sorrow and lamented that even to have good children can be a source of grief.

24. Being much consoled by god Brahmā, Dakṣa again procreated by Pañcajanī a thousand sons called Śabalāśva.

25. Even they (Śabalāśvas) who were commanded by the father to beget progeny, took to religious vows and went to the (sacred) lake Nārāyaṇa where their elder brothers attained perfection (i.e. god-realization).

26. With their minds and hearts perfectly cleansed of all impurities (sins) at the touch of those sacred waters, they practised austere penance muttering (all the while) the sacred syllable OM (a symbol of the Supreme Brahman).

27. For several months, they subsisted on water, and for many months, on the air only. They propitiated the Lord of all *Mantras* (the glorious god Viṣṇu), repeating this (following) sacred *mantra* :

28. "OM. Salutations to Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Indwelling Controller, the Supreme Soul, whose place of manifestation is the extremely pure *sāttvic* heart and who is absolutely free from all blemishes. We meditate upon him."

29. The sage Nārada approached even those (sons of Dakṣa) who made up their minds to renew creation and spoke to them the enigmatic words similar to those addressed to their (elder) brothers, Oh King of Kings.

30. "Oh sons of Dakṣa! Listen carefully to the precept as given (lit. addressed) by me. You find out the path followed by your elder brothers (for whom you are so full of affection).

31. A brother who knows the path of righteousness, follows the great path trodden by his brothers and with merit as his friend, he enjoys (celestial) life in the company of the Marut—(wind) gods (noted for their fraternal affection)."

32. Oh noble King! having addressed this much, Nārada whose audience is never unfruitful, departed. They (Śabalāśvas) also followed the (spiritual) path of their (elder) brothers.

33. Having resorted to the exalted and agreeable path attainable to those whose senses and minds are turned within (away from the external world)—the path that leads to

the realization of the Supreme Brahman—they, like the nights that have passed, never return to this day.

34. Noticing at this time, a number of evil portents, the Prajāpati Dakṣa came to know that Nārada had ruined his sons.

35. Overwhelmed with grief for his sons, he got enraged with Nārada. (To prevent Dakṣa from turning into a recluse, Nārada approached him). Finding Nārada, he exploded (lit. spoke to him) with his lower lip quivering with rage.

Dakṣa said:

36. Oh wicked fellow donning the garb of holy man! You have done a great harm to good people like us, in showing the path of mendicants to my young (good-natured) children.

37. Oh sinful person! You have deprived (my sons) of the bliss in both the worlds (here and hereafter), as they have not repaid their debts to the sages, gods and manes and have not investigated the nature of *karmas*.

38. Merciless and prejudicer of the mind of children as you are, you are bringing stigma to the glory of Lord Hari, and shameless as you are, you still move among the attendants of Hari.

39. With the exception of you who are verily a traitor to friends and who sow enmity between friends, all the devotees of Hari are really ever eager to shower grace on living beings.

40. Renunciation cannot in this way be generated in the minds of men by you who have disguised yourself as an Avadhūta even though you have no knowledge. Though you regard that self-control (automatically) severs the bonds of affection (it is wrong).

41. A man cannot realize how objects of sensual pleasures cause painful consequences, without personally experiencing them. Therefore, one does not get disgusted to that extent if his mind is unsettled by others (in that matter), as a person would who has undergone the experience himself.

42. We have tolerated the unbearable wrong you have done to us, householders, who have vowed to perform Vedic *karmas* with a wish to get heavenly bliss.

43. You are a destroyer of the continuity of my race. As you have again done a wrong to us, you will not get a resting place while wandering through the worlds (Oh fool).

Śrī Śuka said:

44. Nārada who was highly respected by the pious people accepted the curse saying, 'Very well'. He is called really a *Sādhu* (pious soul) who though competent to retaliate, bears up the wrong done to him.

CHAPTER SIX

(Progeny of Dakṣa's Daughters)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Then comforted by the self-born god Brahmā, Prācetasa Dakṣa begot on Asiknī sixty daughters who were affectionate to their father.

2. He gave ten daughters (in marriage) to Dharma, the presiding deity of righteousness, thirteen to sage Ka (Kaśyapa), twenty-seven to the Moon-god, two each to sages Bhūta, Aṅgiras and Kṛśāśva and the rest to Tārkṣya, another name of Kaśyapa.

3. Now, hear from me their names along with those of their offspring whose children and children's children (descendants) have populated completely the three worlds.

4. (The names of Dharma's wives are) : Bhānu, Lambā, Kakubh, Jāmi, Viśvā, Sādhyā, Marutvatī, Vasu, Muhūrtā, Saṅkalpā. Now listen to (the names of the sons).

5. From Bhānu was born Devarṣabha. His son was Indrasena. From Lambā was born Vidyota who gave birth to (deities presiding over) cloud.

6. Saṅkaṭa was born from Kakubh. His son was Kīkaṭa, from whom were begotten the spirits presiding over

the fortresses on the earth. Svarga was the son of Jāmi. From him was born Nandi.

7. From Viśva were begotten the Viśvedevas who are said to be childless. Sādhyā gave birth to a group of gods known as Sādhya whose son was Arthasiddhi.

8. From Marutvatī were born (the forty-nine) Maruts (wind-gods) and Jayanta who was a part manifestation of Vāsudeva and whom they know as Upendra.

9. From Muhūrtā were born the race of gods called Mauhūrtikas who verily bestow upon living beings fruit appropriate to the particular period of time (when an act is performed at that time).

10. Saṅkalpā gave birth to Saṅkalpa (the deity presiding over thought process). It is declared that the god of love is born of Saṅkalpa. Vasu gave birth to eight sons called Vasus. Hear from me their names (now).

11. (Their names are): Droṇa, Prāṇa, Dhruva, Arka, Agni, Doṣa, Vasu, Vibhāvasu. Droṇa begot from his wife Abhimati children called Harṣa, Śoka, Bhaya and others (the presiding deities of joy, sorrow, fear etc.).

12. Prāṇa begot Sahas, Āyus, Purojava from his wife Ūrjasvatī. Dharaṇī (the earth), the wife of Dhruva, gave births to various towns and cities.

13. Vāsanā was the wife of Arka (the Sun-god). Their sons like Tarṣa and others were well known. Dhārā was the wife of the Vasu called Agni, and their sons were Draviṇaka and others.

14. And Skanda was the son of Kṛttikā (another wife of Agni). From him were born Viśākha and others. Doṣa had by Śarvarī, a son called Śiśumāra (the deity of the stellar sphere) who was an *aṁśa* (digit) of Hari.

15. From Āṅgirasī, the wife of Vasu, was born Viśvakarmā, the architect of gods. The name of his wife was Ākṛti. From her were born Cākṣusa, (the sixth) Manu. Viśvedevas and Sādhya gods were the sons of Manu.

16. From Vibhāvasu, Uṣā gave birth to Vyuṣṭa, Rociṣa and Ātapa. From Ātapa was born Pañcayāma (the deity presiding over the day-time) who keeps created beings awake and alert to their duties.

17-18. Sarūpā, the wife of Bhūta, gave birth to crores of Rudras (the deities entrusted with the duty of destruction), the chief among them were the eleven, namely, Raivata, Aja, Bhava, Bhīma, Vâma, Ugra, Vṛṣākapi, Ajaikapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Bahurūpa and Mahān. From Bhūtā, another wife of Bhūta, were born the terrible Bhūtas and evil-spirits (called Vināyakas) who were the attendants of Rudras.

19. Svadhā, the wife of Prajāpati Aṅgiras, gave birth to the manes (*Pitṛs*). Satī, another wife of Aṅgiras, accepted the Veda called Atharva—Aṅgiras—as her son.

20. Kṛśāśva begot from his wife Arcis, Dhūmrakeśa as the son, and on Dhiṣaṇā four sons, viz. Vedaśiras, Devala, Vayuna and Manu.

21-22. Tārkṣya which was another name of the sage Kaśyapa, had four wives, namely, Vinatā, Kadrū, Pataṅgī and Yāminī. Pataṅgī gave birth to birds; Yāminī to locusts. Vinatā had a son called Garuḍa who was the vehicle of directly the Lord of Sacrifices (Viṣṇu). She had another son called Aruṇa (the thighless) who is the charioteer of the Sun-god. Kadrū, mothered serpents of various species.

23. Oh descendant of Bharata ! The presiding deities of Kṛttikā and other twenty-seven constellations of stars, were wedded to the Moon, but due to the curse of Dakṣa, he was affected by consumption and had no issue from them.

24. Having propitiated Dakṣa again, he regained his digits which decreased in the dark half of the month but had no children. Now, listen to the auspicious names of the mothers of the world (viz. Kaśyapa's wives).

25-26. The following are the names of the wives of Kaśyapa who gave birth to this world; Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kāṣṭhā, Ariṣṭā, Surasā, Ilā, Muni, Krodhavaśā, Tāmrā, Surabhi, Saramā and Timi. From Timi were born aquatic beings; from Saramā, tiger and other carnivorous animals.

27. From Surabhi, were created buffalo, cow and other beasts with cloven hooves; from Tāmrā, hawks, vultures and other birds of prey; from Muni, the bevy of celestial demsels.

28. Oh King ! Serpents like Dandaśūka and others were the offspring of Krodhavaśā; the vegetable kingdom, of Ilā, and the Yakṣas and Rakṣasas of Surasā.

29. The Gandharvas (celestial singers) were born of Ariṣṭā; beasts with uncloven feet (e.g. horses, donkeys etc.), of Kāṣṭhā; Danu had sixty-one sons. Listen to the names of the prominent ones in them :

30-31. (They are :) Dvimūrdhan, Śambara, Ariṣṭa, Hayagrīva, Vibhāvasu, Ayomukha, Śaṅkuśiras, Svarbhānu, Kapila, Aruṇa, Puloman, Vṛṣaparvan, Ekacakra, Anutāpana, Dhūmrakeśa, Virūpākṣa, Vipracitti and Durjaya.

32. As is reported, Namuci married Suprabhā, the daughter of Svarbhānu. The mighty Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, was wedded to Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan.

33. Danu's son Vaiśvānara had four daughters who were very beautiful to look at. They are : Upadānavī, Hayaśirā, Pulomā and Kālakā.

34. Out of them, Upadānavī was married to Hiraṇyākṣa and Hayaśirā to Kratu. Oh King, Kaśyapa married Pulomā and Kālakā, the two daughters of Vaiśvānara.

35. The great sage Kaśyapa married them as he was directed to do so by god Brahmā. The sons of Pulomā were the Dānavas known as Kālakeyas who were famous for their warlike nature.

36. Out of them, sixty-thousand sons known as Nivātakavacas who used to disturb sacrifices, were killed by your father's father single-handedly, while he paid a visit to Svarga and wanted to please Indra.

37. Vipracitti begot on his wife Siṁhikā one hundred and one sons. The eldest of them was Rāhu who got a position in the planetary system, along with the remaining hundred sons who were named Ketu.

38. Now, listen from me in due sequence, the details of the race of Aditi wherein the Almighty God Nārāyaṇa incarnated by his own *aṁśa* (digit).

39. The sons of Aditi were : Vivasvān, Aryaman, Pūṣan, Tvaṣṭṛ, Savitṛ, Bhaga, Dhātṛ, Vidhātṛ, Varuṇa, Mitra, Indra and Trivikrama (Vāmana). (These are the presiding deities of the orb of the Sun each month).

40. The highly fortunate Saṁjñā, the wife of Vivasvat, gave birth to Śrāddhadeva, the Manu and a twin called the

Yama god and (his sister) Yamī. That very Saṁjñā became a female horse and gave birth to the twin gods Aśvinīkumāras, on this earth.

41. Chāyā (another wife of Vivasvat) gave birth to Śanaiścara, the presiding deity of the planet Saturn, and Sāvarṇi Manu. She gave birth to a daughter also called Tapatī who chose in marriage Saṁvaraṇa as her husband.

42. Mātṛkā was the wife of Aryaman. Their sons were called Carṣaṇi (for they possessed wisdom of what should and what should not be done). From them were evolved the human kind by god Brahmā.

43. Pūṣan was childless. He got his teeth broken formerly as he exhibited his teeth in laughing at Śiva when he was enraged at Dakṣa, and Pūṣan had to subsist on flour.

44. The girl Racanā, the younger sister of the Daityas, became the spouse of Tvaṣṭṛ. From them were born sons namely Saṁniveśa and the mighty Viśvarūpa.

45. The host of gods selected him (for preceptorship) even though he was the nephew (sister's son) of their enemies, as they were forsaken by their preceptor Bṛhaspati who was insulted by them.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Bṛhaspati's Insult and his abandonment of Preceptorship)

The King said :

1. Please tell me, Oh venerable sir, why the gods were forsaken by their own preceptor and what was the fault of the disciples (gods) against their teacher.

Śrī Śuka said :

2-6. Indra transgressed the path followed by the good, due to his arrogance of overlordship of the three worlds. (Once) surrounded by Maruts, Vasu, Rudras, Ādityas, Ṛbhus, Viśvedevas, Sādhyas and the Aśvinikumāras, and

attended upon and praised and sweetly extolled by Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, by sages, the knowers of Brahman, Vidyādharas, heavenly damsels, Kinnaras, birds and Nāgas (serpents), he (Indra) was seated on the throne equipped with a white umbrella, beautiful like the orb of the full Moon, and with *chowries*, fans and other insignia of supreme royalty. He looked extremely splendid with (his wife) Śacī occupying half the throne.

7-9. When he did not welcome the great preceptor of gods and of himself, by offering him due formalities of respect such as standing up, offering a seat, on his arrival; he (Indra) did not rise at all from his seat, even though he saw the great sage Bṛhaspati who was adorable both to gods and demons, coming to his assembly; the wise and powerful descendent of Aṅgiras (Bṛhaspati) who understood that the violation of good manners is due to the arrogance of affluence and power, came out of the assembly and quietly returned to his house.

10. At that very moment, Indra became aware of the disrespect shown by him to his preceptor, and he, of his own accord, censured himself publicly in the assembly.

11. "Oh what a pity ! What an unrighteous and wicked deed has been committed by me, of poor intellect : being intoxicated with the arrogance of wealth and power, my preceptor has been disrespectfully treated in this assembly.

12. Who will covet for the prosperity and wealth of the Lord of the celestial regions, if he be wise ? for I who am the Lord of gods of *sāttvic* nature was dragged into the demonic state of egotism by that prosperity.

13. Those who lay down that the occupants of the highest position should not rise to receive anyone, do not know the highest code of conduct.

14. Those who believe in the words of those who show the wrong course and themselves sink in the dark infernal regions, verily, go down (to the abysmal depth of hell) by boarding a raft of granite rock, as it were.

15. Now with all my crookedness shed off and touching with my head the feet of that Brāhmaṇa, the preceptor of gods, and possessor of unfathomable intelligence, I shall propitiate him."

16. While Indra was musing thus, the venerable Bṛhaspati went out of his mansion and disappeared with his superb spiritual power.

17. The glorious Lord of the celestial region, looked on all sides for the whereabouts of his preceptor, but could not trace him. Anxiously considering (what will happen to them all, in the absence of the protection of the preceptor) Indra, though he commanded the loyalty of all gods, did not get the peace of mind.

18. As soon as all the demons got the report of it (the desertion of gods' side by Bṛhaspati), they followed the advice of Śukra. Haughty as they were, they carried a war against gods with their arms raised.

19. Gods whose heads, thighs and arms were deeply wounded by the sharp arrows discharged by the demons, went along with Indra, with their heads lowered in humility, to god Brahmā for protection.

20. The venerable birthless self-born god Brahmā saw them afflicted and harassed that way. Consoling them, the god spoke out to them in his supreme grace.

God Brahmā said :

21. What a pity it is, Oh great gods ! Out of arrogance of power and wealth you have certainly committed a very unjust and inauspicious deed in not respectfully welcoming a self-controlled Brāhmaṇa who was imbued with the spirit of Brahman.

22. It is the result of your unrighteousness that you gods, rich and powerful as you are, are defeated at the hands of your enemies who were extremely weak.

23. Oh Indra ! Look at your enemies who became extremely powerless due to disrespect shown by them to their preceptor, have again grown in strength due to their devoted propitiation of their preceptor Śukra. They, who regard Śukra as their deity, may capture even my abode (Brahmaloka).

24. The demons who are well instructed in their objectives by Śukra and whose secret designs are not divulged, have the slightest regard for the celestial region. (They can easily

conquer it). Inauspicious results do not befall kings who are protected by Brāhmaṇas, Lord Viṣṇu and cows.

25. Therefore, take resort to Viśvarūpa immediately. That Brāhmaṇa, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, possesses self-control and (a wealth of) penance. If respectfully treated by you, he will accomplish your objects, if you put up with (some of) his acts (of partiality to demons).

Śrī Śuka said :

26. Oh King ! Gods who were thus advised by god Brahmā, were relieved of their feverish anxiety. They approached the sage Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, embraced him and addressed him thus.

Gods said :

27. We have approached your hermitage as unexpected guests. May you be blessed, Oh child. Please accomplish the wish of your elders (uncles) as demanded by the occasion.

28. It is the highest duty of virtuous sons to serve their parents, even though the sons themselves have got children. It is much more so in the case of celibates, Oh Brahman.

29. The preceptor who invests the sacred thread and initiates in the Vedas, is the embodiment of the Vedas. Father is god Brahmā (the creator) incarnate. A brother is as if an image of Indra, the chief of gods. The mother is a veritable earth personified.

30. A sister is the embodiment of tenderness. An unexpected visitor is the soul of *dharma* (the god of righteousness). And the guest staying with us is the god of Fire incarnate and all beings are the representations of the Supreme Soul of Lord Viṣṇu. (Therefore, one should look upon all beings like himself).

31. Oh child, you should carry out our request and remove by your penance the afflictions of us, your elders, who are suffering from defeat at the hands of our enemies.

32. We select you, who are possessed of Brahmanic power, and a Brāhmaṇa deserving respect, as our preceptor, so that we shall easily and thoroughly vanquish our enemies by the virtue of your spiritual power.

33. They (the wise) do not censure the act of bowing at the feet of younger persons for the accomplishment of their objects. Mere age is not the ground of superiority when one is wanting in Vedic knowledge.

The Sage (Śuka) said :

34. The great sage Viśvarūpa who was so earnestly entreated by the gods for accepting priesthood, became pleased and spoke to them in soft words.

Viśvarūpa said :

35. Priesthood has been condemned by the righteous ones as leading to the loss of spiritual power. But, Oh masters, how a person like me who deserves to be commanded by Lords of worlds like you, can refuse your request, for compliance (of your orders) is in my real interest.

36. To those who decide not to possess anything, grain that is gleaned after the removal of corn from the fields and the grains of corn found after the market-day is over, form the wealth. I have performed my righteous duties with that wealth. Oh suzerine Lords, how should I accept the reproachful priesthood which pleases only those who are wretched in intellect.

37. I, however, do not refuse what has been requested by elders like you. Whatever insignificant is desired by you, I shall accomplish it, at the cost of my life and means.

Śri Śuka said :

38. The great ascetic Viśvarūpa who was thus solicited for accepting priesthood promised them (the gods) thus, and carried out his duties of priesthood, with perfect concentration.

39. The (spiritually) powerful sage snatched the fortune of the enemies of gods even though it was protected by the incantations and spells of Śukra, and by the prayer (lore) of Viṣṇu, i.e. by *Nārāyaṇa Kavaca*, gave it to Indra.

40. The noble-minded Viśvarūpa initiated Mahendra in that lore, and Indra, the thousand-eyed god, became powerful and protected by that lore, vanquished the armies of demons.

41.* Indra, the leader of all gods, entered the spiritual coat of armour called *Nārāyaṇa Kavaca* and always scored victories over the demons, like a lion over ordinary beasts, Oh child.

CHAPTER EIGHT

(*The Nārāyaṇa-Kavaca explained*)

The King enquired:

1-2: Oh venerable Sir, please teach me the protective prayer of Nārāyaṇa which serves as an armour, and protected by which, Indra, the god with thousand eyes, sportfully but thoroughly vanquished the soldiers of the enemies with their horses and chariots, and enjoyed the sovereignty of the three worlds, and protected by which he conquered his enemies who attacked him with raised arms, in the battle.

Śrī Śuka replied:

3. The priest Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, when solicited, explained to the great Indra, the protective prayer called Nārāyaṇa Kavaca. Listen to it with concentrated mind.

4-6. "When a danger is impending, a person should wash his hands and feet, and sip water as *ācamana*. He should put on a ring of the Kuśa grass round his finger, and sit with his face turned to the North. Thus purified and observing silence, he should perform *Nyāsa*, consecrating the various parts of the body and hands with the *mantras* or sacred formulae (one of eight syllables viz. *Oṁ namo Nārāyaṇāya* and the other of twelve syllables, viz. *Oṁ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should put on the armour (protective covering) sacred to lord Nārāyaṇa, by contemplating the Lord (with the eight-syllabled *mantra—Oṁ namo Nārāyaṇāya*) located in the feet, in the knee-joints, the thighs, the stomach, the heart and the chest, the mouth, the crown of the head (thus spiritualizing the

*VJ's text adds this verse.

whole body with the protective *mantra* of Nārāyaṇa) or perform the same in the reverse order (technically known as *Saṁhāra Nyāsa*).

7. He should then perform the *karanyāsa*—the spiritualization of the hands—with the secret incantation or *mantra* consisting of twelve syllables (*Oṁ namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should deposit spiritual power beginning with the sacred syllable *Oṁ* and ending with *ya* in his fingers and joints of the thumbs.

(The method of spiritual insulation against dangers with the mantra *Oṁ Viṣṇave namaḥ* is explained).

8. He should deposit OM (the first syllable of the mantra *Oṁ Viṣṇave namaḥ*) in the heart, *vi* on the crown of the head, *ṣ* in the middle of the eyebrows, and *ṇa* in the tuft of the hair on the head.

9-10. The syllable *ve* should be used (to spiritualize) the two eyes and *na* be deposited in all joints (of the body). He should contemplate the syllable *ma* as the missile. He should direct in all (the ten) directions the syllable *maḥ* (ma with a *visarga*), and ending with the sound phaṭ (for casting the spiritual protection on all sides, to shut out evil spirits—the words to be used while snapping the middle finger and the thumb are maḥ astrāya phaṭ). Thus a wise man becomes the mantra *Oṁ Viṣṇave namaḥ* incarnate.

11. He should then meditate on the Supreme Lord endowed with six potencies (viz. sovereignty of the universe, righteousness, glory, affluence, supreme knowledge and detachment from the world) and should contemplate himself as identical with him. He should then repeat the following mantra viz., *Nārāyaṇa kavaco* as the embodiment of learning, energy and penance.

12. May Hari, designated by the sacred syllable OM, afford me protection on all sides and in every respect—Hari who has placed his lotus-like feet on the back of the king of birds, viz., Garuḍa; who possesses eight spiritual powers (*siddhis-aṇimā* etc.) and who is endowed with eight arms in which he wields eight weapons, viz. conch, discus, a shield, sword, mace, arrows, bow and a noose.

13. May Viṣṇu in the form of the Fish (Incarnation)

protect me from aquatic animals and the noose of Varuṇa in waters. May Vāmana who has assumed the form of a young boy by his magic power protect me on land. May Trivikrama who has assumed the cosmic form protect me in the skies.

14. May the mighty Lord Nṛsiṁha (the Man-Lion form of Viṣṇu), the vanquisher of the king of demon-forces (Hiraṇyakaśipu), at the release of whose tremendous peals of roaring laughter, the cardinal points reverberated violently, and the embryos (from the wombs of Asura women) were discharged, protect me, in dangerous situations like jungles, battle-fronts and others.

15. May the boar-incarnation of Lord Hari, who uplifted the sphere of the earth with his tusk, and who is the embodiment of Sacrifice (yajña) protect me on the road (while travelling). May Paraśurāma shield me (from dangers) on mountain-peaks and may Rāma, the elder brother of Bharata, along with Lakṣmaṇa, protect me in long journeys (or foreign lands).

16. May Lord Nārāyaṇa shield me from black magic and commissions of mistakes of all kinds. May the sage Nara protect (me) from pride; Datta, the Lord of *yoga*, guard me against pitfalls in the practice of yoga. May Kapila, the controller of (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) *guṇas* protect me from the bondage of *karma*.

17. May Sanatkumāra save me from the god of Love; May the horseheaded God (Viṣṇu), from (neglecting in payment of obeisance to (images of) gods situated on the way. May the prominent divine sage Nārada, from the (thirty-two)[285]

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285. VD. quotes from Pañcarātra, the list of 32 transgressions in the worship of god Viṣṇu. They may be translated as follows :—

(1) To enter a temple in a vehicle or without removing even wooden sandals; (2) to neglect serving in celebrations (the *utsavas*) of gods; (3) to fail to bow to an image of god after seeing it; (4) to bow to god in an impure condition (as in the mourning period); (5) to salute with one hand (instead of folding both the hands); (6) merely to circumambulate the image of the deity without stopping to bow to it, after completing each circle; (7) to sit with legs stretched before god's image; (8) to squat raising one knee and encircling them with hands before the deity: (9) to take meals in front of the deity; (10) to sleep before deity; (11) to tell a lie in the deity's presence; (12) to talk loudly; (13) to speak between each other: (14) to cry loudly and (15) to quarrel before the god's

transgressions in worshipping the Supreme person. May Hari in the Tortoise-form save me from all kinds of hells.

18. May Lord Dhanvantari (the physician incarnation) protect me from unwholesome food; may Lord Ṛṣabha, the subduer of his mind, from the pairs of opposites (pleasure-pain, heat-cold) and from fear; may Yajña, from the censure of the world; Balabhadra, from the death and violence at the hands of others (or from Yama); Lord Śeṣa, the king of serpents, from the revengeful race of serpents (called Krodhavaśa).

19. May venerable Vyāsa (Dvaipāyana) guard me against ignorance, Lord Buddha save me from heretical doctrines and negligence of duties; may Kalki who has specially taken this noble incarnation for the protection of Dharma (righteousness), protect me from the Kali age, the dirtiest of all aeons.

20. May Lord Keśava protect me with his mace in the morning (the 1st sixth part of the day); may Kṛṣṇa who has taken a flute in his hands, protect me in the *Saṅgava* period (next sixth part of the day); may Nārāyaṇa with his javeline held up (protect me) in the forenoon; may Viṣṇu with the discus Sudarśana in his hand, shield me at mid-day.

21. May god Madhusūdana, the wielder of the terrible bow, protect me in the afternoon; may god Mādhava of three forms (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra), in the evening. May Hṛṣīkeśa protect me in the first sixth part of the night; and Padmanābha alone during the second part and even at midnight.

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image; (16) to trouble or (17) to favour another; (18) to speak cruel words in the presence of the Deity; (19) to cover one's self with a blanket; (20) to speak ill of others (21) or to eulogize others in god's presence (22) to utter obscene words; (23) flatuence or breaking wind; (24) to offer ordinary material for worship when one can afford the better; (25) to eat without offering it as *naivedya* to the Deity; (26) not to offer fruits or flowers peculiar to and available in the season to god first before distributing them to others; (27) to offer a fruit etc. a part of which has been already eaten or taken by others; (28) to sit with one's back turned towards the Deity; (29) to bow to other persons before offering obeisance to the Deity; (30) negligence in greeting one's preceptor and failure to speak to him; (31) self-extolment and (32) scandalising any deity in the presence of god Viṣṇu's image.

22. May the Supreme Ruler bearing the Śrī-Vatsa mark protect me in the latter part of the night, and god Janārdana, carrying the sword, at about dawn (the fifth part of the night); may god Dāmodara at dawn; and Viṣṇu the Lord of the universe who manifested himself as Time (or the destroyer of all) protect me during twilights.

23. The discus Sudarśana, the rim of which is fierce like fire raging at the time of the destruction of the universe, whirls about when discharged by the Lord. Oh Sudarśana do completely and thoroughly burn down the inimical forces to ashes just as fire, helped by the friendly (favourable) wind, immediately consumes (heaps of) dry grass.

24. Oh mace (Kaumodakī)! You are dear to the invincible Lord. The sparks discharged by you are as formidable as the blow of Indra's Vajra (or thunderbolt), thoroughly crush down to powder all the evil spirits like Kūṣmāṇḍa, Vināyaka, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, goblins and *grahas* (spirits harassing children). Reduce to powder all my enemies.

25. Oh excellent Conch Pāñcajanya: Blown by Lord Kṛṣṇa you, by your terrific blast, shock the hearts of enemies with convulsions of fear. May you drive away demonic spirits like Yātudhānas, Pramathas, ghosts, Mātṛkā (female spirits posing as mothers) Piśācas, Brahma-rākṣasas, and other evil-eyed spirits.

26. Oh sharp-edged excellent sword Nandaka! When directed by the Lord cut down to pieces all the army of my enemies. Oh shield brilliant like hundred Moons (decked with hundred moon-like buttons), cover up the eyes of the enemies, destroy the sight of the evil-eyed enemies.

27-28. May all the *grahas* (planets) and comets, Ketus, human beings, reptiles, carnivorous animals, Bhūtas (goblins), and sins which caused us fear, who stood in the way of our welfare, go immediately to utter destruction through the missile in the form of the utterance of the Divine name and form.

29. May the mighty Lord Garuḍa who is the embodiment of the Veda and who is extolled in *Bṛhad*, *Rathantara* and other *Sāma* hymns and Viṣvaksena protect us from all dangers with (utterance of) their names.

30. May all the names, forms, vehicles, arms of Lord

Hari protect us from all dangers. May his excellent attendants guard our intellect, *Indriyās* (cognitive and conative powers), mind and vital airs.

31. The glorious Lord himself factually constitutes everything gross and subtle, with or without forms. By the force of this truth may all our troubles come to an end.

32. To those who have realised the identity of the Lord with themselves, the Lord himself stands undifferentiated. But he with his own Māyā wields powers known as ornaments, weapons and insignia.

33. On the strength of the same factual reality, may the omniscient glorious Lord Hari protect us everywhere at all times, with all his manifestations, as he is omnipresent.

34. May the glorious Lord Narasiṁha who dispels the fear of the world by his roar and who eclipses the brightness of all luminaries by his all-absorbing brilliance and splendour, protect us in all directions, in the corners of directions, in the upward and downward directions, on all sides, from within and from without.

35. Oh Indra, this spiritual armour imbued with the power and spirit of Nārāyaṇa has been taught to you. Equipped with this spiritual armour, you will easily conquer the leaders of the Asura hosts.

36. Whomsoever does the wearer of this (*Nārāyaṇa Kavaca*) see with his eyes or touch with his feet, he is instantaneously freed from fear.

37. From no quarter does fear affect him who possesses this mantra. Neither from kings, robbers, evil planets (and such other wicked powers) nor from ferocious animals like tigers has he anything to fear.

38. In ancient times, there was a Brāhmaṇa of Kuśika *gotra* who had this sacred mantra mastered by him. He cast off his body by yogic process in a desert.

39. Once upon a time Citraratha, the Lord of Gandharvas, surrounded by ladies crossed in his aerial car the place of the death of the Brāhmaṇa.

40. Immediately he fell down along with his heavenly car with his head downwards. On the advice of sage Vālakhilya, he collected together the bones of the Brāhmaṇa and

immersed them in the Sarasvatī where it bends to the East. He took his bath and returned home amazed (at this instance).

Śrī Śuka said :

41. He who listens to this *Kavaca* at the opportune time (of fear, danger etc.) and devoutly fixes his mind on this Mantra becomes free from fear in every respect, and is reverentially respected by living beings.

42. Indra, the performer of hundred sacrifices, learnt this sacred lore (*Nārāyaṇa Kavaca*) from Viśvarūpa. He conquered the demons in the battle and enjoyed the sovereignty of the three worlds.

CHAPTER NINE

(Viśvarūpa killed. Gods defeated by Vṛtra, advised to approach Dadhīci)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh Parīkṣit (the scion of the Bharata race), we have heard the report that Viśvarūpa had three heads, one used to drink Soma, the other wine, and the third used to eat food.

2. They say that in sacrifices, he directly offered the share of gods to them with due respect declaring loudly their names (e.g. *Indrāya idam*—this is the share of Indra), for gods were his forefathers.

3. Himself being the sacrificer, he managed secretly to offer the share in the sacrifices to the Asuras also, for due to his affection to his mother, he oblated some share to them.

4. Indra, the king of gods, noticed his contempt and faithlessness to gods and his sham righteousness. Being afraid (lest Asuras should be powerful) he immediately cut down his (Viśvarūpa's) heads in wrath.

5. The head that used to drink Soma became the bird Kapiñjala; the head drinking wine, a sparrow (Kalaviṅka); the head eating food became the Tittiri bird.

6. Even though Indra was powerful enough, he accepted the sin of assassinating a Brāhmaṇa with both his hands folded. But at the end of the year for self-purification of the elements constituting himself, he distributed that sin proportionately in four parts to the earth, water, trees and young women.

7. They say that the earth accepted the fourth part of the sin on condition that pits excavated in it are (automatically) filled up (in due course). Barren soil is the form of the *Brahmahatyā* which became manifested in the earth.

8. The trees accepted one-fourth of the sin on condition of the boon that a chopped part of the trees will grow with greater force. *Brahmahatyā* is seen exhibited in trees in the form of gum.

9. Women took over one-fourth of the sin on condition of getting the boon that they would ever cherish the passion of love (even during pregnancy). This sin (of killing a Brāhmaṇa) appears in the form of menstrual discharge from month to month in them.

10. The waters accepted the (remaining) one-fourth of the sin on condition of increasing the quantity of the substance with which it is mixed. The sin appears in the form of bubbles and foam on the water. He who throws away the bubbles etc. removes that sin from water.

11. Tvaṣṭṛ whose son was slain (by Indra) then performed a sacrifice for the birth of an enemy, the killer of Indra: "Oh enemy of Indra grow in strength and kill the enemy (Indra) without delay" (prayed Tvaṣṭṛ).

12. Then arose from Dakṣiṇāgni or *Anvahārya-pacana*, a demon terrific in appearance like the god of death, at the end of the destruction of the worlds, at the end of Yugas.

13. Everyday he increased in size, in all directions, to the extent of the distance covered by the shot of an arrow. He looked like the burnt top of a mountain and was bright like the mass of evening clouds.

14. His hair of the head and beard was red like heated copper and his eyes were fierce like the mid-day Sun.

15. He, as it were, held the vault of the heaven pierced

with his brilliant trident. He was dancing and roaring and was shaking the earth by his gait.

16. By his deep valley-like mouth he was as if drinking the surface of the sky, and was licking the stars with his tongue, and was as it were swallowing the three worlds.

17. He was now and then yawning his mouth which displayed his terrible tusks—seeing him people were stricken with panic and ran away to all the ten directions.

18. That most ferocious wicked demon was called Vṛtra as he, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, covered the whole world with the darkness, by the shadow of his person.

19. The prominent leaders of gods, along with their armies, attacked him, and discharged at him streams of their respective divine missiles and arms. But he swallowed them up completely.

20. The gods were thereby amazed. All of them got despondent. With their splendour eclipsed, they approached Nārāyaṇa, with their minds composed, as he is the *antaryāmin*, the inner controller.

21. May we get protection from him (the Supreme Lord) of whom even the god of Death (or the god presiding over Time) is afraid—the god of death to whom the five elements (constituting the universe) viz., the wind, the sky, the fire, the water and the earth, and three worlds (along with their denizens) and (the rulers of the worlds like) god Brahmā and others and we (ordinary) gods pay homage out of great fear.

22. Like an ignoramous person desiring to cross the sea with the help of a dog's tail, is he who approaches for protection to someone else than him (the Supreme Lord) who is absolutely free from egotism (or curiosity), perfectly serene and passionless, all whose wishes are fulfilled through the realization of his own blissful self and is unconditioned by limitations.

23. The same god, in his fish incarnation, to whose broad big horn Manu fastened his boat in the form of the earth and crossed the danger of deluge, will certainly protect us, his dependants, from the danger caused by Vṛtra, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ—a danger which is difficult to be got over.

24. Formerly (at the beginning of the creation of the universe) god Brahmā, the self-born deity, was all alone. He was all but fallen from his lotus (-abode, growing out of the navel of Viṣṇu) in the terrible waters of the deluge, by the roars of the heavy billows whipped up by stormy winds. But he got over from that danger by (the grace of) Viṣṇu. May the same God be our protector.

25. That Supreme Sovereign, though all alone, has created us by his Māyā. It is through his grace and by imitating him that we carry on the work of creation. We each being proud as independent rulers, cannot see his form, though he is present before us.

26. When he finds that we are excessively harassed by our enemies, he, though eternally existent, by his Māyā takes incarnation by assuming forms of gods (e. g. Vāmana), sages (e. g. Paraśurāma), sub-human beings (e. g. Varāha, Nṛsiṁha), and human beings (Rāma, Kṛṣṇa), in every yuga-period and protects us, regarding us as his own.

27. To that God alone we shall all resort for asylum as he is worthy of it. He is our own Deity (object of worship). He manifests himself as the universe and yet is different from it. As the ultimate cause of it, he is himself both *Pradhāna* and *Puruṣa*. The Supreme Soul will positively confer happiness and prosperity on us who are his devotees.

Śrī Śuka said :

28. While they were praying thus, Oh great King, the Lord revealed himself in their hearts, as wielding a conch, disc and a mace.

29-30. On seeing the Lord whose eyes were like full-blown autumnal lotus, and waited upon on all sides by sixteen attendants (like Sunanda and others) who were just like himself (wielding conchs, discs etc.) with the exception of *Śrīvatsa* mark and the *Kaustubha* gem, all of them were overwhelmed with joy, and lay prostrate before him on the ground like a stick, and rising slowly, began to praise him.

The gods said :

31.* Salutations to you whose power (to confer Svarga and other blessings) is (revealed in) the sacrificial performance. Hail to you who are our Age (The Time-Spirit) defining the time limit of the fruits of sacrifices etc. to be enjoyed. Bows to you who hurl your disc (at our enemies to destroy them). We salute you who are addressed with a number of blessed epithets.

32. Oh Lord ! One who is born posterior to the Creation (of the universe) is incapable of knowing the highest nature which transcends the *guṇas*. We can merely bow to you who are the controller of the three courses of *guṇas* (or the modes of existence as gods, human and sub-human beings).

33. Bow to you, Oh Lord, who are designated by the syllable OM ! Oh Nārāyaṇa (occupant of Cosmic Waters), Vāsudeva (the Abode of the worlds), the most ancient person, the supreme person, possessor of supreme glory and auspiciousness, the supremely blessed and merciful, the absolute (one without a second), the support of the world, the only protector of the universe, the ruler of all, consort of Lakṣmī (the goddess of fortune and bliss) !

When the ascetics of the highest *paramahaṁsa* order deeply meditate upon you by means of the highest concentration of the mind through eight-fold yogic processes the real *dharma* of the *Paramahaṁsas*, viz., the adoration of the Lord, becomes manifest and realized in their pure hearts. Thereby the door of darkness of their hearts is broken open and you stand revealed as the inherent bliss of the Soul, in the regions of their hearts.

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* VR. : Hail to you who have empowered sacrifices and made them the cause of creation, and who bless (us) with longevity for performance of sacrifices and other forms of worship. You wield the disc Sudarśana for the protection of your devotees and the remembrance of whose glorious name is efficacious enough to ward off danger immediately.

VJ. : We salute you who are the creator of sacrifices. You keep *jīvas* bound in *saṁsāra*. You continue the cycle of creation and destruction again and again. You incarnated as Sudarśana (for the protection of the world). You are addressed with various sanctifying names. (We bow to you).

34. You create, protect and destroy this universe constituted of (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) *guṇas* though you yourself are without any support, body or form, without any expectation of cooperation and help from us (the divinities presiding over various organs etc.) and without undergoing any transformation (within yourself). The cause of this sport of yours is simply beyond (our) comprehension.

35. Moreover, we do not properly understand whether your worship, like Devadatta (an ordinary person who builds a house and helplessly experiences joys and sorrows while staying therein) enters (as an *antaryāmin*) the various bodies (which are the products of *guṇas*) and depending upon other (*karmic*) forces helplessly reap the fruit of good or bad actions or whether you are an unconcerned witness (of such happenings) remaining delighted in yourself and naturally unruffled with your spiritual essence undiminished.

36. As a matter of fact, there is no contradiction in both the positions which are compatible in Your Lordship who are endowed with infinite variation of excellences, the absolute ruler of unfathomable greatness. You are far beyond the range of controversies of modern disputants who are strongly prejudiced as their minds are bewildered by the study of heretic scriptures teeming with doubts, (false) reasoning, wrong conclusions, (untrustworthy) authorities and bad logic. Your real essential Self is absolute, transcending all the products of Māyā. What is there that cannot be predicated of you, who, remaining concealed under Māyā, make the Māyā create any impossibility and your real self is free from both the above (contradictory) propositions. (There is no contradiction as there is no duality in you).

37. Just as a piece of rope appears to be a serpent (garland etc.) to those whose minds are prepossessed with the false notion of a serpent etc., (but appears factually a piece of rope to the right thinking men), you show yourself according to the views of the right-thinking persons or of prejudiced wrong-thinkers.

38. Again, the Lord is certainly the real essence of every existing thing and abides in all things. He is the ruler of all. He is the cause of all the causes (*Prakṛti* or *Brahma*) of

the whole of the universe. The illuminating power of the objects (intellect, senses) indicates the *jīva* but not him as he abides in all, as the Inner Controller (*Sarvāntaryāmin*). He is the only true existence conclusively left over (proved) by the process of elimination of double negation (*neti neti*).

39. Oh slayer of (the demon) Madhu! By tasting but once a small drop of the nectar-like sweet ocean of your glories, incessant stream of rapturous joy begins to flow uninterruptedly in the heart of great devotees. It makes them forget the apparent trifling bits of pleasures of senses actually seen (enjoyed on the earth) or heard (of as available in the heaven)—the devotees whose hearts find incessant and ecstatic delight in the Lord who is beloved friend of all beings and is the Soul (the Inner Controller—*antaryāmin*) of the entire universe. Under these circumstances, how is it that the saintly persons (devoid of love, hate etc.) who are skilful in achieving their high purpose (viz. Liberation) and who look upon you as their dear friend and a well-wisher, give up the service of your lotus-like feet whereby there is no return to the *Saṁsāra*, the transmigration of the Soul.

40. Oh Lord whose manifestation and mansion are the three worlds (or Oh Soul and the abode of the three worlds)! Oh God who dominate the three worlds (or who covered the universe in three steps)! Oh Guide of the three worlds whose majestic charm captivates (the minds of) the worlds! Even the demons like the sons of Diti and Danu and others are your glorious forms. Considering (however) that this is not the appropriate time for (giving free rein to) their (destructive) activities, you as a wielder of the rod (of punishment), dispense punishment (to them) proportionate to (the gravity of) their offence by assuming, through your Māyā Power, forms of gods (e.g. Vāmana), men (e.g. Rāma, Kṛṣṇa), beasts (such as Boar or Varāha), half-man half-beast (e.g. Narasiṁha, Hayagrīva), aquatic animal (e.g. the Fish or the Tortoise). In the same way, Oh glorious Lord, if you deem it fit, kill this son of Tvaṣṭṛ (viz. Vṛtra).

41. Oh Father! (Nay) Oh grand-father! Since we are yours and have completely submitted to you, and since our heart has been firmly attached (lit. fettered) with the bond of

love (evolved) through (our) meditation on the pair of your lotus-like feet, and as you have accepted us as your own by the revelation of your person, be pleased to cure the fever (torments) of our hearts, by your bright, charming, soothing, smiling looks which are rendered still more gracious by your compassion and with the nectarine drops in the form of sweet words proceeding from your lips, Oh Faultless one !

42. Oh glorious Lord ! To what extent can we respectfully communicate to you our specific entreaty any more than the sparks of fire (which emit little light) can bring illumination to the god of Fire ? (as a matter of fact, it is superfluous). For you indulge in your pastime with the divine Māyā which is the instrumental cause of the creation, maintenance and the destruction of the whole world, and you, as Brahman as well as *Antaryāmin* (the Inner Controller of bodies) reside within the hearts of all the multitudes of beings, and from without as *Pradhāna* (the Primordial matter) you are their material cause, and thus experience the peculiarities of the place, time, body and conditions (of all beings). With your body (untouched and untainted) like the sky, you are a detached witness of the thoughts of all. You are the transcendental *Brahman*, the Supreme Soul.

43. (You are omniscient). Hence please accomplish for us of your own accord (without waiting for being requested for it by us) that object (of ours) desiring which we have resorted to you and have sought refuge under the shade of your lotus-like feet which removes the fatigue of the transmigration of the Soul resulting from various sins. And you are the glorious Lord and the Supreme Teacher.

44. Therefore, Oh Lord, kill Vṛtra who has already swallowed up our powers as well as missiles, Oh Kṛṣṇa, and is now devouring the three worlds.

45. Salutations to you Hari, the reliever of sufferings—to Hari who is absolutely pure and abides in the cavity of heart remaining witness to the intellect etc. You are the eternal Bliss incarnate. Your glory is resplendent. You are beginningless and are cherished as a treasure by the virtuous. To wanderers in *Saṁsāra* seeking refuge with you, you are the

final destination to be reached at the end of *Saṁsāra*, the excellent fruit to be coveted.

46. Oh King ! Being thus reverentially and earnestly praised by gods, Lord Hari listened to the prayer offered to him and being highly pleased, he addressed them (as follows:).

The Lord said :

47. I am highly pleased with you, Oh great gods, for the knowledge enshrined in your eulogy which will awaken the memory of transcendental nature of their real Self among the beings and engender in them devotion unto me.

48. What is difficult to be attained when I am pleased, Oh great gods ? But he who knows the truth and cherishes devotion to me, does not covet for anything else than Myself.

49. The miserly fool who looks upon the products of the *guṇas* as real, does not know what is really good for himself and he who confers those objects (products of *guṇas*) on them at their request is of the same description (is equally ignorant).

50. A wise man, knowing for himself what the highest good is, does not prescribe the (path of) *Karma* (ritualistic actions) to the ignorant, just as an excellent physician does not allow the ailing patient unwholesome food even if he (the patient) may desire it.

51. May good betide you, Oh Indra ! Without delay you all go to Dadhyaṅ (Dadhīca or Dadhīci), the foremost of sages and beg of him his body which has been reinforced by *Brahma-Vidyā*, observance of vows and austerities.

52. Dadhyaṅ has completely realized his identity with Pure Brahman (untainted by Māyā or has mastered the *Pravargya*). He initiated the gods Aśvinikumāras in that knowledge which came to be called *Aśva-śiras*—horse headed (as at the time of imparting the knowledge, the sage Dadhyaṅ had a horse's head instead of a human one.[286] That Brahma-lore conferred immortality (*mokṣa* while alive) on those gods.

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286. Purāṇic quotations in the commentaries of ŚR., VR. etc. give the story as follows :

When Aśvinikumāras sought initiation in *Brahma-vidyā* from Dadhyaṅ, the sage was engaged in some religiuos rites. He told them to see him on

53. Dadhyaṅ, the son of Atharvan, taught the impregnable protective armour (called the *Nārāyaṇa kavaca*) full of my essence and imparted it to Tvaṣṭṛ. Tvaṣṭṛ gave it to his son Viśvarūpa who in turn taught it to you.

54. The sage is well-versed in Dharma (righteousness). When begged by Aśvinikumāras (your physicians) he will offer his body (i.e. the limbs of the body) to you. Then with the (bones of the requisite) limbs, the most powerful weapon will be forged by Viśvakarman (your artisan). With that weapon imbued with my power, you will cut the head of Vṛtra.

55. When he (Vṛtra) is killed, you will regain your former glory, missiles, weapons and wealth. May you be happy ! Nobody can trouble or destroy those who are devoted to me.

CHAPTER TEN*

(With Vajra forged, Indra fights)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The glorious Hari, the protector of the universe, thus instructed Indra and disappeared at that very spot, while the gods, with unwinking eyes, were simply gazing.

2. Oh Bhārata (Parīkṣit) ! Solicited by gods thus (as per instructions of the Lord), the great-hearted sage of

some other occasion as he was then busy. In the meanwhile, Indra came to the sage and advised him not to impart Brahma-vidyā to Aśvins as they were merely physicians and hence unqualified. He further threatened to behead him, in case he initiated them in that lore. When Aśvinikumāras approached the sage and learnt of Indra's threat, they proposed a surgical operation in which the sage's head would be replaced by a horse's head and requested him to teach through the horse's mouth. In case Indra beheaded the horse's head, they would substitute his original human head. The sage preferred to keep his word and not his head. He allowed the Aśvins to perform the operation and imparted to them the Brahmavidyā with a horse's head on his shoulders.

* JG—No commentary on this chapter.

Atharvan Clan was delighted and addressed them jokingly (with a smile), as follows:

3. "Oh gods! (Presiding deities of the senses as you are) can you not imagine the excruciating and unbearable pain caused to embodied beings at the time of death—a pain that deprives them of consciousness.

4. In this world, (one's own) body is the dearest thing coveted by living beings who have a desire to live. Who can dare to donate it even to Viṣṇu, should he beg for it ?"

Gods said :

5. Oh Brahman ! Is there anything which is difficult to part with in the case of great persons like your honour, who are compassionate to all beings, and whose noble deeds are worthy of being praised by people with hallowing reputation.

6. There is no doubt that persons who are solely devoted to achieve their own objects, do not (care to) understand the danger faced by others (the donors). If they could realize it, they would not beg for it. (In the same way, the donor also does not appreciate the difficulty of the seeker of his help). If the donor were (aware of the seeker's danger and) capable of granting it, he would never say "No". (Hence understand our danger and grant our request).

The sage said :

7. It is with a desire to hear from you the (exposition of) Dharma (righteousness) that you were replied that way (by me). Here I cast off my body which is dear to you (due to its utility) as (some day) it is sure to leave me.

8. Oh Lords ! A person who does not desire to earn religious merits out of compassion to living beings or aspire after glory by means of this ephemeral body, deserves to be pitied even by immobile creatures.

9. That one should sympathetically feel sorrow or delight at the grief or joy of other beings, is the eternal law of righteousness (*Dharma*) practised by persons with holy renown.

10. Alas! What a pity! that a mortal does not show benevolence (by helping others) with his wealth, sons and relatives and his body—all of which are transient, of no use to him and (actually) belong to others.

Śri Śuka said :

11. In this way, Dadhyañ, the scion of the Atharvan Clan, made up his mind and uniting his individual Soul with the glorious transcendental Brahman, gave up his ghost.

12. He controlled his senses, vital airs, mind and intellect and fixed his gaze on the Reality. He severed all bonds and established himself in union with the Brahman, and (in the process) was not aware of the falling away of his body.

13. Then Indra was equipped with Vajra (the thunderbolt) forged out of the bones of the sage, by Viśvakarman (the chief artisan of gods). He (Indra) was endowed with the Lord's power and felt himself mighty.

14. Surrounded by all the hosts of gods and eulogised by assemblies of sages, he shone riding his excellent elephant (Airāvata), to the delight of the three worlds.

15. In order to cut him down, Oh King! he attacked vehemently Vṛtra who was surrounded by the leaders of Asura forces, just as wrathful Rudra does in the case of the god of Death (at the end of the world).

16. Then ensued the most ferocious fight between the gods and the demons, on the bank of the Narmadā, at the beginning of the Tretā Age (in the first round of four yugas in this *manvantara*).

17-18. The demons, headed by Vṛtra, did not tolerate the sight of Indra armed with Vajra and resplendent in his original glory and surrounded by Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, Aśvinikumāras, manes, Fire-gods, Wind-gods, Ṛbhus, Sādhyas, and Viśvedevas, on the battle-field.

19-21. Namuci, Śambara, Anarvā, Dvimūrdhā (a two-headed demon), Ṛṣabha, Ambara Hayagrīva (a demon with horse's head), Śaṅkuśiras, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Puloman, Vṛṣaparvan, Praheti, Heti, Utkala, and the sons of Diti and Danu and Yakṣas, Ogres in their thousands, of whom Sumāli and Māli were prominent—all armoured and decorated with gold ornaments—resisted the vanguard of Indra's army which was unapproachable even to the god of Death.

22-23. The haughty and furious demons were fearless and unbewildered. With a lion-like roar, they attacked gods with maces, iron bars, arrows, barbed shafts and javelins.

They covered the leaders of gods with volleys of weapons and missiles like pikes, axes, swords, *Śataghnīs* (cylindrical pieces of wood, 4 cubits long and studded with iron spikes) and *Bhuśuṇḍis* (a Śataghnī-like weapon with iron spikes, one exceeding the other in length), on all sides.

24. The gods, covered with net-like volleys of arrows showered on all sides with one arrow closely following the other, were rendered invisible like luminaries behind the screen of clouds in the sky.

25. The streams of the volleys of missiles and weapons did not reach or touch the soldiers in the army of gods, for they were cut down to pieces in thousands on their way in the sky, by gods with quick hands.

26. When their stock of missiles and weapons was exhausted, they showered the army of gods with mountain peaks, trees and stones, and the gods cut them to pieces as before.

27. Finding that the gods were unhurt and safe despite the volleys of weapons and missiles, and unaffected by trees, shower of stones and different mountain peaks, the demons led by Vṛtra were filled with consternation.

28. Just as abusive language employed by the vulgar against the exalted persons does not disturb them, all the efforts repeatedly made against the army of gods by the demons became ineffectual, as Lord Viṣṇu was favourable to them.

29. The demons who were not devoted to Hari, had their arrogance and pride of fighting crushed, when they found that all their efforts had become infructuous. With their *morale* deeply affected, they thought of fleeing from the battle-field deserting their leader at the initial stage of fighting.

30. The self-possessed warrior Vṛtra saw that his followers are running away. Finding his army broken through terror and fleeing, he laughed loudly and spoke.

31. The heroic person spoke the following words appropriate to the occasion and agreeable to the high-minded souls:

"Oh Vipracitti, Namuci, Puloman, Maya, Anarvan, Śambara, listen to me.

32. This death is inevitable to whoever is born. No escape from any side from this, has been devised (by any one). If the attainment of heaven and glory could follow death, who would not court such a desirable and welcome end ?

33. Two modes of death are approved of (by the great), but they do not easily come to one's lot, namely, (1) he who, engaged in the Yogic process, controls his vital airs, concentrates himself on Brahman and casts off his body and (2) one who, in the fore-front of battle, gives up his body on the battlefield (the bed of warriors), without turning his back."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

(Vṛtra, Hari's devotee, fights)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh King, while he (Vṛtra) was explaining the course of righteousness to the demons, they were struck with terror, and were bent on fleeing, and hence paid no heed to the words of their leader.

2-3. The great Asura, found his army of demons being shattered and scattered like a leaderless mob by gods to whom time was favourable and got enraged. The enemy of Indra, being indignant, was deeply pained, and warding the gods off, he spoke to them scoldingly, Oh King.

4. "What are you gaining by striking on the back of the fleeing soldiers who are no better than the excreta of their mothers ? The slaughter of the cowards does not contribute to the glory or lead to heaven those who pride themselves as valiant.

5. Oh insignificant fellows, if at all you have faith in fighting or some courage at heart and have no longing for sensual vulgar pleasures, try to stand before me at least."

6. The wrathful demon possessed of vast strength and formidable figure, threatened the army of the gods thus and gave out a loud roar which made people lose their consciousness.

7. By that terrible roar of Vṛtra all the hosts of gods verily fell unconscious on the ground as if struck down by a thunderbolt.

8. Just as a leader of a herd of elephants in the period of his youthful madness, tramples over a bed of lotuses, Vṛtra of irrepressible passion for fighting, shaking the earth by his might and with his trident raised, trampled under his feet the army of gods which was terrified and lying with closed eyes.

9. Indra, the wielder of Vajra, saw him and got extremely enraged. He hurled his heavy mace at his enemy who was rushing towards him. But Vṛtra sportively caught it in his left hand while it was coming with irresistible force.

10. The enemy of Indra, possessing terrible prowess, was extremely enraged and by that very mace, he struck the vehicle of the great Indra, viz., the elephant Airāvata on its forehead (its temples). All present in the battlefield warmly appreciated this feat (of Vṛtra).

11. Airāvata which was smitten down by Vṛtra's mace, reeled down like a mountain struck by a thunderbolt. With blood coming out of its mouth, it retreated along with Indra for a distance of seven bows, as it was extremely afflicted with its mouth deeply wounded.

12. The great-souled Vṛtra did not hurl his mace against Indra who was deeply dejected in spirits as his vehicle, viz., the elephant was stunned. Indra whose wounded elephant recovered from its pain, by the touch of Indra's hand dripping with nectar, again took his stand (against Vrtra).

13. Oh King of kings, seeing Indra, his enemy the murderer of his brother, armed with the Vajra (thunderbolt) itching for a fight, he remembered Indra's wicked sinful deed (the murder of his brother) and filled with grief and infatuation he laughed and spoke.

Vṛtra said :

14. How glad I am that you, my enemy, the murderer of a Brāhmana, the slayer of your own preceptor and my brother, have stood before me. Oh most wicked fellow, how lucky is it that I shall discharge my debt by piercing your stony heart with my trident within a short time.

15. Just as a sacrificer desirous of heaven mercilessly lops off the head of a sacrificial beast, you cut off the heads of our innocent elder brother who had realized his Self, was a Brāhmaṇa and your preceptor, and who, reposing full confidence in you about his safety, was engaged in a sacrifice.

16. Being destitute of shame, grace, mercy and glory, you are fit to be censured by man-eaters for your misdeed. With your body painfully torn up by my trident and uncremated the vultures will devour you.

17. I shall propitiate the lords of goblins (*Bhairavas*) along with their retinue, by piercing the necks with my sharpened trident, of those ignorant followers who obey a wicked fellow like you, and who attack me with their missiles raised.

18. Oh valiant Indra, if you will cut off by force my head with the Vajra, I shall have discharged the debt of all beings (by my body) and shall attain to the regions (lit. the dust of the feet) of the high-souled ones.

19. Oh Lord of gods, why do you not hurl your unfailing Vajra on your enemy who is stationed before you. Do not entertain any doubt that like your mace, the Vajra will be ineffectual like a request made to a miserly fellow.

20. Oh Śakra, this Vajra of yours is sharpened and strengthened with the power of Lord Viṣṇu and the austerities of Dadhīci. Kill your enemy by that thunderbolt which is prompted by Viṣṇu's power, because where there is Hari, victory, fortune and excellences are to that side.

21. Concentrating my mind on the lotus-like feet of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa as directed by him, with the ties of attachment to sensual pleasures cut asunder by the force of your Vajra, I shall cast off my body and attain to the region of sages.

22. He does not confer on persons whose minds are absolutely devoted to him, the wealth and affluence of heaven, the earth, and the netherworlds as it engenders passions, fear, anxiety, arrogance, discord, misery and physical pain.

23. Oh Indra, our Master causes obstructions in the efforts for attaining the three objects of human life, (viz, Dharma, Artha and Kāma). The grace of the Lord is to be

inferred from such obstructions, for it is the lot of those votaries who have given up everything for him (and have nothing of their own). This is extremely rare in the case of others.

24. (Contemplating over the Lord, Hari, Vṛtra addresses :) Oh Lord Hari, let me be again the servant of the servants of your devotees whose sole refuge is your feet. May my mind ponder over the excellences of the Lord of my life. May my speech extol them and may my body render service to you.

25. Oh treasury of Bliss and Grace ! I do not aspire after the post of Dhruva which is above the heaven; nor the position of god Brahmā, nor absolute sovereignty over the whole world or the overlordship of a subterranean region, nor do I covet for supernatural yogic powers nor for Liberation (which terminates the cycle of births and deaths)—if it means separation from you.

26. Oh lotus-eyed God, my mind eagerly yearns to see you, just as the unfledged young ones of birds anxiously wait for their mother or young calves tormented with hunger wish for the milk from the udders (of the mother cow) or a beloved lady dejected due to the absence of her lord who has gone to a distant country (waits for her beloved).

27. Bless me with friendship with the devotee of the Lord of excellent renown, while I am wandering in the cycle of Saṁsāra (transmigration of the Soul) as an effect of my *karma* (deeds). I may not form friendship with people whose minds are attached to their bodies, children, wife and house (property) due to the force of your Māyā.

CHAPTER TWELVE

(Vṛtra slain by Indra)

The Sage (Śuka) said:

1. In this way, Vṛtra who was eager to lay down his life (body) in the battle, and who thought death preferable to victory, seized his trident and attacked the Chief of gods, just

as the demon Kaiṭabha did against the Almighty Lord Viṣṇu, on the Cosmic waters of the deluge, Oh King.

2. Then, whirling with force his trident with prongs, dazzling like the fire of *Pralaya* (the dissolution of the universe), he hurled it at the great Indra. The valiant Vṛtra roared aloud and exclaimed in wrath, "Killed are you Oh wicked fellow".

3. Seeing that (trident) darting through the sky with a whirling motion, and unbearable to look at like a dazzling planet or meteor, Indra remained unperturbed. The wielder of thunderbolt i.e. Indra cut it with his Vajra of hundred joints, along with Vṛtra's arm which was long and stout like the body of the serpent lord Vāsuki.

4. Vṛtra whose arm was cut, became extremely enraged and dashing at Indra, he dealt a blow both to Indra and his elephant on the cheek. And the bolt slipped down from the hand of Indra.

5. Gods, demons, the companies of Cāraṇas and Siddhas applauded the most marvellous feat of Vṛtra, but seeing the critical plight of Indra, they shouted loudly in great anxiety, "Alas, Alas".

6. Being very much ashamed, Indra did not pick up his bolt which slipped from his hand in the presence of the enemy. To him Vṛtra said, "Oh Indra, take up your Vajra and kill your enemy. This is not the time for despondency".

7. With the exception of the Omniscient, beginningless, Eternal Person, the Controller of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, victory does not always favour the belligerents equipped with weapons anywhere, as there are some occasions when their bodies are controlled by others (destiny).

8. It is due to the control of God (in the form of Time) that the worlds along with their guardian deities live and act, in spite of their will, like birds caught in a net. Hence it is the Time-spirit alone which is the cause of victory and defeat.

9. Not knowing that the Time (or god) is the cause of the power of the mind, the potency of the sense organs, physical strength, vital breaths, immortality or Liberation and death that people regard this gross body of theirs as the cause (of victory).

10. Just as a wooden doll or a mechanical toy-deer is controlled by the showman or the mechanism, similarly all the *bhūtas* (beings or elements) are subject to the control of god.

11. In the absence of his grace, neither the individual Soul, nor Prakṛti (primordial matter), nor *Mahat* (cosmic intelligence), nor ego, nor elements, nor the cognitive and conative organs or the mind is individually or aggregatively capable of the creative and other activities (pertaining to the universe).

12. He who is ignorant of this, regards his incapable Self as capable of doing this. But it is really the Lord who creates or evolves beings or elements from *Bhūtas*, and devours them through carnivorous beasts or withdraws the elements at his own sweet will.

13. It is at the favourable time that length of life, affluence, glory, power and blessings fall to the lot of man. They are reversed against them even against his will.

14. Therefore, one should be balanced, irrespective of glory and infamy, victory or defeat, pleasure or pain, life or death.

15. He who knows that *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* are the modes of Prakṛti and not the qualities of the Soul, and that the individual Soul is merely the witness of their working, is not subjected to the bondage of *Saṁsāra*.

16. Oh Indra, look at me. I am defeated and deprived of the weapon and my arm in the battle. I am however endeavouring to the best of my ability to take your life.

17. This battle-field is like a gambling house where life is the stake, arrows are the dice and the vehicles like horses, elephants etc. are the board. Here it is not known who will be triumphant and who is defeated (to the last of the fight).

Śrī Śuka said:

18. Having heard the straightforward and guileless speech of Vṛtra, Indra expressed his respect. Picking up his Vajra and overcoming astonishment (at his charitable disposition), he laughed heartily and spoke.

Indra said:

19. Oh son of Danu, you are really a Siddha (one who has attained enlightenment) as your tenor of thought is such. You are a real devotee, with all your being, of the Lord, a friend of the universe.

20. Your respectable self has verily crossed the Māyā (deluding power) of Viṣṇu which infatuates the world, as your honourable self has given up his demonic nature and attained the level of exalted Souls.

21. It is certainly a great wonder that you who are *Rājasic* by nature, entertain unflinching faith and devotion in the glorious Lord Vāsudeva who is the embodiment of Sattva.

22. He who cherishes devotion to the glorious Hari, the bestower of Mokṣa, has as if sported in the ocean of nectar. Of what account are to him waters of the ditches and the pools (i. e. pleasures in the heaven)?

Śrī Śuka said:

23. Oh King, discoursing this way with a desire to ascertain the nature of Dharma (righteousness), those two leading veterans in fight, Indra and Vṛtra, possessed of extraordinary prowess, fought on.

24. Vṛtra, the vanquisher of enemies, whirled his terrible bludgeon made of black iron and hurled that dreadful weapon with his left hand at Indra, Oh noble king.

25. But the god with his bolt of hundred joints, simultaneously cut down that iron bludgeon as well as Vṛtra's hand which was like the trunk of an elephant.

26. The demon with both of his arms cut at the roots and streaming forth profuse blood shone like a mountain with wings chopped, and dislodged from the sky by being struck down by the wielder of thunderbolt.

27-29. With his lower jaw touching the earth and his upper jaw brushing the heavens, and with his mouth deep like the sky and with his lusty serpentlike tongue and with his large teeth looking like the god of Death, he was as it were swallowing the three worlds. With his extremely gigantic body he was shaking the mountains with his violent motion, and like a big mountain moving on feet, he was pounding the earth. He

thus assailed Indra and swallowed him up along with his vehicle namely the elephant Airāvata.

30. (Vṛtra swallowed them) as a big serpent of immense strength and indomitable power swallows up an elephant. Gods along with the protectors of the worlds and great sages observed Indra being swallowed up by Vṛtra and wailed despondently "Alas, how unfortunate"!

31. Though Indra was swallowed up by the chief of demons, he entered Vṛtra's belly. Protected as he was by the armour of the Supreme Person (Nārāyaṇa Kavaca) and by his Yogic powers and Māyā, he did not die.

32. Ripping open the abdomen of Vṛtra by his Vajra, the powerful vanquisher of Bala, came out of it and by his power lopped off the enemy's head, like the peak of a mountain, by his Vajra.

33. Whirling very rapidly and cutting on all sides the neck of Vṛtra, Vajra felled it on the ground at the proper time of Vṛtra's death in as many days (360) as are required for the heavenly bodies like the Sun for two *Ayanas* (the apparent motions of the Sun from the northernmost to the southernmost point and vice versa.

34. At that time kettle-drums were sounded in the sky, Gandharvas, Siddhas along with companies of great sages, joyously showered flowers on Indra glorifying him with panegyrics describing his great feat of killing Vṛtra.

35. Oh vanquisher of the enemies, while all people were looking on, from the body of Vṛtra there came forth a light (his effulgent Soul) and merged in the Supreme Being, transcending the universe.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

(*The Triumph of Indra*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When Vṛtra was killed, all the three worlds along with their guardian deities, with the exception of Indra, became immediately free from feverish anxiety and felt felicitous at heart.

2. Without bidding good-bye to Indra, gods, sages, manes, Bhūtas, demons and the followers of gods returned to their respective regions. Then dispersed Brahmā, Rudra, Indra and others. [According to GS, Indra did not return to Svarga. The very moment he killed Vṛtra, the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa (*Brahma-hatyā*) assailed him and Indra had to fly away hurriedly and hide himself in the Mānasa lake. Indra's restoration took place after his performance of a horse sacrifice].

The King said :

3. Oh Sage, I wish to hear the cause of Indra's unhappiness whereby gods became happy, while Indra suffered agony.

Śrī Śuka said :

4. All gods along with sages who were agitated over the prowess of Vṛtra, begged Indra to slay him, but Indra being afraid of *Brahma-hatyā* did not wish to do so.

Indra said :

5. The sin of killing Viśvarūpa, a Brāhmaṇa, was graciously shared by women, the earth, the water and trees. Where can I wipe off the sin of killing Vṛtra, another Brāhmaṇa ?

Śrī Śuka said :

6. Having listened to him, the sages assured him, "May good betide you ! We shall help you in performing a horse-sacrifice. Please do not get afraid (of *Brahma-hatyā*).

7. Worshipping Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Man, the universal Soul and the Controller of the Universe, by perform-

ance of the Horse-sacrifice, you will be absolved of the sin of massacring the world. What of one Brāhmaṇa like Vṛtra.

8. By singing the Lord's name, a person who slays a Brāhmaṇa or his own father, or a cow, or his own mother, or a preceptor, a sinner who eats a dog, or is of the lowest caste, becomes purified.

9. If with faith and reverence, the great sacrifice called *Aśvamedha* (Horse-sacrifice) be performed with our co-operation, you will not be affected by sin, even if you kill all the mobile and immobile creation along with Brahmā. Then what of killing a wicked demon like Vṛtra?

Śrī Śuka said :

10. Thus strongly impelled by Brāhmaṇas, Indra killed his enemy Vṛtra. As soon as Vṛtra was killed, the sin of slaying a Brāhmaṇa attacked Indra.

11. Indra suffered agonies by that and did not get any peace of mind, for to selfrespecting persons, excellences like sovereignty do not give any pleasure if they bring censure.

12-13. He saw the *Brahma-hatyā* chasing after him. She was like a Cāṇḍāla woman in form. Her body was trembling with age and she was a victim of consumption. She put on blood-stained garments. With her grey hair scattered, she was asking Indra to stop and stand. She was polluting the atmosphere on the road with her breath stinking like rotten fish.

14. The thousand-eyed god ran in all directions in the sky, Oh Lord of the earth. He speedily rushed to the north-east and entered the Mānasa lake, Oh king.

15. He stayed within the fibres of a lotus therein without getting any subsistence, for he had the fire-god as his purveyor of food.[287] He remained unperceived in the water for one thousand years, pondering over his absolution from the sin of *Brahma-hatyā*.

16. During that period (of Indra's absence), Nahuṣa who possessed the capacity of a ruler due to his knowledge,

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287. ŚR. points out the impossibility of fire-god's entry into water. VC. & GS. attribute his non-entry to the guards of Rudra, for Agni purveys oblations of Varuṇa.

austerities and strength of yoga, governed the third heaven. But as his intelligence became blind by the arrogance of affluence, and power was reduced to the state of sub-human being (boa constrictor) by Indra's wife, Śacī.[288]

17. Then Indra whose sin was warded off by meditation over the protector of Truth, namely, Lord Viṣṇu, returned as he was invited by Brāhmaṇas. His sin of *Brahma-hatyā* was deprived of its power by Rudra, the god of that direction, and it did not assail him as he was protected by Lakṣmī, spouse of Viṣṇu.

18. The Brāhmaṇa sages approached him and consecrated him according to religious formalities for the performance of the Horse-Sacrifice by which Hari is propitiated.

19-20. When the Supreme Person who embodies within himself all the divinities, was thus worshipped by the great Indra, in the Horse-Sacrifice which was performed duly through the Brāhmaṇas who were expositors of the Veda, the huge mass of sin of slaying Vṛtra the son of Tvaṣṭṛ was reduced to naught by that very worship of the Lord just as the frost is evaporated by the Sun.

21. By performance of the Horse-sacrifice according to scriptural injunctions through sages like Marīci who conducted it on proper lines, Indra worshipped the ancient Supreme Person, the presiding deity of sacrifices and thus being completely free from sin (of *Brahma-Hatyā*), became as great as before.

22. This great narrative which celebrates the glory of Lord Viṣṇu of hallowed feet, absolves one of all sins. It extols the virtues of devotion and the greatness of the devotees of the Lord, and describes the purification of the great Indra from *Brahma-hatyā* and his final victory.

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288. Nahuṣa thought that as he was Indra, former Indra's wife would be ipso facto his own. When Śacī received an invitation from Nahuṣa, she, as per advice of Bṛhaspati, requested him to come to her in a palanquine borne by sages like Agastya. Nahuṣa while being borne thus, in his eagerness, touched Agastya with his leg and asked him to hasten (*Sarpa, Sarpa*). Agastya being thus insulted cursed him to be a serpent.

23. Wise persons should always read this narrative. They should listen to it on the days of *Parvans* e.g. the new-moon-day and the full-moon-day. It contributes to the prosperity and glory, removes sins, bestows victories over enemies, is conducive to auspiciousness and confers long life.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(The Previous Birth of Vṛtra—King Citraketu)

Parīkṣit said:

1. Oh Brāhmaṇa sage, how is it that the sinful Vṛtra who, by nature, was predominated by *Rajas* and *Tamas*, entertained unflinching devotion to the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa.

2. Even in the case of gods who are constituted of pure Sattva and in that of pure-souled sages, generally devotion to the feet of Viṣṇu is not engendered.

3. In this world there are beings which are as numerous as the particles of dust. Among them, it is very few like the human beings who can practise righteousness.

4. Oh best of the Brāhmaṇas, there are generally very few among them who seek Liberation from Saṁsāra. Out of thousands of seekers of Mokṣa, it is only one who can get rid of attachment (to sensual pleasures etc.) and attain liberation.

5. Out of the crores of Siddhas who are free from attachment and have realized the Self, a person who is absolutely devoted to Nārāyaṇa and of serene mind is very difficult to find, Oh great sage.

6. But how is it that Vṛtra, the fiend incarnate, the tormentor of all the worlds, was thus so steadfast in devotion to Kṛṣṇa (Lord Viṣṇu) in the heat of fierce battle.

7. On this point, we entertain a great doubt and wish to hear eagerly about it, Oh Master, for he gratified god Indra by his heroism on the battlefield (and did not remember God out of Indra's fear).

Sūta said:

8. The venerable Śuka welcomed the relevant and interesting query of the devout king Parīkṣit and replied as follows:

Śrī Śuka said:

9. Oh King, listen attentively to this legendary history as heard by me from the mouth of Vyāsa, Nārada and even of Devala.

10. It is traditionally reported, Oh King, that there was a sovereign ruler of the world called Citraketu, in the country called Śūrasena. To him the earth yielded whatever he desired.

11. He had ten million wives. Though he was capable of procreation, he did not get any issue from them.

12. Though he was endowed with handsomeness, generosity, youth, noble lineage, deep learning sovereignty, affluence and other excellences, the husband of barren ladies was overweighed with anxiety.

13. Neither his affluence nor his queens of beautiful eyes or the universal sovereignty of the earth became a source of delight to him.

14. Once upon a time, the glorious sage Aṅgiras, during his course of wandering over the world, arrived by chance to his palace.

15. The king honoured him with due formalities such as respectfully standing, offering articles of worship, and with a collected mind, he sat near the sage who was fully entertained as a guest and was seated comfortably.

16. The great sage respectfully showed every courtesy to the king who was sitting near him on the ground and bowing down modestly. Addressing him as 'Mahārāja' (Oh great King), he spoke to him as follows:

Aṅgiras said:

17. Are you in good health? Are your subjects and yourself well? Just as the individual Soul (man) is protected by seven constituents (viz. *Mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra*—ego and the five subtle elements), the king is protected by the constituent elements of the state, namely ministers, allies, treasures, ter-

ritories, fortifications, and militia and his own office of kingship.

18. By placing oneself under the control of Prakṛtis, the king should enjoy sovereignty and regal prosperity. Similarly the Prakṛtis (ministers, subjects etc.), with their grievances removed, become enriched and benefited by king.

19. Are your wives, subjects, ministers, servants, members of trade guilds, councillors, citizens, country people, tributary princes, and sons obedient to you?

20. He who has controlled his mind has all these (mentioned above) obedient to him. All the worlds along with the guardian deities offer to him dutifully due honour and worship.

21. It appears that your mind is not pleased with you or with others. I find that your countenance is overshadowed with anxiety as you presumably have not achieved your object or desire.

22. The king who was thus subjected to various alternative questions by the sage who knew (everything) by intuition, bent down with modesty, and then addressed the sage, with a desire for progeny, Oh King.

Citraketu said:

23. Oh worshipful sage! What is not known to yogins (like you) who have destroyed their sins, what lies within and without embodied beings, by means of their penance, spiritual knowledge and concentration?

24. But as I am prompted by your worship who knows what is weighing on my mind, it is with your permission that I am speaking it to you.

25. (My) sovereign power and affluence which are covetable even to the guardians of the world, do not give me any delight. Childless as I am, these are like other things (such as garlands, sandal-paste etc.) to a person overwhelmed with hunger and thirst.

26. Oh highly blessed one, kindly therefore protect me who along with my ancestors, am on the verge of falling into a dark abysmal hell. Please do that unto us whereby we shall cross this hell which is difficult, by blessing us with progeny.

Śrī Śuka said:

27. The venerable, merciful son of Brahmā who was thus entreated, caused *caru* (rice cooked in milk) to be prepared for Tvaṣṭṛ and worshipped Tvaṣṭṛ with its oblations.

28. The seniormost queen both in age and status among the queens, was Kṛtadyuti by name. The Brāhmana gave the remainder of the sacrificial offerings to her.

29. Then the son of Brahmā told the king, "Oh king, one son will be born to you. He will give you both joy and grief". Saying thus, he departed.

30. Queen Kṛtadyuti conceived a son through Citraketu by the eating of that *caru*, just as (the constellation) Kṛttikā bore a son to the Fire-god.

31. Her foetus which was begotten by the king of Śūrasena gradually developed every day, just as the Moon waxes in the bright half of the month.

32. In due course, after the arrival of the proper time, a son was born, giving great joy to the inhabitants of Śūrasena who heard the news.

33. The king who was overjoyed, purified himself by taking a bath and adorned himself. He made the Brāhmaṇas pronounce pious benedictions and caused them to perform the *jātakarma* ceremony.

34. He gave them gold, silver, garments, ornaments, villages, horses, elephants and six crores of cows.

35. Like a showering rain-cloud, the noble-minded king showered other persons with objects desired by them for the future affluence, glory and longevity of the prince.

36. Just as a penniless person develops love for his hard-earned money, the father, a royal sage, developed, day after day, great affection for his son who was got after great difficulty.

37. To the mother Kṛtadyuti, the affection caused by infatuation developed into intense love, but it created feverish desire for a child in her co-wives.

38. By fondling the child every day, Citraketu showed so much intensive love to his wife who gave birth to a child, that he ignored others.

39. Those co-wives tormented and reproached themselves out of envy, the misery of childlessness and the indifference of the king.

40. Fie on the childless accursed woman who is not loved in the house of her husband and is treated with contempt, like a maid-servant, by other co-wives blessed with children.

41. What agony can there be to maid servants who are constantly waiting upon their master and whose services are appreciated by him? We are unfortunate like the maid-servant of maid-servants.

42. The co-wives, in this way, developed intense hatred, as they were burning due to the wealth in the form of child to their co-wife and their very existence being not approved by the king.

43. The women who lost their good sense through hatred and became cruel-hearted administered poison to the prince, in their unappeasable hatred for the king.

44. Kṛtadyuti was quite innocent about the grievous sin committed by her co-wives. Looking at him (her son) she thought him to be asleep and went about in the house.

45. The clever woman realizing that the child had slept for a pretty long time ordered the nurse, "Oh auspicious lady bring the son to me".

46. The nurse approached the sleeping child and saw him with the pupils of his eyes turned upwards and bereft of breathing, senses and life. (She cried out) "Oh I am undone" and fell down on the ground.

47. Then hearing her painful shriek and violent beating of the breasts with her hands, the queen entered in haste and approaching the child, she saw that it had met with sudden death.

48. Overpowered with grief, she fell on the ground and with her hair and garments in disorder, she lost her consciousness.

49. Then all the men and women who were in the harem of the king heard the wailing. Coming there, they equally shared her grief and became extremely distressed and even those who perpetrated that heinous crime pretended to weep.

50. Hearing that his son died from an unknown cause, the king lost his eye-sight. He staggered with faltering steps on the way. The king who was surrounded by his ministers and Brāhmaṇas fell in deep swoon, due to his grief which was infinitely intensified by love.

51. The king fell at the feet of his dead son. His (king's) hair and garments fell in disorder. He heaved heavy sighs. His throat was choked with tears and he was not able to speak.

52. Observing that her husband was overwhelmed with grief as the son, the only scion of the family, was dead, the virtuous queen burst out into lamentations of various sorts enhancing the afflictions of the subjects and the ministers.

53. Bathing her breasts decorated with paintings of saffron and sandal-paste, by means of tears mixed with collyrium, and with her dishevelled hair dropping flowers (used for hair decoration), she cried out loudly and in diverse tones like a female osprey.

54. "Oh Creator, you are extremely foolish, for you act contrary to your (process of) creation, because here the elderly people survive when the young ones die. If you are of a contrary nature, then you must be an eternal enemy of all creatures.

55. If there be no order in the birth and death of embodied beings, it may be due to their own *Karmas*. But the tie of affection which you have engendered for the growth of your creation, is cut asunder by you, due to the death of the child.

56. (Addressing the child) Oh dear child ! It is not proper for you to abandon a wretched and helpless (mother like) me. Please have a look at your father who is tormented with grief. It is through you that we shall easily cross the dark hell which is impassable for childless persons. Please do not go far away, with the merciless god of Death.

57. Oh child, get up. These young children, your friends, are calling you to play. Oh Prince, you have slept for too long a period. You must have been famished with hunger. Enjoy breast-feeding and remove the grief of our relatives.

58. Unfortunate as I am, I have not (as usual) seen your lotuslike face with cheerful looks and innocent smile, Oh

child. Or is it that you are taken away by the merciless (Yama) and have gone to the other world from which there is no return, for I do not hear your sweet words."

Śrī Śuka said :

59. While she was bewailing her dead son through such various laments, Citraketu became extremely tormented with grief and cried at the top of his voice.

60. While the husband and wife were thus lamenting, the subjects, both men and women, who were devoted to them verily wept aloud and everything was lifeless.

61. Knowing that everybody was reduced to such wretched plight and lost all consciousness and were leaderless (for consolation) the sage Aṅgiras came along with Nārada.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

(Consolation of Citraketu)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Bringing back to consciousness the king, with their soft and wise words, the sages Aṅgiras and Nārada spoke to the king who was overpowered with grief, and was lying like a dead person by the side of the dead child.

2. "What can be your relationship, in the previous and the present birth, Oh great King, with the child whom you are mourning ? How was he related to you in the previous birth, the present birth and will be related in the future one ?

3. Just as the grains of sand come together and separate by the force of the stream of water, so are embodied beings brought together and separated by Time.

4. Just as seeds may or may not produce corn, similarly *Bhūtas* prompted by God's Māyā may or may not produce *Bhūtas*.

5. We, you, the mobile and immobile creatures which are contemporaneous with us, were not so before the present

birth nor are so in the present birth, nor shall be so after death. (Due to the nonexistence of these before and after, they are unsubstantial or unreal like dreams).

6. The Lord of *Bhūtas* who is himself unborn (and therefore imperishable) and has no purpose to achieve, like a playful boy, creates, protects and destroys the *Bhūtas* by means of *Bhūtas* which are created by him and hence dependent on him.

7. Oh King, the body of a son is born from the body (of the mother) through another body (namely that of the father) just as a seed sprouts forth from another seed. But the occupant of the body is eternal like earth and other principles.

8. It is from eternity that this (above-mentioned) distinction between a body and the occupant of the body (the Soul) has been presumed through ignorance, as the distinction between the class or the generic property (*jāti*) and the individuality of a thing (*vyakti*) is conceived as existing in the thing itself (such distinction between interdependants like *jāti* and *vyakti* are untenable).*

Śrī Śuka said :

9. When king Citraketu was thus consoled by the words of the Brāhmaṇa sages, he wiped out with his hand, his

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* After verse No. 8, the text before VJ. adds four verses.

(1) Just as the difference or changes due to fuel are wrongly attributed to the fire, similarly the conditions affecting the body, viz., difference, birth, decline, growth and destruction are wrongly attributed to the *Jīva* who is distinct from the body. This misconception is due to *Karma*.

(2) It is due to Jīva's intimate relation to the body and the false identification of the body with the Soul, that the above-mentioned conditions (of the body) appear to be the conditions of the *Jīva* as in a dream. As everything else is a source of fear, one should not ponder over anything leading to evil consequences.

(3) Just as the appearance of a serpent or a tiger or another (frightening) object like it, in a dream, causes fear, as the dream appearance is identified with the reality in a wakeful condition, so is the *Saṁsāra* due to the misconception grown since eternity.

(4) The idea of the world of sons (or relatives) and other possessions depends on the mind. It is due to the influence of the Ego which creates likes and dislikes in the mind and leads to merits and demerits. One should clear away the ignorance in the form of the notions like me and mine, and fix one's mind on the all-powerful Omnipresent Lord Vāsudeva.

face which was withered through grief for his son, and addressed them thus.

The king (Citraketu) said :

10. Who are you both so full of spiritual knowledge, the most worshipful ones among the adorables who have come here disguised as *Avadhūtas* ?

11. For, persons who have realized Brahman and who are dear to the glorious Lord, range over the world in the guise of mad persons, for guiding and counselling sensually-minded people like me.

12. (For example) Sanatkumāra, Nārada, Ṛbhu, Aṅgiras, Devala, Amita, Apāntarātma, Vyāsa, Mārkeṇḍeya and Gautama.

13. Vasiṣṭha, the glorious Paraśurāma, Kapila, Bādarayaṇi (Śuka), Durvāsas, Yājñavalkya, Jātūkarṇya and Āruṇi.

14. Romaśa, Cyavana, Datta, Patañjali, Āsuri, the sage Vedaśiras, the sage Bodhya, and Pañcaśiras.

15. Hiraṇyanābha, Kausalya, Śrutadeva, Ṛtadhvaja—these and other masters of spiritual powers go about in the world with the object of imparting spiritual knowledge.

16. Therefore, you both are the masters of a stupid and ignorant brute like me. Enlighten me with the lamp of your knowledge—me who am plunged into the blinding darkness of ignorance.

Aṅgiras said :

17. Oh King, I am Aṅgiras who blessed you with a son as you longed for one. This is the veritable son of Brahmā, the worshipful divine sage Nārada.

18-19. Finding you, a devotee of the Supreme Person, plunged in the deep impassable darkness of grief for the son, though you are not fit to be so affected, we have arrived here to help you out of it, with our grace. For, you are dear to Brāhmaṇas and votary of the Lord and thus do not deserve to be so despondent.

20. When I visited your house, at that very time (of our first meeting), I would have imparted to you spiritual knowledge. But knowing your insistence and longing for

something else (viz, the birth of a son), I blessed you with a son.

21-22. Now, you experience the agony suffered by persons having sons. In the same way (are the agonies of persons who have) wives, houses, wealth, power and prosperity of various kinds, objects of enjoyment like sound etc., fleeting powers of sovereignty, the earth, kingdom, the army, the treasury, servants, ministers, friends and relations.

23. Oh King Śūrasena, all these are the sources of grief, delusion, fear and affliction, for they are momentary like (the proverbial) city of Gandharvas in the sky, and unreal like a dream, delusion and fancies.

24. They are mental images, for they are perceived without being real or substantial and disappear the next moment. For a man brooding over objects through the force of tendencies of actions (*karma*) in the previous birth, various activities proceed from the mind.

25. In fact, this body of embodied beings is constituted of gross elements, conative and cognitive senses. It is said, by the knowers of the reality, to be the cause of various afflictions and torments to the *Jiva* who identifies itself with its body.

26. Therefore, examining carefully the real nature of the Soul and with concentration of mind, give up the belief in the permanence of the objective world as it implies duality. Betake yourself to renunciation and serenity of the mind*.

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* Additional verses in VJ.'s text of the Bh. P. :

(1) A king named Bhoja dreamt that he subsisted on the remnant of the food (out of the dishes) of his enemy. He was therefore overcome with nausia, grief, delusion, fear and distress and became utterly miserable.

(2) (In the dream) some (of his enemies) who nursed age-old animosity and vengeance, carried away the objects he enjoyed; some killed his dependents; some abducted his wives while others beheaded him.

(3) Awaking from this dream overflooded with unending miseries, he reflected deeply over it. He got disgusted and renounced his house (worldly life).

(4) Externally appearing as insane, he visualized the Supreme Soul within his heart, free from attachments. Overcoming conflicting states of the mind he established it in the Supreme Brahman called Śrī Nārāyaṇa, untouched by the conditioning perishable body. In this absorbed state of meditation (in *a-samprajñāta-samādhi*), he totally forgot that he was conditioned by the body.

Nārada said :

27. After purifying yourself (i.e. after disposing of the dead body of the child and taking a bath thereafter) accept from me the *Mantropaniṣad* (Vide Infra Ch. XVI, 18-25). By bearing this in mind and meditating over it, you will visualize Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa within seven nights.

28. Oh great King, by resorting to the feet of Saṅkarṣaṇa, ancient votaries of the Lord like god Śiva and others, gave up the illusion of this world which implies duality and attained immediately to his greatness which was neither equalled by nor surpassed by anyone else. You will also attain to that eminence within a short time.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

(*Citraketu's Realization of Lord Ananta*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Then, Oh King, the divine sage Nārada (by his yogic powers) showed the spirit of the departed prince to the relatives who were mourning and spoke to the spirit.

Nārada said :

2. Oh Jīva, God bless you. Have a look at your mother, father, friends and relatives who are deeply afflicted with grief for you.

3. Please enter this body of yours. Surrounded by your friends enjoy pleasures throughout the remaining period of your life—pleasures provided to you by your father and ascend the royal throne.

Jīva said :

4. In what life were these my father and mother, while I was revolving in the cycle of births in the species of gods, subhuman beings and human beings by my *karmas*.

5. For, all persons are by turns related to others as relatives, cousins, enemies, mediators, friends, indifferent men and bitter adversaries.

6. Just as commodities like gold and other articles change hand from one customer to another and one place to another, similarly a *Jiva* wanders from one species of existence to another.

7. Even during the life-time of a person, the relation even of men with animals is temporary. The attachment of mineness lasts so long as the particular relation exists.

8. In the same way, the relation of a *Jiva* who has entered the womb of a particular species is transient. For, by himself, *Jiva* is eternal and as such unrelated to his body and is therefore without attachment (as a son etc.). The sense of belongingness lasts so long as and only with him, with whom he is associated due to his *karma* (and not after death. Therefore grief for me is unnecessary).

9. This Ātman is eternal. He is not subject to decay or change. He is subtle and free from birth. He is the basic support (as the material cause of the universe) of all. He is self-illuminating. Being all-powerful he manifests himself as the universe by the *guṇas* of his Māyā.[289]

10. To him no one is very dear, nor anyone hateful. He has no kith or kin or an alien. He is one, the witness of the working of the minds of friends and foes (who do good or evil).

11. The Ātman does not accept (experience) the good or evil (i.e. pleasure or pain) nor is he the recipient of the fruit of *karmas* (namely kingship). He is a dispassionate witness of cause and effect and not their enjoyer. He is thus unconditioned by body and is independent.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. After explaining thus the spirit departed. The relatives of that *Jiva* then became wonderstruck. They cut asunder their bonds of affection to him and gave up sorrow.

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289. VJ. explains : The Jīva is eternally related with Hari who by the *guṇas* of his Māyā creates his universe. Hari is eternally connected with all. He is eternal, not conditioned by change or decay, subtle but absolutely one. He perceives everything as he is the Lord of all. Thus the relation of a Jīva with any person is temporary.

13. The relatives took away the dead body and performed the suitable obsequies. They set aside their affection which is so difficult to be rid of, and which causes grief, delusion, fear and distress.

14. The queens who killed the child and whose charms waned due to the infanticide, became ashamed. They performed the expiation for infanticide as enunciated to them by the Brāhmaṇas on the bank of the Yamunā, remembering what the Brāhmaṇas have explained to them, Oh Mahārāja.

15. Citraketu who was thus spiritually awakened by the words (of advice) by the Brāhmaṇa sages, came out of the dark deceptive well in the form of domestic life, just as an elephant extricates himself out of the mire in the lake.

16. Having taken ablution in the Yamunā according to the sacred precepts, and having poured out oblations of water (to the Pitṛs), he, with his senses properly controlled, bowed to the two sons of god Brahmā (viz. Nārada and Aṅgiras) in silence.

17. The venerable sage Nārada gladly taught this great lore to the king who was their devotee and who resorted to them for protection and had fully controlled his mind.

18. "OM ! Salutation unto you, Oh glorious Lord Vāsudeva. We contemplate (mentally pay obeisance to) you. We bow to Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa (all the *vyūhas* of the Lord).

19. Obeisance to You who are pure, absolute knowledge, the very embodiment of supreme bliss, delighted with yourself, serene and above the notion of duality.

20. Hail to you who, through realization of your blissful character, kept yourself above the waves (the feelings of love, hate etc.) caused by Māyā. Salutation to the great Hṛṣīkeśa (the Supreme Master of Senses) whose body is the universe.

21. May he protect us—he who shines alone by himself and is beyond the reach of speech and other senses and the mind; who is pure consciousness and has no name or form and who is the cause of the law of causation (and hence above it).

22. Bow to you Supreme Brahman on whom the universe (the product of cause and effect) is based, from whom it evolves and in whom it dissolves and thus pervades everything in the universe, just as products of earth do with reference to the earth.

23. I salute the Brahman which pervades everything from within and without like the sky but to whom the *Prāṇas* (organs of activity) do not touch (by their conative force) nor do the mind, intellect and cognitive senses comprehend him (by their power of cognition).

24. It is only when these—body, senses, vital airs, mind and intellect—are charged by his part or presence (*aṁśa*) that these carry out their functions and not otherwise, just as an unheated piece of iron (does not emit heat or light.) What is called the 'spectator' is another designation of yours in the state of wakefulness (of the Jīva. He has no independent existence apart from you).

25. Salutations to you the Supreme Person, designated by the sacred symbol OM, the possessor of Supreme Might, whose lotus-like feet are adored in great love with the lotus-bud-like joined palms by all the great Sātvatas (votaries of the Lord). I reverentially bow to you, the most excellent controller of all."

Śrī Śuka said :

26. Having taught this prayer-lore to his devotee who sought his protection, Nārada along with Aṅgiras, went to the region of god Brahmā, Oh King.

27. Citraketu observed the course of that lore (of meditation and prayer) with perfect concentration as per instructions of Nārada. For one week he subsisted on water only.

28. Then at the end of the seventh night, the king attained to permanent overlordship of Vidyādharas through the practice of that lore.

29. Then after some days, his mental power became illumined through the practice and repetition of the same lore, and he went near the feet of Śeṣa, the God of gods.

30. He saw the Lord Śeṣa white like a lotus fibre, clad in blue garments and adorned with brilliant crown, armlets,

girdle and wristlets, and with gracious countenance and reddish eyes, attended upon by multitudes of great Siddhas.

31. All his sins having been destroyed at the sight of the Lord, the sage Citraketu whose heart became cleansed of all impurities, approached the Most Ancient Person in silence. Due to surging devotion, his eyes were flowing with tears of love and his hair were standing on ends due to ecstasy, he prostrated himself before him.

32. Repeatedly moistening with his tears of love the altar under the lotus-like feet of the glorious Lord, and his power of expression was being choked up by his overpowering love and devotion, he was not for a long time able to praise him properly.

33. Then, composing his mind by the force of reason and having restrained the senses from going out to external objects, he addressed the following words to the father of the world, the embodiment of the Sātvata Śāstra, i.e. *Pañcarātra* (or whose body stood described in the *Pañcarātra* scriptures).

Citraketu said :

34. Oh unconquered Lord ! (Despite your unconquerableness) you have been vanquished by self-controlled righteous persons of impartial and unruffled minds. They, in their turn, are conquered by You. You are so very gracious that you bestow your own self upon your devotees whose minds are completely free from desires.

35. Oh glorious Lord ! The creation, preservation and destruction of the universe is your prowess—a sport. The (so-called) creators of the universe are merely the portion of your portions. They, however, regard themselves severally as creators and vainly vie with one another.

36. You are at the creation, destruction as well as during the intervening period of the subtlest atom as well as (of the universe) of the largest dimensions. But you are (yourself) devoid of this triad of limitation. You are that unchanging constant who exist at the beginning and end as well as in the interim of all created things.

37. The egg of the universe is enveloped by seven sheaths of the earth and other elements etc., each outer envelop being

ten times the extent of the enclosure inner to it. This egg-like universe together with millions and millions of other universes appears just like an atom on your head. Hence, you are called Ananta, the infinite.

38. Oh Controller of the universe ! Those persons are really beasts who, in their thirst for objects of pleasure propitiate the deities concerned (like Indra, who are but your parts only) and not you—for, the blessings (so conferred upon them) come to an end with the extinction of the deities, just as the good fortunes of the followers of a king perish with the fall of that royal house.

39. Oh Supreme Lord ! Even if worldly desires are entreated of you who are pure knowledge and consciousness and not a product of *guṇas*, they do not grow like the fried seeds (which cannot sprout forth). For all the pairs of opposites (e.g. love—hate, leading to rebirth) are the result of *guṇas* (and you are above them).

40. Oh unconquerable one ! When you propounded the pure *Bhāgavata Dharma* (the righteous path leading to the realization of the glorious Lord), you have conquered all (made all your own). For sinless sages (like Sanat-kumāra) who are possessionless and free of desires and find delight in the Supreme Soul, resort to that Dharma (or to you) for Liberation.

41. Here *in the Bhāgavata Dharma* men do not cherish crooked, differential notions such as 'I', 'you', 'mine' and 'yours', (as is in other cults, as that of sacrifice). Whatever (act) is performed with the notion of such differences is impure, perishable and full of sin, (like *himsā*).

42. What good to one's own self or to another can accrue from a *dharma* (path of religion) or what benefit can be gained through a *dharma* which is harmful to oneself and to others. It is irreligion, for pain is caused to oneself through self-mortification and sin is committed by offending others.

43. Your vision by which you expounded the *Bhāgavata-dharma* never goes astray from reality. Hence, the noble Souls who do not regard the multitudes of the mobile and immobile being as different from you follow that *dharma*, Oh Lord.

44. It is no miracle that all the sins committed by men

are annihilated at your sight, for even an outcaste like a Cāṇḍāla becomes liberated from the cycle of birth and death, by hearing your name once only, Oh glorious Lord.

45. Oh Lord, we have got our heart cleansed of all the impurities by your very sight. How could that which the divine sage, your own devotee, has said, turn out to be untrue?

46. Oh Infinite Lord ! As you are the Soul of the world, you know everything that is done in this world by people. You are the Creator and Preceptor of the world. There is nothing new to be specially made known to you, as there is nothing to be revealed to the Sun by the fire-flies.

47. Salutations to you, Oh glorious Lord, who are the master and controller of the creation, sustenance and destruction of all the worlds. You are the purest of the pure (*Paramahaṁsa*). Your real nature is incomprehensible to bad yogins who entertain the notion of difference.

48. The creators of the world (e.g. god Brahmā and other gods who preside over the conative organs) (are activated) when you breathe (become active). When you (wish to) see, the gods (like the Sun who preside over the cognitive organs,) are able to get perception. The globe of this earth is (insignificant) like a mustard seed on your head. My Salutations to you, Oh glorious Lord of a thousand heads.

Śrī Śuka said :

49. Lord Ananta who was thus eulogised, was pleased with him. He spoke out to Citraketu the king of Vidyādharas, Oh scion of the Kuru family (Parīkṣit).

The glorious Lord said :

50. Oh King, it is by the precept (of the means of propitiating me) taught to you by Nārada and Aṅgiras and by the practice of that spiritual lore and by my sight that you have fully achieved your purpose.

51. I am verily all the created beings, their Soul and their support. I am the Veda the Supreme Brahma and both of these are my eternal form.

52. One should understand that his own Self is pervading the whole of the universe (as the subject of experience)

and that the universe is resting on the Ātman (i.e. is superimposed on the Soul) and that both (one's own Self and the universe) are pervaded by me (as the prime cause).

53. Just as in a state of profound slumber, one sees the universe (i.e. the various objects in it) in his own Self, and waking up from the dream, he finds himself alone and in a particular place (of sleeping such as a bed-room).

54. Similarly wakefulness etc. are the conditions of Jiva and are the products of Māyā with reference to Ātman. Therefore, one should remember that Paramātman is only a witness.

55. Recognize me to be that Ātman or Brahman through whom the Jīva in a sleeping condition, regards himself as in deep sleep. I am absolute bliss beyond the range of *guṇas* or the senses.

56. That knowledge is the Supreme Brahma—knowledge which is found in a person who remembers his experiences during sleep and wakefulness—a connecting link as well as the *differentia* between the two states of experience.

57. When the Jīva forgets my real nature, he regards himself as different from me and this is the cause of his Saṁsāra, in which he goes from birth after birth and suffers death after death.

58. Having attained birth in the human species here, where the knowledge of the Self (as detailed in scriptures) and the wisdom, i.e. direct knowledge and perception of the Self, can be developed, he who does not realize me, can never find peace and happiness.

59. Remembering that in the Pravṛtti Mārga (i.e. the path of *karma*) there are great afflictions and contrary results (of the expected fruit), and there is fearlessness, i.e. Liberation (Mokṣa) in the Nivṛtti-Mārga (the path of cessation of activities), a wise man should desist from the path of *karma*.

60. A pair of husband and wife perform (ritualistic) acts for getting pleasure and avoidance of misery. But there is no escape from misery nor the attainment of happiness, as a result of ritualistic performance.

61-62. Having thus realized that the consequences go contrary to expectation of persons who in their pride regard themselves to be clever, and having realized the subtle nature

of the Ātman which transcends the three states (viz. state of awakeness, dream and deep sleep), and being completely free (from the desire) for the pleasures of this world and the next, through one's power of discrimination and finding satisfaction and pleasure in one's knowledge and wisdom, a person should devote himself to me (completely).

63. Realization of the unity of the individual spirit and the Supreme Soul is the real objective to be attained through all possible means by yogins whose intellect and power have acquired acuteness through yogic meditation.

64. If you bear in mind my advice and bring that into practice carefully, you will soon be blessed with knowledge and wisdom and attain Liberation, Oh King.

Śrī Śuka said :

65. Having comforted Citraketu in this way, the glorious Lord Hari, the father and the preceptor of the world, and the Soul of the universe, immediately disappeared there while Citraketu was looking on.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

(*Citraketu cursed by Pārvatī*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Having bowed to the direction in which Lord Ananta disappeared, Citraketu, the Vidyādhara, the sky-ranger went his own way (in the sky).

2-3. Possessed of indefatigable physical power and undiminished acuteness of senses, and eulogised by sages, Siddhas and Cāraṇas as a great Yogī, he (Citraketu), for a period of 1,000 million years, sported in the caverns of the great Kulācala (sumeru) (the boundary mountain), which automatically supplies the desired objects to the occupants. He made the Vidyādhara ladies chant the glories of Lord Hari.

4-5. Once upon a time, while he was going by his resplendent aerial car, gifted to him by Viṣṇu, he saw Lord Śiva surrounded by Siddhas and Cāraṇas and having embraced in his arm the goddess Pārvatī seated on his lap, in the assembly of sages. Approaching near her, he laughed loudly and spoke out within the hearing of the goddess.

Citraketu said :

6. (Look here), here is the preceptor of the world himself, the expounder of Dharma to all embodied beings, the head of the assembly (of sages etc.), sits in a posture coupled with his wife.

7. He has matted hair on his head and performs austere penance. He is the president of the assembly of sages well versed in Vedas, but he sits with his wife on his lap, like a shameless vulgar fellow.

8. Generally, even ordinary people embrace a woman in secluded places, but this observer of great vows indulges in dalliance with his wife, in an open assembly.

Śrī Śuka said :

9. Even Lord Śiva of unfathomable mind laughed out heartily on hearing it, and kept quiet in that assemblage. The members of the assembly also followed his example.

10. The goddess angrily spoke to the impudent Citraketu who was proud of his own self-control, and who passed unbecoming remarks against Lord Śiva, about whose irresistible powers he was ignorant.

Pārvatī said :

11. Is this now the ruler of the world and the punisher thereof? Is he competent to mete out punishment to wicked and shameless fellows like us?

12. Neither god Brahmā nor the sons of Brahmā like Bhṛgu, Nārada and others, neither Sanatkumāra nor Kapila and Manu comprehended *Dharma* (righteousness), for they raised no objection to Hara's transgression of *dharma*.

13. This impertinent wretched Kṣatriya insults wise gods and sages, and reproves this preceptor and father of the

world whose lotus-like feet are meditated upon by the above-mentioned (great personages), and who is the very embodiment of the highest *dharma*. Therefore, this fellow should be punished.

14. This haughty self-conceited person does not deserve to be allowed to approach the feet of Lord Viṣṇu which are reverently worshipped by pious sages.

15. Oh wicked fellow ! Go forth hence to the most wicked demonic existence of *Asuras* so that you may not again speak ill of the great, Oh child.[290]

Śrī Śuka said :

16. Citraketu who was thus imprecated, got down from the aerial car, and propitiated Satī (Goddess Pārvatī) paying her obeisance with his head bent low, Oh Parīkṣit.

Citraketu said :

17. I accept your curse with my folded palms, Oh Mother. Whatever is pronounced by gods about mortal being is something predestined for him.

18. In this whirling wheel of *Saṁsāra*, a creature, being deluded by ignorance, wanders experiencing pleasure and pain, everywhere, at all times.

19. Neither one's self nor another is the creator of pleasure and pain. It is only the unwise who regards himself or another person as the author of pleasure and pain.

20. (All this Saṁsāra is the product of *Guṇas*). In this stream of *Guṇas*, what is the distinction between a curse and grace? What is the heaven or the hell? And what is the difference between pleasure and pain ?

21. It is the glorious Lord alone who creates all beings by dint of his Māyā power. To these are ordained bondage and liberation, pleasure and pain, but he himself is above them all.

22. To him none is dear or hateful; none a cousin or a relation; none is friend or an enemy; he is equal to all

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290. GS. explains that Pārvatī was really sympathetic towards Citraketu, but the curse was a reproof against his audacity.

everywhere and absolutely pure. He has no attachment for pleasure. How can there be wrath in him ?

23. It is however the outflow of his energy called Māyā manifested in meritorious or sinful acts, that becomes the cause of pleasure and pain, good and bad, bondage and liberation. birth and death of embodied beings, and causes transmigration of the Soul.

24. Therefore, Oh wrathful Goddess, I do not propitiate you for relieving me from your curse. But Oh Satī (Pārvatī), please forgive me for what you consider as an unrighteous expression from me.

Śuka said :

25. Having propitiated Lord Śiva and goddess Pārvatī in this way, Citraketu left by his aerial car, while they looked wondering.

26. Then the glorious god Rudra (Śiva) spoke to Pārvatī while gods, sages, Siddhas and his attendants were listening (reverentially).

Rudra said :

27. Oh beautiful lady (possessor of dainty waist), you have seen the nobleness of the high-souled servants of servants of Hari of miraculous deeds and how they are free from desires (of any kind).

28. All who are devoted to Nārāyaṇa are not afraid of anybody for they see the same Reality in *Svarga*, *Mokṣa* and even in hells.

29. It is through the sporting activities of the Lord that the Soul is invested with a body and experiences pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, birth and death, grace and curse, through contact with the physical body.

30. The notion of desirability and undesirability with reference to pleasure and pain is certainly illusory and false, and it is the result of man's lack of discrimination and knowledge. For it is like the difference (between the experience of pleasure or pain by seeing oneself to have become a prince or a pauper in a dream) felt within oneself or the imputation of

the notion of a serpent on a garland of flowers (while one is awake).*

31. To persons who are bearing intense devotion to venerable Lord Vāsudeva and whose power lies in spiritual knowledge and renunciation, no object is worth seeking or resorting in this world.

32. Neither I, nor god Brahmā, nor Sanatkumāra or Nārada or the sons of God Brahmā, sages, nor the great gods who are but parts of his parts comprehend his intention. We do not know his real nature though we regard ourselves as independent rulers.

33. To him nobody is beloved or hateful, nobody is his own or an alien. Hari being the Ātman (inner controller) of all beings is the beloved of them all.

34. This highly blessed Citraketu is a beloved follower of the Lord. He looks upon all as equal and is serene. I am also beloved of Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore, I did not get angry with him.

35. You need not, therefore, wonder about (the behaviour of) high-souled men who are devotees of the Supreme person Viṣṇu—the votaries who are tranquil by nature, and regard all beings as equal.

Śrī Śuka said :

36. Having heard the explanatory speech of the glorious Lord Śiva, the goddess Pārvatī got over her feeling of wonder and became appeased and calm in mind, Oh King.

37. Even though the votary of Viṣṇu, Citraketu, was most competent to retaliate the Devī's curse by counter-curse, he accepted it bowing down his head (with great respect and humility),—which is the characteristic of righteousness.

38. Assuming the body of a Dānava, Citraketu was born in the Dakṣiṇāgni of Tvaṣṭṛ, and became famous as Vṛtra. He

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* VR. : The *Jīva* is an individual constituted of pure consciousness. The difference as a god or man or a sub-human being with reference to *Jīva* and the desirable and undesirable states (e.g. pleasure and pain, birth and death, grace and curse) are due to the lack of discrimination. It is caused by eternal *Karma* and induces one to identify oneself with the physical body. Moreover, this notion of difference is like pleasant and unpleasant sights in a dream.

was, however, endowed with spiritual knowledge and wisdom (despite his birth as a demon).

39. In this way I have narrated to you everything which you enquired about the cause of Vṛtra's birth as a demon, and his devotion to Hari.

40. Hearing this sacred history of the noble-minded Citraketu and the glory and greatness of votaries of Viṣṇu, one becomes liberated from the bondage (of Saṁsāra).

41. He who gets up early in the morning and recites this episode with reverence, and observing silence, meditates on Lord Hari, attains to the highest region (*Mokṣa*).

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN*

(The Birth of the Maruts)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Pṛśni, the wife of Savitṛ (the fifth son of Aditi) gave birth to three daughters, namely, Sāvitrī[291], Vyāhṛti[292] and Trayī[293] and (nine sons, namely,) Agnihotra[294], Paśu[295], Soma[296], Cāturmāsya[297] and the five great sacrifices[298].

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* In the introduction of this chapter, ŚR. states that this chapter is in continuation of the first six chapters in which the progeny of the first four sons of Aditi has been enumerated. He underscores the allegorical significance of this chapter by explaining what deities are described here.

291. The deity presiding over the holy Gāyatrī Mantra.

292. The deity presiding over the three mystical syllables, viz., *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ* and *Svar* usually repeated after OM. These are prefixed to the Gāyatrī Mantra. They stand for the earth, the intermediate region and the heaven.

293. The deity presiding over the three Vedas, viz., Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda.

294. The deity presiding over the acts of offering oblations into the sacred fire.

295. The presiding deity of animal sacrifices.

296. The deity presiding over the Soma Sacrifice.

297. The presiding deity over the three Cāturmāsya sacrifices performed at the beginning of the three main seasons, viz., the summer, the rainy season and the winter.

298. The names of the five great sacrifices (*Mahāmakha*) are as follows:

2. Oh dear Parīkṣit ! Siddhi, the wife of Bhaga (the sixth son of Aditi), brought forth three sons, namely, Mahiman, Vibhu and Prabhu, and a beautiful pious daughter called Āśis.

3. Out of the four wives of *Dhātṛ* (the seventh son of Aditi) Kuhū[299] bore Sāyam[300]; Sinīvālī[301] Darśa[302]; Rākā[303] Prātar[304]; Anumati[305] Pūrṇamāsa[306] respectively.

4. Samanantara or Vidhātṛ (the eighth son of Aditi) begot on Kriyā the Fire-gods called Purīṣya[307]. Carṣaṇī was the spouse of Varuṇa (the ninth son of Aditi. He is the deity presiding over water). To her was reborn Bhṛgu (the son of Brahmā).

5-6. Vālmīki, another son of Varuṇa, was a great Yogī. They say that he was born from an ant-hill. The sages Agastya and Vasiṣṭha were born of Mitra and Varuṇa who, in a jar, deposited their semen that was discharged at the sight of and in the vicinity of the celestial damsel Urvaśī. Mitra (the 10th son of Aditi) begot through Revatī three sons, namely, Utsarga, Ariṣṭa, and Pippala.

7. We are told that the king of gods, Indra, (the 11th

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(1) *Brahmayajña* : Propitiation of the ancient sages. It consists of teaching and chanting the Vedas.

(2) *Pitṛyajña* : Grateful acknowledgement of our debt to our departed forefathers. This includes *tarpaṇa* or pouring water as oblations in their memory and for their gratification.

(3) *Devayajña* : Propitiation of gods through *homa* (pouring oblations in the sacred fire uttering their names).

(4) *Bhūtayajña* : Offering a portion of our food to all sub-human beings in acknowledgement of our debt to them.

(5) *Nṛyajña* : Worship of our fellow beings. It consists of offering food and shelter to an *atithi* (A traveller staying for only one day).

These five daily sacrifices are binding on every householder (Vide Manu 3.70-71).

299. The deity presiding over the last night of a dark fortnight.
300. The presiding deity over the evening.
301. The deity presiding over the 14th night of a dark fortnight.
302. The presiding deity over the last day of a dark fortnight.
303. The presiding deity of the last night of the bright fortnight.
304. The presiding deity of the morning.
305. The deity presiding over the 14th night of a bright fortnight.
306. The deity presiding over the last day of a bright fortnight.
307. The five deities presiding over the sacred fires known as Purīṣya.

son of Aditi) procreated through Paulomī or Śacī three sons, namely, Jayanta, Ṛṣabha and the third Mīḍhusa, Oh child !

8. Urukrama who was god Viṣṇu who appeared as Vāmana through his own divine Māyā (and who was the 12th son of Aditi) begot on his wife Kīrti, a son called Bṛhacchloka who was the father of Saubhaga and other sons.

9. We shall narrate in detail later (in Skandha VIII) the feats, excellences and the deeds of the high-souled son of Kaśyapa, namely, Vāmana, and also how he incarnated as the son of Aditi.

10. Now, I shall describe to you the sons of the sage Kaśyapa from his spouse Diti. Among them were born the great devotees of Viṣṇu, namely, the glorious Prahlāda and Bali.

11. Diti had two sons, namely, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa who were respected by Daityas and Dānavas. They were described (formerly in Skandha III).

12-15. The wife of Hiraṇyakaśipu was a Dānava lady called Kayādhu. She was the daughter of Jambha and was given in marriage to Hiraṇyakaśipu. She gave birth to four sons, namely, Saṁhrāda the eldermost, and Anuhrāda, Hrāda and Prahlāda. Their sister was Siṁhikā by name. She got from Vipracittia son called Rāhu whose head was lopped off by Hari with his disc (Sudarśana) while he (Rāhu) was drinking ambrosia. Kṛti the wife of Saṁhrāda gave birth to Pañcajana. Dhamanī the wife of Hrāda bore Vātāpi and Ilvala. It was Ilvala who cooked Vātāpi for the celebrated guest Agastya.

16. Anuhrāda brought forth through his wife Sūrmyā two sons Bāṣkala and Mahiṣa. The son of Prahlāda was Virocana who had from his spouse Devī, a son called Bali.

17. From Bali, a hundred sons out of whom Bāṇa was the eldest, were born to (Bali's queen) Aśanā. We shall recount later on (in Skandha VIII) the glory of Bali which deserves celebration.

18. Having propitiated god Śiva, Bāṇa attained the first place among his attendants. The glorious god Śiva is by his side and He is still guarding his capital city.

19. Diti had sons called Maruts. They were fortynine in number. All of them were childless and they were brought over by Indra and were converted to his own class of gods.

The King (Parīkṣit) said :

20. Oh Preceptor, how did Indra convert their inborn demonic nature to godhood ? What obligations did they render to Indra which made him convert them into gods.

21. Oh worshipful sage, these other sages along with me, earnestly desire to know the details. You should therefore expound that to us.

Sūta said :

22. Oh Śaunaka, having heard that speech of Viṣṇurāta (king Parīkṣit), Śuka, the son of sage Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa), greeted it with heart full of joy, as it was full of earnestness and was brief yet pregnant with significance. The Omniscient Śuka spoke as follows :

Śrī Śuka said :

23. Diti whose sons were slain by Viṣṇu as the ally of Indra, in the background, was burning with wrath enkindled by grief and she began to ponder.

24. "When can I get happy sleep after bringing about the death of the hard-hearted wicked sensual Indra, the cruel murderer of his brothers.

25. The body which is addressed as "A Lord or a Ruler", goes also under the name of worms (becomes full of worms after burial), excrement (if the body is eaten up by carnivorous animals or birds of prey), and ashes (if it is cremated). He (Indra) who seeks to injure other beings for such a body, does not know self-interest, for it leads to hell.

26. By what means can I get a son who will quell the pride of Indra who wrongly presumes that this body is eternal and who is very arrogant (of unrestrained heart) ?"

27-28. With this object in view, she many times served what was wished by her husband. By her service, affection, modesty, self-control, intense devotion, by her charming sweet words as well as by her winning smiles and side glances, she who was intimate with the knowledge of human nature, captivated his heart.

29. Thus enchanted by the sly, clever woman, Kaśyapa, though learned, became powerless (against her charms). He

succumbed to her and acquiesced in her request. Such stupefaction by women is not to be wondered at.

30. At the beginning of creation, Prajāpati found that beings entertained no attachment (and the work of creation was not possible), god Brahmā (then) converted half of his body into a woman who leads astray the judgments of men.

31. The worshipful Kaśyapa who was thus waited upon by his wife, was highly pleased with Diti. With a hearty laugh, he greeted Diti with delight (and said).

Kaśyapa said:

32. Ask for a boon Oh beautiful lady with shapely thighs. Oh faultless one, I am pleased with you. When husband is pleased with his wife, what object in this or in the next world, is unattainable?

33-34. It has been declared that the husband alone is the supreme deity in the case of women.

For the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the husband of the goddess Śrī, who is in the heart of all beings, is worshipped in the guise of different deities by men who ascribe to him different names (e. g. Indra, Varuṇa) and forms (wielder of the Vajra, or of a noose). But he is worshipped by women in the form of their husbands.

35. Therefore, Oh lady of beautiful waist, chaste women who are desirous of their welfare, worship with unswerving devotion their husband as the image of god and the Soul of the world.

36. I who am worshipped by you with so much devotion and with such superb faith, shall accomplish for you your desired object, Oh blessed lady—an object which is very difficult to be atained by unchaste women.

Diti said:

37. "Oh Brāhmaṇa sage, if you are conferring a boon on me, I pray for an immortal son who will slay Indra, for he (Indra) caused both of my sons killed and I have become a lady whose sons are dead."

38. Hearing her speech, the Brāhmaṇa became dispirit-

ed and repented (as follows) : "Alas! What a great unrighteousness and sin have overtaken me today!

39. Alas! Today I have fallen a victim to sense gratification. I allowed my heart to be captivated by Māyā (deluding power) in the form of a woman. Vile as I am, I shall certainly fall in the abysmal hell.

40. What fault is there in the case of the woman who followed the natural tendencies of women ? Alas ! Fie upon me who am ignorant about my self-interest and lost the control of my senses.

41. Who can fathom the motives of the actions of women whose countenance is beautiful like the fully bloomed autumnal lotus, whose speech is like ambrosia to the ear but whose heart is sharp like a razor-blade.

42. Women whose minds are determined to achieve their own objective have no one really dear. For serving their own purpose, they will kill or cause to be killed their husband, son or brother.

43. I have promised that I shall give her a son. That promise should not prove untrue. But Indra does not deserve death. Under these circumstances the following expedient appears proper.

44. Oh descendant of the Kurus! Considering thus, the worshipful son of Marīci (Kaśyapa) showed some indignation and condemning himself said.

Kaśyapa said:

45. Oh blessed lady, if you carefully observe this vow for one complete year, a son will be born to you who will be the slayer of Indra, or a friend of gods (if this vow is not properly observed).

Diti said:

46. Oh Brāhmaṇa sage! I hereby undertake to observe the vow. Explain to me what acts are obligatory and what are prohibited for me, and also the acts which (are neither obligatory nor prohibitive but which) do not violate the vow.

Kaśyapa said:

47. You should not injure any of the living beings. You should not curse or tell a lie. You should not pare your nails or cut your hair. You should not touch an impure and inauspicious thing.

48. You should not take bath into water by plunging in it. You should not get angry or speak with wicked men. You should not put on unwashed garments nor should wear a garland worn by others.

49. You should not eat food which has remained after being eaten by others; nor food offered to the goddess Bhadrakālī or to seven Mātṛkās or eaten by ants. You should not eat nonvegetarian food or food brought by a Śūdra. You should not take food which is seen by a woman in monthly course. You should not drink water with your folded palms.

50. You must not go out with remnants of food sticking in the mouth or without rinsing the mouth with water. You should not stir out in the evening with dishevelled hair, unadorned or without the upper garment. You should not be unrestrained in speech.

51. You should not sleep without washing your feet or in an impure condition or with wet feet. (You should not go to bed) with your head to the North or to the West. You should not sleep with others or without any clothes. You should not remain asleep at dawn and dusk.

52. Putting on washed garments, always pure and furnished with all auspicious things, you should worship god Viṣṇu, goddess Śrī, cows and Brāhmaṇas before you take breakfast in the morning.

53. You should worship women whose husbands are alive, by offering them garlands, sandal-paste, food and ornaments. Having worshipped your husband, you should wait upon him and contemplate that your husband's energy is present in your womb.

54. If you will observe this vow called Puṁsavana (yielder of a son) for the period of one year without any flaw, you will beget a son who will be the slayer of Indra.

55. Diti agreed to that. She conceived from Kaśyapa and strictly (began to) observe the vow, Oh king.

56. Having come to know the intention of his maternal aunt the sly foresighted Indra waited upon Diti who was staying in a hermitage, (under the pretext of) rendering service to her.

57. At the appointed time he always brought flowers, fruits, sacred sticks, kuśagrass, leaves, shoots, earth and water from the forest.

58. Oh King, in this way the crooked Indra, desiring to find out some flaw in the course of the observance of vows of the lady who had undertaken them, served her like a hunter who puts on the guise of a deer.

59. Indra who was intent on detecting a weak point in her observance of vows, could not find it. He became intensely anxious as to how he could succeed (in securing his good).

60. Once in the evening, Diti who was fatigued with the observance of that austere vow and deluded by fate, slept with the remnants of food in the mouth (without rinsing her mouth with water), and with unwashed feet.

61. Getting this opportunity, Indra who was expert in Yoga entered the womb of Diti by his deluding power of Yoga, while Diti was unconscious in sleep.

62. With his Vajra he cut in seven parts the foetus which was brilliant like gold. While it was crying he said 'Don't cry," and cut each of that piece into seven again.

63. While they were being rent, all of them folded their palms and appealed to him "Oh Indra, we are Maruts, your brothers. Why do you wish to kill us ?"

64. "Don't be afraid, Brothers, you are for me", said Indra to the Maruts who as a class had unswerving loyalty to him as his attendants.

65. The foetus in the womb of Diti did not die through the grace of Lord Viṣṇu even though it was repeatedly hacked with Vajra, just as you were saved from the missile of Aśvatthāman.

66. If a person worships but once the Ancient Person Viṣṇu, he attains to the self-same form as that of Viṣṇu, whereas the great god Hari was worshipped by Diti for a period slightly less than one year.

67. Along with Indra the Maruts became in all fifty gods. Removing the stigma of maternal heredity, they were made participants in Soma-drinking by Indra.

68. After getting up, Diti saw her sons brilliant like fire in the company of Indra. The faultless lady felt highly gratified.

69. She asked Indra, "Child, desiring a son which would strike terror in the sons of Aditi, I observed this vow which was most difficult.

70. I expected to have one son. How is it that I got seven times seven (fortynine)? Oh Son, if the truth is known to you, please tell me, but don't tell a lie."

Indra said:

71. Oh mother, having learnt about your determination, I approached you. Detecting a flaw in the observance of your vow, I who did not care for righteousness and was bent on achieving my object, slashed the foetus.

72. I hacked the foetus in seven ways and there were seven sons. Each of them was cut in seven; but they did not die.

73. Having seen that greatest miracle, I came to the conclusion that this must be some indescribable incidental Siddhi achieved through the worship of Lord Viṣṇu.

74. Those who without entertaining any blessings propitiate the Lord, do not wish the attainment of even Mokṣa, are declared as clever in accomplishing their objects.

75. After propitiating the Ruler of the World who is one's own Soul and is a bestower of his own Self, what wise man would seek contact with *guṇas* (worldly objects)? For (the products) the *guṇas* are available even in hell.

76. Therefore, Oh Mother, it behoves you to forgive this act of wickedness on my part which I, as a fool, committed to the worshipful ones. Fortunately the foetus has become alive again (after death).

Śrī Śuka said:

77. Indra, the god of heaven, was permitted (to go) by her who was sincerely pleased with him. He, along with Maruts, bowed to her and went to the heaven.

78. In this way, I have narrated to you in details what you had asked me, namely, the auspicious birth of the Maruts. Now tell me what else I should relate to you.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

(The Details of the Vow called Puṁsavana)

The King (Parikṣit) asked :

1. I wish to know, Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage, the details of the vow called *Puṁsavana* which you have mentioned, as Lord Viṣṇu is propitiated thereby.

Śrī Śuka said :

2. With the permission and consent of her husband a woman should begin on the 1st day of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa this observance of vow which is calculated to confer all desires on one.

3. She should listen to the narrative about the birth of Maruts and consult the Brāhmaṇas. Cleansing her teeth white and having taken a bath, she should put on two white garments. Adorning herself with ornaments, she should worship Lord Viṣṇu along with Śrī in the morning, before taking the breakfast.

4. (She should pray as follows:) "Oh Lord of accomplished desires, I bow to you who, being endowed with enough of all things, are (hence) above wants and expectations. Salutations to you, the Lord of Lakṣmī, the master of all mystic powers.

5. Oh Lord ! Possessor of excellences like supreme grace, fortune, prowess, glory, energy and other divine attributes as you are, you are the real omnipotent Supreme Ruler of the world.

6. Oh Divine consort of Viṣṇu, the supreme deluding power of the Lord, you possess the same characteristics as those of the Supreme Person Viṣṇu. Be propitious unto me, Oh Almighty Goddess. Oh Mother of the universe, I bow to you.

7. I offer worship to the glorious Lord designated by the sacred syllable OM, the Lord who is the Supreme Person, most mighty, the Lord of Mahālakṣmī, along with his highest potencies.

Invoking daily god Viṣṇu by chanting the aforesaid *mantra*, one should offer, with concentrated mind, articles of worship such as water for washing his (Viṣṇu's) hands and feet, and rinse his (Viṣṇu's) mouth and water for taking bath, silken garments, the sacred thread, ornaments, sandal-paste, flowers, incense, light, food and other articles.

8. Out of the food left after offering it to Viṣṇu, twelve oblations of that food should be offered to the fire with the *mantra* "Salutation to the glorious Supreme Person (Viṣṇu) of unlimited powers and denoted by the sacred syllable OM. I offer these oblations to you along with Lakṣmī."

9. If one is desirous of securing all worldly prosperity, one should always devoutly worship goddess Lakṣmi and Lord Viṣṇu who confer boons and both of whom are the fountain-heads of all blessings.

10. She should prostrate herself before them just like a rod on the ground, with her heart submissive in devotion. She should repeat the (abovementioned) *mantra* for ten times and sing (the following) Hymn:

11. "Both of you are the Lords of the universe, the ultimate cause of the world. This is verily the subtle Prakṛti, your deluding potency (Māyā) too formidable to be overcome.

12. You are directly her Supreme Ruler, the Supreme Person. You are the embodiment of all sacrifices while she is the sacrificial performance. She is activity itself while you are the enjoyer of the fruit thereof.

13. This goddess is the manifestation of *guṇas*, while you are the cause of that manifestation and the enjoyer of the *guṇas*. You are the Soul, the inner controller of all embodied beings, while Śrī is the body, senses and the inner organ. The glorious Lakṣmī represents the name and form, while you are their support and their illuminator.

14. Inasmuch as both of you Supreme Rulers confer boons on the three worlds, Oh Lord of hallowing renown, may my great desires be fulfilled."

15. Eulogizing thus the Lord of Śrī along with Śrī who confers boons, one should remove all articles used in worship. Having offered water to rinse the mouth (to the deities), one should continue to worship. (known as *uttara-pūjā*)

16. She should then praise with the above hymn, with her mind merged in devotion, Smelling the remnants of the offerings to fire, she should again worship Hari.

17. Identifying with great devotion her husband with Lord Viṣṇu, she should serve him with various objects dear to him. The husband who is loving by nature, should himself help in all the activities of his wife, whether they be great or small, pertaining to the worship of God.

18. It is enough if this vow is observed by one of the couple (husband and wife). If the wife is incapable (for reasons of health) or disqualified (due to monthly course), the husband should observe it with concentrated mind.

19. This vow pertaining to Viṣṇu, if once undertaken, should not be violated under any circumstances. Every day she should worship with devotion Brāhmaṇas and women whose husbands are alive, by offering them wreaths of flowers. sandal-paste, food and ornaments, and should also worship Lord Viṣṇu.

20. After requesting the deity to retire to his abode, one should eat what was offered to the deity, for self-purification and attainment of all desires.

21. After performing such process of worship for a period of twelve months, the pious lady should observe fast on the last day of the month of Kārttika.

22. When the morrow dawns, she should touch water (take bath) and duly worship Lord Kṛṣṇa as before. The husband should offer twelve oblations according to *pārvaṇa-sthālī-pāka vidhāna* (a kind of sacrificial performance) of rice cooked in milk and mixed with ghee, (in the sacrificial fire).*

23. Having reverentially accepted the blessings pronounced by the Brāhmaṇas who are pleased, and having devoutly

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* The text of the Bh.P. used by VR. adds :

"Looking upon Brāhmaṇas as the embodiments or forms of the Supreme Soul, she should serve meals to them with devotion and should give to them sesamum seeds coated with jaggery and fried grains, and drinking vessels full of water."

paid obeisance to them by bowing the head, she should take meals with their permission.

24. After feeding the preceptor first along with the relatives, the husband, with his speech restrained, should give the remnants of the *caru*, which is capable of conferring good progeny and ensuring good fortune, to his wife.

25 A man who observes this vow of the Almighty God with due formalities, gets his desired object. A woman who observes this will get good fortune, wealth, progeny, longevity to her husband (throughout her life), glory and a good house.

26-27. An unmarried girl will get a husband possessing all good characteristics. A widow will be rid of her sins and attain to Liberation. A woman who loses her children in death) will get long-lived children. A woman if ill-fated in spite of wealthy condition, becomes blessed with good fortune and if ugly looking, becomes beautiful. A chronic patient of long period gets free from disease, and becomes energetic and virile in his senses and activities. If it is repeated at the time of auspicious ceremonies, it gives eternal and infinite satisfaction to forefathers and divinities.

28. If the Fire-God, the goddess Lakṣmī and Lord Viṣṇu are pleased after the completion of *Homa* (sacrifice), they confer all desired objects. Oh King, I have narrated to you the auspicious story of the birth of Maruts and the great vow observed by Diti.

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THE
BHĀGAVATA-PURĀNA

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SEVENTH SKANDHA

CHAPTER ONE

Conversation between Yudhiṣṭhira and Nārada :
Jaya and Vijaya cursed

The King (Parīkṣit) said :

1. How is it that the glorious Lord who is by nature impartial and friendly to all beings, killed Daityas for the sake of Indra, as if He was impelled by partiality, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ?

2. Being transcendental to *Guṇas* (He is above love and hate). He is the very embodiment of perfect bliss. He has no selfish ends to be served from the host of gods, nor does He entertain any fear from Asuras and nor does He cherish any hatred towards them.

3. Oh highly fortunate one, this has been our great doubt about the excellences of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Your Worship should please dispel it.

Śrī Śuka said :

4. Oh great King, you have asked a good question. The life of Hari is miraculous and mysterious. It contains the glories of the devotees of the Lord and promotes devotion unto Him intensely.

5. The legendary story of Hari which is highly meritorious is sung by sages like Nārada and others. After paying obeisance to Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, I shall narrate to you that.

6. Though the Lord who is transcendental to Prakṛti, attributeless, unborn and unmanifest, enters into the *guṇas* of his own Māyā. He assumed the role of the chastiser to those who deserved punishment (i.e. became the cause of enmity between gods and demons).

7. *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* are the attributes of *Prakṛti* and not of the *Ātman*, nor is there a synchronous increase or decrease of them.

8. During the period of the ascendancy of *Sattva*, he enters into the bodies of celestials and sages, and He thus intensifies their power. During the preponderance of *Rajas*, he does so for Asuras. During the dominance of *Tamas*, he fosters Yakṣas and Rākṣasas. It is in conformance with the Time-spirit that this happens. (Not that God is partial).

9. Like fire (in the wood), space i.e. *Ākāśa* (in a pitcher), he appears in many forms or bodies without being distinguished from the body occupied by him. It is only the discerning who, after meticulous investigation (by introspection) into the *Ātman* as residing in themselves, realize Him (as being distinct from *guṇas* and their products).

10. When the Supreme Self desires to create cities, i.e. bodies, for enjoyment of the *Jīva*, he creates separately *Rajas* (which was in a state of equilibrium) and impels it to act with dominant force. When the Lord desires to sport Himself in multifarious bodies, he makes the *Sattva* act. When he desires to go to sleep, i.e. to withdraw the universe within himself, he sets in motion the *Tamas*.

11. Oh King, this infallible Creator and Controller of the universe, through the instrumentality of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, creates the Present Time which acts as their supporting associate. The entity that is designated as Time, promotes the power of *Sattva*. Due to the fostering of *Sattva* by Time, the Lord of extensive fame, the Controller of Time, appears as a friend of gods (whose dominant characteristic is *Sattva*) and destroys the enemies of gods who are dominated by *Rajas* and *Tamas*. (It is due to his presence that Time has the potency to achieve this).*

12. Oh King, on this very topic was narrated a legend by the divine sage Nārada, when he was respectfully questioned by Yudhiṣṭhira formerly, in the great Rājasūya Sacrifice.

13-14. Having seen the most marvellous absorption of *Śiśupāla*, the king of Cedi, in Lord Vāsudeva at the great

* VR.: Supreme Soul creates the Present Time which, being pervaded by Him, is like His body. He then brings forth *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*—the sentient and the insentient phenomena. When it is the time for protection through *Sattva guṇa*, the Lord impels the Time to increase the power of gods only and defeat the Asuras who are dominated by *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

sacrifice called Rājasūya the king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu, became astonished in his mind, and asked the divine sage who was sitting there, in the presence of the sages.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

15. Oh, it is extremely marvellous that Śiśupāla, the hater of Vāsudeva was absorbed into Vāsudeva, the Supreme Reality, as such merger is very difficult even to those who are exclusively devoted to Him.

16. Oh Sage, all of us are solicitous to know (the explanation of) this mystery, for Vena who used to revile the Lord was cursed to hell[1] by Brāhmaṇas.

17. The wicked son of Damaghoṣa, Śiśupāla was wrathful and jealous about Kṛṣṇa since his childhood-lisping up to this time. Even so was the wicked Dantavaktra.

18. Why is it that the tongue of those who constantly blasphemed Viṣṇu who is the immutable transcendental Brahman, was not affected with white leprosy or that they did not enter the blinding darkness of hell?

19. How is it that they were so easily absorbed into his Lordship of incomprehensible nature, even while all people were looking on ?[2]

20. This (miracle) confuses my intellect and makes it unsteady like the flame of a lamp flickering before the wind. Your worshipful self should please explain to me the reason of this most wonderful event.

Śrī Śuka said :

21. Hearing that speech (query) of the king, the worshipful sage Nārada was pleased, and addressing to him, he recounted the episodes connected with this event while the members of the assembly were listening

Nārada said ;

22. Censure and eulogy, respectful and disrespectful treatments are meant for this body which is brought forth

1. GS. explains that Vena was killed. He did not go to hell.

2. ŚR. points out that though Dantavaktra was not absorbed at that time, his future merger with Vāsudeva was astrologically predicted and is hence treated as a *fait accompli*, by Nārada.

through want of discrimination and ignorance between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, Oh King.

23. By the false notion of identity between the body and the Soul, arises the misapprehension of one's being different from others. It leads to the concept of individual distinctness expressed by the words "I" and "Mine" and (gives rise to) the feeling of pain under punishment and harsh words.

24. The killing of creatures is the destruction of the body which they have identified with the Soul and the notion of idividuality (i.e. 'I' and 'Mine'). But the Lord is without a second and the Soul of all. Being absolute, he has no such attachment (or the sense of individuality), he chastises the wicked for their good and not out of malice. How could harmfulness (*Himsā*) be attributed to Him ?

25. Therefore one should concentrate one's mind on Him either through constant hostility or through devotion characterised by absence of malice or enmity or through fear or love. By this concentration, a person will perceive nothing else but the Lord.

26. It is my definite conclusion that just as a mortal being attains identification and concentration with the Lord by cherishing enmity, he does not (with that intensity and to that extent) attain absorption through devotion.[1]

27. A worm shut up by a wasp (in its hole or nest) on a wall, broods over it (the wasp) so intensely and continuously through hatred and fear that it gets transformed into a form like a wasp.

28. Thus those who cherish enmity against the glorious Supreme Ruler Kṛṣṇa who appears a human being through his Māyā power, attain to him as their sins are washed off by their constant meditation upon him through hatred or fear.

29. Many persons have attained unto union with the Supreme Lord after being purified of all the impiety by concentrating their mind on the Lord through love, hatred, fear, affection and devotion.

30. Gopīs (wives of cowherds) through love, Kaṁsa through fear, Śiśupāla and other kings through hatred, Vṛṣṇis

1. VJ. & VC. point out that this verse does not advocate hatred as the best form of devotion, though superficially it appears to do so.

through kinship, you Pāṇḍavas through friendship and affection, and we sages through devotion (attained identity with him), Oh King.

31. Vena does not fall under any of the five categories of devotees of the Supreme Man. One should therefore fix one's mind on Kṛṣṇa by any one of the means (detailed above).

32. Oh Pāṇḍava, Śiśupāla and Dantavaktra, the sons of your maternal aunt, were the foremost attendants of Viṣṇu; but they fell down from that position through the curse of a Brāhmaṇa.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

33. It appears certainly incredible that those who are exclusively devoted to Hari, were compelled to be born again. Therefore (please tell us) whose curse it was and what was the nature of the imprecation which overpowered the servants of Hari.

34. The residents of the city or region called Vaikuṇṭha are of pure sāttvic form and are devoid of material body, senses and the like. You should narrate to us how it led to the assumption of corporeal existence (in the case of such residents of Vaikuṇṭha).

Nārada said :

35. Once upon a time, Sanandana and others (Sanaka etc.) the sons of Brahmā, went to the region of Viṣṇu, by chance, while they were ranging at will, through the three worlds.

36. Though they were born earlier than elders like Brahmā's sons (such as Marīci and others), they looked like children of five or six years in age. All of them had no garments (and were completely nude). Thinking them to be kiddies those two door-keepers (of Viṣṇu) prevented them (from entering).

37. Being enraged at this, they cursed, "Both of you (doorkeepers) are fools. You do not deserve to live near the feet of Lord Viṣṇu (much less to serve him) as his feet are completely free from *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Hence, immediately turn into the most sinful form of Asuras."

38. While both of them were falling down from their place due to this curse, they were addressed by the merciful sages, "Both of you will be fit to return to your region (Vaikuṇṭha) after three births".

39. Both of them were born as the sons of Diti. The elder was Hiraṇyakaśipu and the younger brother was Hiraṇyākṣa. Both of them were respected by Daityas and Dānavas.

40. Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed by Hari assuming the Man-Lion form. Hiraṇyākṣa was killed by Viṣṇu incarnating in a boar form while lifting up the earth (sunken into the cosmic waters).

41. Hiraṇyakaśipu adopted various devices to torture his son Prahlāda to death, as he wished to kill him for his (Prahlāda's) love and devotion to Viṣṇu.

42. Despite his endeavours to kill Prahlāda, he could not do so, as Prahlāda identified himself with the soul of all beings; was serene and looked upon all as being Brahman (and therefore equal). He was also surcharged and covered with Lord Viṣṇu's power.

43. Thereafter, both of them were born as Rākṣasas as the sons of Keśinī and Viśravas. They were Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, the tormentors of all the worlds.

44. Even in that incarnation, Viṣṇu became Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, and killed them for redeeming them from the curse. You will hear the prowess of Rāma from the lips of Mārkaṇḍeya, Oh King.

45. That very pair was born as Kṣatriya, as the sons of your maternal aunt. Now (not they but) their sins (and their present body, as the consequence of the curse) being destroyed by Sudarśana disc of Kṛṣṇa, they are now rescued from the curse.

46. Both of them were led to absorption in Kṛṣṇa (Acyuta), through their contemplation (of Kṛṣṇa) intensified by the bitterest enmity. They have again returned to Hari's presence, as attendants of Viṣṇu.

Yudhiṣṭhira asked :

47. How is it that Hiraṇyakaśipu came to cherish hatred towards his high-souled beloved son? And how did Prahlāda

happen to devote his mind exclusively to Hari ? Please tell me this in detail. Oh worshipful sage.

CHAPTER TWO

Hiraṇyakaśipu consoles his mother and kinsmen

Nārada narrated :

1. When Hari, who had assumed the form of a boar, thus killed his brother Hiraṇyākṣa (out of partiality to gods), Hiraṇyakaśipu was agitated with wrath and grief, Oh King.

2. Trembling with rage, biting his lips, and with eyes fiercely blazing with anger, he looked at the sky which appeared full of smoke; he spoke thus.

3. Looking fierce with his terrible big teeth, frowning look, and terrific looking face with knit eyebrows, he raised his trident in the assembly of Dānavas and addressed them as follows.

4-5. "Oh Dānavas and Daityas, Oh Dvimūrdhan (two-headed demon), Oh three-eyed one, Śambara, hundred-armed one, horse-headed one, Namuci, Pāka, Ilvala, Vipracitti, Puloman, Śakuna and others ! Listen to my words and then immediately execute them. Do not delay.

6. My beloved brother was killed by insignificant enemies through Hari who, though impartial, sided with them through their services (to Him).

7. He (Viṣṇu) was originally pure and impartial but through his assumption of the form of a boar by his Māyā, he has fallen away from his original nature. Like a child, he sides with him who serves him. His mind is unstable.

8. I shall satisfy my brother who is thirsting for blood, with the profuse blood (of Viṣṇu) with his neck cut off by my trident, and thus I shall relieve my grief.

9. When the crafty adversary (whose actions are inscrutable) is destroyed, the residents of heavens (gods) whose very

life is Viṣṇu, will wither away like branches of a tree the roots of which are cut.

10. (While I am accomplishing this), you immediately repair to the earth which has been made prosperous by Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas. Slaughter down those who are engaged in austere penance, sacrifice, Vedic studies, observance of religious vows and acts of charity.

11. Viṣṇu owes his existence to (lit. has for his roots in) the religious performance of Brāhmaṇas, for he Himself is the sacrifice and personified righteousness. He is the ultimate resort of gods, sages, manes and beings.

12. Repair to those regions wherein dwell the Brāhmaṇas, cows, (recitation of) Vedas, (proper observance of the duties of) Varṇas and Āśramas. Devastate that country with fire, and cut down (the trees etc. useful for sacrifice)."

13. In this way, they respectfully accepted the order of their master, bending their heads. Being innately disposed to indulge in harassment of others, they wrought havoc among subjects (on the earth).

14. They set fire to towns, villages, cow-pens, gardens, parks and fields, hermitages and mines, farmers' settlements, villages at the foot of mountains, cow-herd settlements and even capital cities.

15. Some knocked down and dismantled with spades bridges, ramparts and towers. Some with an axe in hand cut down fruit-bearing trees (serving as food to others). Some set on fire the houses of the people with flaming torches.

16. When people were thus constantly harassed by the followers of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of the demons, (sacrifices could not be performed and) gods (who starved due to non-receipt of their share in sacrificial oblations) deserted heaven, and wandered over the earth unperceived.

17-18. (Though himself deeply) aggrieved, Hiraṇyakaśipu offered oblations of water to the spirit of his deceased brother, and performed other funeral rites. He consoled the sons of his brothers, viz., Śakuni, Śambara, Dhṛṣṭa, Bhūta-Santāpana, Vṛka, Kālanābha, Mahānābha, Hariśmaśru, Utkaca.

19. Hiraṇyakaśipu who knew what was appropriate for a particular occasion and situation (lit. place and time), addre-

ssed the following in soothing words to his nephews (mentioned above) and to their mother (his sister-in-law) Ruṣābhānu and to his own mother Diti, Oh ruler of men.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

20. Mother dear ! Oh daughter (-in law) ! Oh sons ! You ought not to lament (the death of) a hero. Praiseworthy and covetable is the death of the brave, while facing the enemy (on the battle-field).

21. The sojourn of beings in this world is like the get-together of travellers in a shed of water-jars (kept on the road-side for travellers to drink), Oh virtuous lady. Similarly, it is by the Providence that creatures are severally brought and are separated by their respective *karmas*.

22.* The Soul is eternal (deathless), immutable, pure, omnipresent, omniscient, the cause of everything, yet distinct from the body, (hence you should not lament for Hiraṇyākṣa thinking him to be dead, separate etc.). Through his Māyā, he creates *guṇas* (such as various species of bodies, pleasure, pain) and assumes various forms.

23-24. Just as even the (reflection of) trees (in water appears to) move when the waters move, or the earth appears to revolve when one's eyes are swimming, the same way, when the mind gets agitated and conditioned by the *guṇas*, the Perfect Person appears similarly conditioned and invested with a material body, even though he is bodiless.

25-26. It is the perversity of the Soul to presume its identification with the material body which does not exist. By this identification and attachment, are caused one's union with the undesirable and separation from the dear ones, and *vice*

* As usual, VR. sets forth the Viśiṣṭādvaita theory of the Soul, viz. *Ātman* that is *jīva* pervades the whole body that he occupies (*sarvaga*) through his knowledge. To enjoy the fruit of his *karma* (whether merit or sin), he activates the *guṇas* (e.g. Sattva). The association of and separation from the body of each *jīva* is due to his *karma*.

But VR. does not explain the get-together and dispersal of several *jīvas* as required by the text of the Bh. P.

VJ. points out that the *jīva's* relation with his body etc. is temporary, but with that of the Lord is constant. It is the Lord who bestows the *jīva* with the mind, senses etc. Hari is the real support of the *jīva*.

versa, *karmas*, and entrance into various species of beings, birth and death, sorrows of various kinds, lack of discernment and discrimination (between the matter and the spirit), brooding over the (objects of senses), forgetfulness about the discrimination between the Soul and the body.

27. In this context, the wise people give as an illustration, the following ancient legend, in the form of a conversation between Yama (the god of death) and the kinsmen of a dead person. Listen to that dialogue carefully.

28. In the country called Uśīnara, there lived a famous king by name Suyajña. When he was killed in the battle by his enemies his kinsmen stood around him.

29-30. He lay on the battlefield with his armour studded with jewels shattered, his ornaments and wreaths of flowers fallen away from his body. His heart was pierced with arrows and his body lay weltering in blood, the hair of the head dishevelled and scattered. His eyes were blown and lips were bitten with rage. His lotus-like face was covered with dust, and his weapons and arms were cut into pieces.

31. Observing their husband, the king of Uśinaras, reduced to that plight by Fate, the queens were deeply grieved. Screaming out 'We are undone, Oh Lord', they violently beat their breasts with their hands now and then, and fell at his feet.

32. Bewailing loudly and bathing the lotus-like feet of their (dead) husband with tears tinted reddish with saffron paste on their breasts, and their hair and ornaments dishevelled and scattered, they wailed so piteously and loudly as to cause heartrending grief in the hearts of the listening persons.

33. "Alas ! Your majesty has been transported to a stage of existence beyond the range of our sight, by the merciless Destiny, Oh Lord. You who were once the giver of livelihood (and happiness) to the people of Uśīnara country, have now been made the cause of their increasing grief, by it.

34. Oh Lord of the earth ! How can we live without you, our best friend and appreciator of merits ? Permit us who are desirous of serving your feet, to follow you wherever you will go (i.e. to die after you)."

35. While they were lamenting thus clasping their dead

husband, and unwilling to allow him to be removed for cremation, the Sun set in the sky.

36. Having heard the wailings of the relatives of the dead (even while he was in his capital), Yama (the god of death) himself approached them, in the form of a boy, and spoke to them.

Yama said .

37. Oh ! How astonishing is the folly of these elderly people who have been daily observing the course of the world (viz. the death of everyone who is born). Though themselves of the same (mortal) nature as that of the dead person, they bewail in vain the man who has returned to the (unmanifest) state from which he has come (originally).[1]

38. Oh ! How blessed-most we are that though abandoned by parents in this world, we do not feel any anxiety. Weak as we are, we are not devoured by (carnivorous animals like) wolves and others. (We feel confident that) he who protects us while (we were) in the womb, shall protect us (in this world).

39. Oh ladies ! The imperishable Lord, at his sweet will, creates, protects and destroys the universe. The wise people call the mobiles and immobiles as mere toys. It is the Lord alone, who is powerful (enough) to preserve and destroy it.

40. Protected by the Lord, one survives even if abandoned by the road side. If ignored by Him, one meets death even while staying at home. A helpless creature can stay alive even in a jungle, if looked after by Him; while a person if destined by Him to die, shall never live even if protected at home (by the use of medicines, incantations etc.).

41. Bodies of all species (including those of gods, sub-human and human beings) come into existence and perish at a particular time according to the *karmas* depending on the subtle body. But the Soul though it inhabits the Prakṛti (the corporal body), is not affected by the attributes of the Prakṛti (body) as he is different from it.

1. Cf. *avyaktādini bhūtāni vyaktamadhyāni Bhārata/ avyaktanidhanānyeva tatra kā paridevanā* // B.G. 2.28.

42. This corporal body of Puruṣa (the Soul or Spirit) is caused by delusion, and being made of *bhūtas*, is different from the Soul, just as a house is different from its dweller. Like bubbles constituted of atoms of water, pots made of earth, gold ornaments made of (solidified) fire, this body formed (out of elements) by Time, undergoes modification and perishes.

43. Just as fire remaining latent in the pieces of wood is distinct from them, or the vital breath existing in the body remains different from it, or the sky pervading all things does not stick to anything, similarly the Soul, the supporter of all the *guṇas*, i.e. their product, e.g. the body, sense organs or who dwells in them, is distinct from them.[1]

44. You fools ! This (body called) Suyajña whom you are lamenting, is lying here. He who heard you and then replied, could never be seen by you.

45. Not even the great vital air (*mukhya-prāṇa*) in the body which is called life, is the listener or the speaker. The principle, which is the master and controller of senses, is the real *ātman*, and it is distinct from the body and the life-breath *mukhya prāṇa*).

46. This all-pervasive principle *ātman*, though distinct, assumes different bodies (celestial, human and sub-human), consisting of five elements (*bhūtas*), senses and mind, and regards himself as one with them; and by dint of his power and wisdom, he casts them off (as well).

47. So long as its association with Māyā continues, the *ātman* identifies itself with the subtle body (*liṅga-śarīra*) and feels attachment for it. The bondage of *karma* holds sway over him. It leads to the perversion of the Soul, resulting into misery.

48. It is a false notion and attachment to look upon and speak of (products of) *guṇas* (such as pleasure, pain) as real. Like our fanciful desires and dreams, all sense-experience is unreal.

1. According to VJ. verses 41-43 emphasize the distinction of *Paramātman* from Jiva. In 43, the presence of the *Paramātman* in the body is not the effect of delusion, and as such he is not affected by the *guṇas*.

49. Hence, the knowers of the reality do not grieve for what is eternal (the Soul) or what is transient (e.g. body, sense-organs, objects of pleasure). But the nature of those who are given to grieving, cannot be changed (as they have not imbibed the knowledge of reality).

50. A fowler, created as the destroyer of birds (by God) spread his net in the forest, placing allurements at different places.

51. A pair of *Kuliṅga* birds (sparrows) was seen flying over it. Out of them, the female sparrow was soon allured by the fowler.

52. The queen-bird, being dragged by Time (Destiny), was enmeshed in the net. Seeing her in that miserable condition, the male partner was extremely afflicted. The pitiable mate, being helpless (to rescue her and to control his own grief), lamented over his miserable companion, out of affection :

53. "Oh ! What that merciless yet almighty Providence is going to do with my wife, who herself is pitiable and helpless in every respect, is lamenting for me.

54. May the Deity be pleased to take me also. Of what use is to me the survival of the one (male) half leading a miserable life, after being separated from my better half ?

55. How can I maintain those unfledged motherless young ones ? Those unfortunate children of mine must be waiting for the arrival of their mother."

56. While the male bird, who was grieved at the separation from his wife, was thus lamenting with his voice choked with tears, the fowler, as if impelled by fate, concealed himself close by, and hit the bird with an arrow.

57. So, you foolish ladies who do not foresee your own destruction (death) will never get back your husband, even if you bewail for hundreds of years."

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

58. While the child was thus admonishing, all the kinsmen (of Suyajña) became astonished, and realized that everything is transient and unreal.

59. Having exhorted them thus, Yama also disappeared at that very spot. The relatives of Suyajña performed his funeral rites.

60. Hence you need not grieve for yourself or for others. In the case of ignorant beings, the differentiation between one's own self and another or what belongs to one's own self and another, is due to the false notion of distinction between one's own self from another (and the consequent attachment for one's own body and property)."

Nārada said :

61. Having heard the speech of the king of Daityas (Hiraṇyakaśipu) Diti, along with her daughter-in-law, immediately stopped sorrowing for her son and steadied her heart by fixing it on Reality.

CHAPTER THREE

Hiraṇyakaśipu's Penance—Brahmā grants Boons

Nārada said :

1. Oh King (Yudhiṣṭhira) ! Hiraṇyakaśipu wished to be invincible, unaffected by old age and death, unrivalled and the absolute ruler of all the worlds.

2. With his arms stretched upwards, eyes fixed in the sky and (all the while) standing on the tips of his big toes, Hiraṇyakaśipu (with the abovementioned desire) performed penance of a severe type, in the valley of mount Mandara.

3. Like the Sun radiating fiery rays at the time of the destruction of the world, he shone with the brilliant splendour of his matted hair. While he was thus engaged in austerities, gods (who disappeared out of fear) returned to their (former) abodes (in heaven).

4. As a result of his (severe) penance, smoky fire emanated from the crown of his head. It spread in all directions

and scorched the higher, middle and lower regions of the universe.

5. Rivers and oceans were agitated; the earth along with its continents and mountains quaked (violently); planets and stars fell down (from their orbits); all the ten directions were ablaze.

6-7 Being scorched (with that fire), gods deserted the heaven and went to the region of god Brahmā, and implored to the creator of the world : "Oh god of gods, Lord of the universe! Being burnt (severely afflicted) with the penance of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of Daityas, we are unable to stay in the Heaven. Oh great god ! If it pleases you, please bring about its pacification (extinction) before all the people (or regions) who worship you, are not destroyed, Oh Supreme Lord !

8. Do you not know his intention of performing this severely austere penance ? (If not) be pleased to listen to it as reported by us.

9-10 'Having created this universe of mobiles and immobiles by dint of his penance and Yogic meditation, the creator of the universe occupies his throne (position) exalted over all regions. I too will attain a similar high position for me, by my ever-increasing devotion to asceticism and Yogic concentration. For Time and Soul are eternal.

11. Otherwise, by the power of my penance, I shall reverse the old order of the universe and make it as it was not before (making sins result in happiness, meritorious deeds lead to miseries. The *Asuras* will be exalted to Svarga and gods and sages driven to Pātāla). What have I to do with the positions of Dhruva, Viṣṇu and others which are abolished by Time, at the end of *a Kalpa* ?[1]

12. We heard it reported that, it is with that determination, he (Hiraṇyakaśipu) undertook those rigorous religious austerities. Oh Lord of the three worlds ! Now you may please do promptly whatever is proper.

13. Your exalted position as Parameṣṭhī promotes the growth, welfare, prosperity, good fortune and victory of the twice-born ones and cows, Oh Lord of the universe."

1. **The realm of Viṣṇu is eternal. But Hiraṇyakaśipu being of demonic and *Tāmasa* intellect thought it to be perishable.**

14. Thus respectfully requested by gods, Brahmā, the glorious, self-originated god, accompanied by Bhṛgu, Dakṣa and others, went to the hermitage of the king of Daityas.

15. But (at first) they could not find him as he was covered with an ant hill, grass and bamboos and as his skin, fat, flesh and blood were eaten up on all sides, by ants.

16. Brahmā (the swan-riding god) was surprised on seeing Hiraṇyakaśipu tormenting the world with his religious austerities (while lying concealed thus) like the Sun (scorching the world though) covered with clouds. Laughing aloud, he spoke :

Brahmā said :

17. Arise, arise, Oh Son of Kaśyapa ! May good betide you ! You have accomplished the purpose of your penance. I, the bestower of boons, have come here (to confer any boon you ask of me). Ask for any boon desired by you.

18. I have seen your extremely wonderful fortitude and patience. Though your body is eaten up by gnats, your life resides in your bony skeleton only.

19. None of the sages of yore has performed such austere penance, nor shall others do it in future. Who can verily sustain his life without (drinking a drop of) water for a hundred celestial years ?[1]

20. By this resoluteness of yours which is hard to practise even by those (great sages) who control their mind, and by your firmness in austere penance, I am conquered by you, Oh son of Diti.

21. I shall bestow on you, Oh leader of Asuras, all the blessings. The sight of an immortal god like me will not be unfructuous and in vain for you (who are but) a mortal.

Nārada said :

22. Having spoken to him (Hiraṇyakaśipu) thus, the first-born god Brahmā sprinkled on the body (of Hiraṇyakaśipu) which was eaten up by ants, celestial water from his

1. Human year of 360 days corresponds to 1 day of gods. Thus, one celestial year=360 human years. 100 celestial years=36,000 human years.

Kamaṇḍalu (earthen or wooden water pot) charged with unfailing potency.

23. From the ant-hill covered with bamboos, there arose, like fire from fuel, a youth of adamantine frame of the body, perfect in all limbs, endowed with energy and power, and with complexion like molten gold.

24. Finding god Brahmā seated on his swan, and stationed in the sky, he was transported with joy at this sight, and reverentially touched the ground with his head.

25. Rising up, he saw the god Brahmā with his own eyes. Reverentially he folded his hands in a suppliant position. With his eyes full of tears of joy, and with his hair standing on their ends, he expressed the following prayer with his voice choked with tears of joy.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

26-27.* "Bow to the all-pervading Supreme Lord, the support of the *guṇas—sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, who, being self-luminous, manifested by his own splendour (power), this universe which was enveloped in intense *tamas* (not darkness), produced by Time, at the time of the periodic destruction of the universe (at the end of each *Kalpa*), and who, assuming the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* creates, protects and destroys this universe.

28** Salutations to the Primary Cause (the instrumental cause of the universe who is knowledge and wisdom *incarnate*, and who (as the material cause) becomes manifest through the modifications, viz., vital airs (*prāṇa*), senses (*indriya*), mind and intellect.

29. You govern the mobiles and immobiles through the chief *Prāṇa* (chief of the five vital airs) and hence, you are the protector of all the creatures, the controller of the mind, and

* VR. notes that due to the *tāmasa* nature of Hiraṇyakaśipu, he wrongly thinks god Brahmā to be the Almighty Lord. VJ. also points out that the attributes used here are inapplicable to the four-faced god Brahmā but are proper for Hari who, as an *antaryāmin*, dwells in all and controls Brahmā.

** VJ. shows that the attributes mentioned herein are applicable both to the Supreme Lord and to god Brahmā.

life principles, of the heart and the sense-organs. You are the *mahat* (and) as such the ruler of the elements (*bhūtas*), their *guṇas* (objects such as sound, touch etc.) as well as their *vāsanās* (sense-impressions).

30. Through your body consisting of the three Vedas, and the sacrificial lore, requiring four officiating priests (viz. Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Udgātṛ and Brahmā), you perform the seven types of sacrifices (such as *Agniṣṭoma*, *Atyagniṣṭoma*, *Uktha*, *Ṣoḍaśī*, *Atirātra*, *Āptoryāma* and *Vājapeya*). You are the Soul of all living beings. You are indivisible, without a beginning and end, and unlimited by time and place, the Omniscient Indwelling Soul and Controller.

31. You alone are the unwinking Time. You reduce the duration of the life of men by units of time called *lava*, *nimeṣa* and others. You are the immutable Soul, the occupant of the most exalted position, the birthless, all-pervading principle, the supporter and controller of all living beings.

32* Neither cause nor effect, or neither mobiles nor immobiles are apart from you. All the branches of knowledge (viz. Vedas and upa-Vedas) and arts (auxiliaries of Vedic studies e.g. phonetics, grammar, prosody etc.) it, this shining are your forms. You are the great Brahmā containing within egg of the universe. You are beyond (transcendental to) Prakṛti consisting of three *guṇas*.

33** Oh all-pervading Lord ! This gross manifested universe is your body through which you enjoy the objects of

* VJ. points out that the attributes in this verse are applicable to the Supreme Lord and this verse is a eulogy of the Inner Controller (*antar-yāmin*).

"No mobiles and immobiles of the past, present and future can stand outside and unsupported by you. Both the *parā* and *aparā vidyās* abide in your body and are the means of knowing you. You are perfect and beyond the reach of the three stages, viz. wakefulness, sleep and dream.

** This verse sums up both the gross and subtle forms of Brahmā —VR.

VJ. The words *hiraṇya-garbha* etc. show that the universe is Hari's gross form, in which he enjoys supreme bliss and not misery, or pain like Devadatta (an ordinary man).

As usual, VJ. gives two interpretations, one applicable to Hari and the other to Brahmā—

senses, life-breath (vital energy) and the mind, remaining all the while established in your original most exalted state. You are the unmanifest (subtle) *ātman* and the most ancient Supreme Person.

34. Salutation to the glorious Lord who has pervaded the whole of the universe by His infinite, unmanifest form and who is possessed of powers called *cit* or *vidyā* and *acit* or *māyā*.

35. Oh greatest among the bestowers of boons ! If you are to confer on me my desired boons, may my death not take place at the hands of any being created by You, Oh Lord.

36-37. Let me not meet death indoors or out of doors; during night or at day time, by the hand of any other (being created by you) or by means of weapons; let there be no death to me either on the earth or in the sky, either by men or beasts; by gods, demons and big serpents; by beings whether living or dead. Grant me matchlessness in fight and the sole absolute rulership of all embodied beings.

38. (Lastly) confer on me the great position and power you enjoy among all the guardians of the world. Kindly grant me the undiminishing glory and unfailing mystical powers enjoyed by those whose power lies in asceticism and Yoga."

CHAPTER FOUR

Oppression of Hiraṇyakaśipu and Description of Prahlāda's devotion

Nārada said :

1. Thus solicited, Brahmā who was extremely pleased with the austere penance of Hiraṇyakaśipu, granted on him the boons which are very rarely obtained by anyone.

(1) "Oh Hari, you are the most ancient person in Vaikuṇṭha. This gross manifested universe" etc.

(2) "Oh god Brahmā, you are the Soul (*purāṇa*—one bound to the body) the four-faced god who does "not incarnate (*avyakta*)", the rest as above.

Brahmā said :

2. "My dear child! These boons that you seek of me are very rarely to be obtained by men. I, however, confer them on you, even though they are very difficult to be secured."

3. Then the glorious almighty god of unfailing grace, who was worshipped by the king of Asuras, departed while being extolled by lords of creation (*Prajāpatis* like Marīci and others).

4. The demon who was thus blessed with the boons, assumed a resplendent golden body. Constantly remembering the killing of his brother (by Viṣṇu), he cherished hatred towards the glorious Lord.

5-7. The great Asura subjugated and brought under his control all directions, the three worlds, gods, Asuras, the kings of men, Gandharvas, Garuḍa-like birds, serpents, demi-gods (like Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Vidyādharas); (he subdued) sages, Lords of manes (*Pitṛs*), Manus, Yakṣas, *Rākṣasas*, chiefs of *Piśācas*, *Pretas* and *bhūtas* (goblins, evil spirits etc.); having vanquished and brought under his sway all the chiefs of living beings, the conqueror of the universe forcibly usurped the regions (and offices) of the protectors of the world, along with their glory.

8-11. He established himself in the celestial region which was beautified with the charming heavenly pleasure-garden (*Nandana*). He took up his residence in the palace of the great Indra, (which was) constructed by Viśvakarman, as the very centre of affluence, wealth and prosperity of the three worlds (*OR* the abode of the Lakṣmī of the three worlds). There, the flight of steps are built of coral, the pavement consists of precious emeralds, the walls of crystals and the rows of columns were of *lapis lazuli*. The canopies are of artistic workmanship; the seats were wrought with rubies; beddings white as the foam of milk, were fringed with wreaths of pearls; the heavenly damsels (of pearl-like teeth) filling the mansion here and there (everywhere), with the sweet jingling sound of their anklets (*nūpuras*), see the reflections of their faces on the floors of precious stones.

12. In that palace of Mahendra, the mighty, proud yet magnanimous Hiraṇyakaśipu, the vanquisher and the absolute ruler of the world, enjoyed himself. He ruled with a strong

iron hand, making the oppressed gods and others worship his feet respectfully.

13. With the exception of the three gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) all the Lokapālas (guardians of the world like Indra), with tributes and presents in their hands, waited upon him (Hiraṇyakaśipu) who was (always) intoxicated with strong-flavoured wines and had his reddish eyes rolling due to inebriation, yet who was the receptacle of penance, *Yoga*, power and energy, Oh King.

14. Viśvāvasu, Tumburu, I and others (had to) give musical performance in the presence of him who had forcibly established himself on the throne of Mahendra. Gandharvas, Siddhas, sages, Vidyādharas, and celestial nymphs eulogised him, Oh descendant of Pāṇḍu.

15. By his majestic lustre, he alone appropriated the portions of oblations offered in sacrifices with generous sacrificial gifts, performed by persons of various *Varṇas* (classes of society) and *āśramas* (stages in life).

16. The earth with all the seven continents yielded harnest without ploughing (and other agricultural operations). The heaven offered him whatever he desired, and the sky presented him various wonderful objects.

17. Oceans (lit. mines of precious stones) full of salt water, wine, clarified butter, sugarcane juice, curds, milk and nectar-like (sweet) water, along with their wives (rivers falling in them) bore, on the crest of their waves, heaps of jewels.

18. Mountains along with their caverns afforded him pleasure-grounds. Trees bore fruits and flowers in all seasons. Singly he combined in himself all the different functions of Lokapālas (such as showering, burning, evaporating etc.).

19. He who became the sole, absolute ruler of the world after vanquishing all the directions, enjoyed as much as he liked, pleasures dear to him. But having no control over senses, he was not satiated thereby.

20. In this way, a long period (of more than seventy-one *Yugas*) passed. With the imprecation of a Brāhmaṇa (Sanaka) hanging over his head, he became inebriated with

power and pelf. In his arrogance, he violated the injunctions of the *śāstras*.

21. Being extremely afraid of his harsh punishments and stern rule, all the inhabitants of the world, along with their protective deities, sought shelter with the unfailing Lord Viṣṇu, as they got no protection anywhere else.

22. (They prayed) "Salutation to that direction where resides Hari, the Soul and sovereign ruler of the universe—the direction (region) after reaching which, pure and tranquil recluses do not return (to the mundane existence)."

23*. Having thus controlled their minds and meditating over the Lord with concentrated attention, they shed off their sins. Foregoing their sleep and subsisting on air only, they prayed Lord Viṣṇu.

23-A** (Additional verse in VJ.'s text).

24. A voice emanating from no visible form, deep like the rumbling of clouds and completely filling all the quarters of heaven with its reverberations, was heard by them, assuring protection to the righteous.

25. They heard: "Oh foremost among the gods ! Be not afraid. Good betide you all. A sight of myself (as well as the hearing of my voice) is the means to attain all blessings to all creatures.

26. The wickedness and oppression of this wretched Daitya is already known (to me). I shall mete out a suitable pacification (death) to him. Wait till that period.

27. When a person cherishes hatred to gods, the Vedas, cows, Brāhmaṇas, the righteous people, religion and Me, he verily perishes in no time.

* VJ. : In this way, feeling confident in mind that the Lord will protect them and with concentrated attention (thus controlling their external and internal senses) and subsisting on air (and controlling the vital breath—*prāṇa*) and foregoing sleep (thus controlling their bodies), they repeated the following *mantra*.

**A (1) Hail to the Supreme Person endowed with six excellences, who is the Inner Controller of all, Omniscient and extremely merciful, and who is absolute knowledge and bliss *incarnate*, a resort affording absolute protection.

28. When he (Hiraṇyakaśipu) will maliciously seek to injure his own son, the serene high-souled Prahlāda who cherishes no enmity against anyone, I shall slay him despite his power derived from Brahmā's boons."

Nārada said:

29. Thus assured (addressed) by the Father (and the protector) of the world, the inhabitants of heaven (gods) bowed down to hin. With all their anxieties allayed, they returned, deeming that the demon is (as good as) killed.

30. The king of Daityas had four extremely marvellous sons. Prahlāda who was the worshipper of the Exalted Being was preeminent amongst them by his virtues.

31. He was full of reverence to Brāhmaṇas and was possessed of noble character, true to his word, self-controlled, and like Paramātman, he was the best friend and well-wisher of all.

32. Like a servant, he bowed at the feet of noble Souls. Like a father he was kind to the poor and needy. With equals, he was affectionate like a brother. He looked upon his elders as his masters. Though he was highly endowed with learning, munificence, personal charms and high lineage, he was completely free from pride and arrogance.

33. In dangers and calamities, his mind (always) remained unruffled. He cherished no desire for enjoyments, heard (as obtainable in the next world) or seen (in this world), as he regarded them to be unreal. He had controlled his senses, vital airs (the life-breath), body and intellect. He completely controlled his desires and kept his mind calm and serene. Though he was a demon by birth, he was devoid of demonic characteristics.

34. Oh King ! The excellent qualities of the Lord or of his devotees are now and again extolled by the wise. Even now they are not obscured as is the case with the excellences of the Lord.

35. In assemblies, where the discourses on the appreciation of the righteous take place, gods, Prahlāda's sworn enemies, cite him as a model (of piety and righteousness). What to speak about the devotees of Viṣṇu like you ?

36. Prahlāda had a natural love and devotion to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva. Hence it is impossible to describe his innumerable qualities. The description of his nobleness of Soul (and greatness) is only suggestive (and not exhaustive).

37. Even as a child, he set aside his toys. His mind being completely absorbed in the Lord, he appeared as a dunce. As his Soul (mind) was possessed by Kṛṣṇa, as though like a spirit, its coveted treasure, he did not know the matter-of-fact world (as known to ordinary persons, but was full of his presence). (His Soul was completely absorbed in the contemplation of Kṛṣṇa who was his only object of attraction).

38. Being folded in the embrace of Viṣṇu (i.e. finding himself fully identified with the Lord), he was not conscious of his acts such as sitting, walking, eating, sleeping, drinking or speaking.

39. Sometimes his consciousness would get mixed with anxiety for the Lord, and being agitated, he cried. Sometimes he would laugh in the excitement of his meditation about him; sometimes he would sing loudly.

40. Sometimes he shouted at the top of his voice. Sometimes, banishing all the sense of bashfulness, he would dance about. Sometimes, being filled with thoughts about him and feeling absorbed in him completely, he would imitate him.

41. Sometimes, with his hair standing on end, he would sit silent as if (deeply) satisfied with the Divine touch. (as if the Lord manifested himself in his heart and touched him with his hand). Sometimes, his eyes were half-closed and steady, with tears of joy and love flowing out.

42. By the service of the lotus-like feet of Lord of hallowing glory (Viṣṇu) which he acquired while in association with the Lord's devotees who claim nothing as their own, he attained supreme happiness not only to himself but often imparted that felicity to the minds of others which were polluted and miserable by bad company.

43. To his son, who was such a great devotee of the Lord, magnanimous and a highly noble Soul, that Hiraṇyakaśipu tried to do harm, Oh king.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

44. Oh divine sage of excellent vows ! We desire to know from you why the father meted out ill-treatment to his son who was so pure, innocent and righteous.

45. Fathers affectionate to their sons do remonstrate their disobedient sons for the sake of imparting education but never harm any like an enemy.

46. How much less would they do so in the case of such sons who are so obedient, righteous and regard the father as a deity.

Oh Brāhmaṇa sage, be pleased to satisfy our curiosity as to how the hatred of the father towards his son culminated in the father's attempt on the life of his son (or became the cause of the father's death), My Lord.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Life of Prahlāda

Hiraṇyakaśipu attempts to kill Prahlāda

Nārada said :

1. As is reported, the glorious Kāvya (Śukra) was selected by demons to fill the office of the royal priest. His two sons, Śaṇḍa and Amarka, stayed near the palace of the king of Daityas.

2. They taught the course of studies (in politics and such other sciences) to Prahlāda and other eligible Asura students sent to them by the king, even though Prahlāda was expert in philosophy.

3. Whatever was taught there by the teacher, he (carefully) listened and reproduced it. But he did not approve of the teaching that was on the false notion of distinguishing between (man and man) as friends and enemies.

4. Oh Pāṇḍava, once upon a time, the king of Asuras seated the child on his lap and asked him, "What do you regard as good, my child ?"

Prahlāda replied :

5. Oh Prominent Asura ! To embodied beings who are always mentally harassed with the false notion of 'I' and 'Mine', I regard that it is in their interest that they should abandon the hidden-well-like household which is degrading to the Soul and should enter into the woods and seek shelter with Hari.

Nārada said :

6. Having heard the words of his son which were in favour of the hostile party, he laughed (derisively) and exclaimed : "How the understanding of children gets perverted through contact with others (inimical element) !"

7. Let the child be so carefully guarded in his preceptor's house, that this intellect should not be vitiated by Brāhmaṇas who are the partisans of Viṣṇu *in cognito*.

8. When brought home (from the palace of Hiraṇya-kaśipu), the royal priests of Daityas sent for him. Praising him in soft words, they enquired of him in coaxing terms and in a conciliatory tone.

9. "Oh child Prahlāda ! May you be happy ! Please tell (us) the truth; do not tell a lie. What caused this perversion of intellect which is beyond (i.e. not found in) boys of your age ?

10. Is this change (distraction) in your mind brought out by others ? Or has it taken place automatically due to your innate nature ?

Prahlāda said :

11. Obeisance to the glorious Lord whose deluding power (Māyā) has created the wrong concept that 'this is mine' and 'this is another's', found in men whose intellect is deluded by Māyā.[1]

12. When He is favourable, the beast-like understanding apprehending differentiation that "This is different (from me) and I am different (from him)", comes to an end.

1. VJ. attributes this delusion to the Lord.
"vimohitetyanenā pīśvara-kartṛtvaṁ jñāyate /"

13. It is the Supreme Soul which is looked upon as one's own Self and another, by stupid people to whom His ways are inscrutable and indescribable. (It is however no wonder.) Even god Brahmā and other exponents of the Veda, are stupefied when they enquire about his nature. It is that Soul who has changed my mind (and outlook).

14. Oh Brahman ! Just as a piece of iron within the vicinity of a magnet is automatically attracted towards it, my mind, of its own accord (without any ostensible reason), is gravitated to Lord Viṣṇu.

Nārada said :

15. Having spoken (explained) as above, the highly intelligent Prahlāda stopped (speaking). Reproaching him threateningly, the wretched royal servant got enraged (and ordered):

16. "Who is there? Bring me a cane. This boy brings disreputation to us. The fourth expedient (corporal punishment) has been prescribed in the Śāstras, in case of such a wickedminded fellow who ruins his family.

17. This boy is like a thorny tree grown in the forest of sandal trees in the form of Daityas. He serves as a handle to Viṣṇu who is (like) an axe cutting the roots of that forest."

18. Intimidating him with various expedients like threats (corporal punishment and others), they made Prahlāda to learn (the text dealing with) the first three objects of human life (viz. *dharma, artha* and *kāma*).

19. Later on, the teacher was convinced that Prahlāda had mastered (known) the four branches in political strategy (viz. *sāma, dāna, daṇḍa* and *bheda*). After Prahlāda's mother bathed, dressed and adorned him, he was brought to the presence of the king of Daityas.

20. The Asura (Hiraṇyakaśipu) greeted with blessings his child who lay prostrate at his feet. For a long time he hugged him in his arms and felt deep satisfaction and happiness.

21. Placing him on the lap and smelling the crown of his head, he bathed him with tears. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira, then he spoke to the child of cheerful countenance.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said:

22. "My dear child Prahlāda ! Please recite some excellent passages that you have learnt well from what your teacher has taught you up to this time, Oh long-lived one !"

Prahlāda said:

23-24. "There are nine forms of devotion to Lord Viṣṇu—(1) to hear the names, episodes etc. of Viṣṇu, (2) to sing of his name and glories, (3) to Remember him (his name), (4) to render service unto him, (5) to worship him, (6) to pay obeisance to him, (7) to dedicate all one's actions to him, (8) to confide to him as a friend, (9) to offer one's body and belongings to his service and care. I regard it as the highest type of learning, if one offers himself completely to the Lord and performs this nine-fold devotion[1] (regards complete dedication as the condition precedent of real devotion)."

25. Hearing these words of his son, Hiraṇyakaśipu, with his lips quivering with rage, reproached Śukra's son (the preceptor's son) as follows :

26. "You wretch of a Brāhmaṇa ! What does this mean ? Wicked fellow ! You sided with the enemies and disregarding me completely, you have taught some non-sense to the child.

27. There are wicked persons in this world who assume a friend's garb, but their friendship is treacherous. Their sin (sinfulness) becomes manifest in due time, like the grave diseases of sinners."[2]

Preceptor's (Śukra's) son said :

28. What this son of yours speaks is not taught by me or by any person. Oh foe of Indra ! It is his innate intelligence ! Oh king ! Please control your anger. Do not lay the blame on us.

1. JG. has given a long but excellent exposition of Bhakti and its nine forms which deserve perusal in the original.

2. ŚR. quotes a *smṛti* text according to which certain types of sinners, e.g., murderer of a Brāhmana, a habitual drunkard, a debaucherous person violating his teacher's bed have to suffer from heinous diseases even after completing their term in hell. The question is repeated by VC., VD., GD. and others.

Nārada said :

29. When he was thus replied by (Prahlāda's) preceptor, the Asura (Hiraṇyakaśipu) again asked his son : "If this perverted understanding has not been caused by the teaching of your preceptor, whence has it come, you inauspicious boy ?"

Prahlāda said :

30. (Unswerving attachment and) firm fixation of the mind on Kṛṣṇa does not arise through (the advice of) another, or of one's own accord, or by mutual efforts in the case of those who are firmly devoted to their household (as if it were a sacred vow). Nor (is it engendered) in persons who have not controlled their senses, and who now and again enter the darkness of Saṁsāra, and who again and again ruminate (repeatedly experience) what they have enjoyed (in former births).

31. They whose heart is polluted (by their attachment to worldly objects) do not know Viṣṇu, to be their (real)objective in life and goal. For they look up for guidance to those who regard the external objects as their aim in life, and are like the blind persons led by the blind. They are tied down (like beasts) with Lord Viṣṇu's long rope in the form of Vedic injunctions prescribing rites to be performed for future good. (These persons are like persons who go to the east in search of an object lost in the west).

32. So long as persons do not seek bath in the dust on the feet of those noble Souls (the devotees of Viṣṇu) who have shed off attachment to worldly objects, the mind of such persons cannot touch (reach) the feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the Lord of long strides as Trivikrama or the Lord of infinite prowess), the object of which is the cessation of *Saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths and the miseries involved)."[1]

33. Hardly did the son (Prahlāda) stop speaking, when

1. ŚR. states : Unless one secures the grace of such exalted Souls, the exact implication of Vedānta and the consequent liberation is impossible.

GS. also agrees with this view.

GD. and BP. state that hereby Prahlāda suggests that it was through Nārada's grace that he got this spiritual revelation.

Hiraṇyakaśipu with his mind blinded with rage, hurled him from his lap, down to the ground.

34. Overwhelmed with unbeareble (violent) wrath, and with eyes reddened with anger, he ordered, "This boy deserves capital punishment. Let him be executed immediately. Oh Nairṛtas, take him away from my presence.

35. This (boy) is verily the murderer of my brother. For this wretched fellow, deserting his own well-wishers, worships like a slave the feet of Viṣṇu, the assassinator of his paternal uncle.

36. Or even to Viṣṇu what good purpose can he serve, I doubt; for even as a child of five, he forfeited his parental affection which is so hard to sever.

37. If beneficial, even a stranger should be treated as a child, like medicine (though the medicinal herbs grow into the forest—outside and away from one's home—they are preserved at home). If a son begotten by one's own self becomes inimical (works against one's interest) he should be treated like a disease. One should amputate that part of the body which is injurious to the body as a whole, if by removing it, the rest (of the body) can live in happiness.

38. Like an uncontrolled sense-organ, in the case of a sage, he is a veritable enemy masquerading as a friend (son). He should be disposed of by all expedients, e.g. administering poison in food, killing him while sitting unguarded or while asleep."

39-40 Commanded thus by their master, the demons with sharp teeth, terrific faces and reddish hair and beard, armed themselves with tridents, and giving out terrible yells and shouting "Cut him, kill him", pierced Prahlāda in all the vital parts with their tridents while he was sitting quietly.

41. All their attempts on (the life of) Prahlāda proved fruitless and ineffectual, like the pious acts of a person with no past meritorious deeds to his credit; for Prahlāda's mind was in communion with the glorious Lord who is the Soul of all beings, the incomprehensible Supreme Brahman.

42. When that attempt was thwarted, the king of demons grew alarmed and he persistently devised other expedients to kill Prahlāda, Oh Yudhiṣṭhira.

43-44. When the Asura could not kill his innocent son by employing elephants guarding the quarters, great serpents, by use of black magic, by hurling him down from mountain peaks, by using illusive powers (*māyā*), by confining him in dark holes (silos), administering him poison, by starvation, by exposing him to snow, winds, by throwing him in fire and by throwing mountains on him, he was plunged in the deepest anxiety and could not think of any other (effective) measure to kill him.

45. (Hiraṇyakaśipu thought to himself). "This boy has been severely reproached by me now and again. Measures to kill him were also adopted. But by dint of his own power and energy, he has survived unaffected by those tortures and black spells.

46. He is not away from my presence. Though he is still a boy, his mind is not daunted (through my fear). He is so powerful that he will not forget (and forgive) my unrighteousness (and maltreatment) like Śunaḥśepa.[1]

47. He is of immeasurable prowess; he entertains fear from nobody as if he is immortal. It is certain that my death will take place by confronting him or possibly it may not (overtake at all)."

48. In this anxious mood, he was sitting with his countenance pale and downcast, when Śaṇḍa and Amarka, the two sons of Śukra spoke to him in private, as follows:

49. "You have single-handedly conquered the three worlds by terrifying all the Lokapālas (guardian deities of the world) by merely contracting your eye-brows. For such a (powerful) Lord as you are, we see no reason for anxiety. The behaviour of children should not be seriously judged as good or bad.

50. Keep him bound down by the noose of Varuṇa so that he should not run away out of fear, till your teacher Śukra returns. A man's understanding may improve with advancement of age and service of the noble ones."

1. This refers to the legend of Śunaḥśepa in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. Śunaḥśepa disowned his father Ajīgarta for selling him for sacrifice to Hariścandra and adopted another—Viśvāmitra—*gotra*.—ŚR.

51. Expressing his assent to the proposals of the preceptor's sons, he ordered, "The duties prescribed for royal householders be taught to him."

52. Oh King ! Then they taught in serial order the details only of *Dharma, Artha, Kāma,* to Prahlāda who was both modest and obedient.

53. (Though taught systematically), Prahlāda did not approve of the teaching of only the first three objects of human life (as mentioned above), as this instruction was meant for those who were interested in pairs like attachment and hatred, and in the enjoyment of objects of senses.

54. When the teacher was not present (at his class) due to some household duties, he was invited by the school-companions of his age who found opportunity for play (and merry-making).

55. Responding to their call in sweet words, the wise Prahlāda, knowing their attachment to him, spoke to them with a smile, out of grace.

56-57. Out of great regard for him, all the boys whose minds were not vitiated by the advice or actions of persons (teachers) who were given to worldly enjoyments and were subject to love, hate etc., set aside all their play-things. With their eyes and hearts fixed on him, they sat round him. The Asura (Prahlāda) who was a great devotee of Viṣṇu and full of compassion and friendship, addressed them.

CHAPTER SIX

*(Prahlāda's Teaching)**

Prahlāda said:

1. In this world, a wise perso ı should (begin to) practise the righteous duties leading to god-realization, since his

* The text of VJ. gives the following additional five verses :

Prahlāda said :

(1) Alas ! You children ! Please listen to my words of advice which will lead to your happiness in every way. Consider (see and

very childhood; for birth in the human species is not easily attained. Even though it (human life) is transient, it alone can help us to achieve the desired object (viz. Liberation).

2. It is, therefore, advisable that a person should approach the feet of Viṣṇu in this very birth as he is the (real) Ruler, Well-wisher and the very beloved Soul of all beings. (Hence one should adopt the course leading to the attainment of his feet.)

3. Oh descendants of Diti ! Being (closely) related to the body, pleasure, like pain, derived from objects of senses, comes to the lot of embodied beings in all species of life (including sub-human beings) through divine dispensation, without any special effort for it.

4. No endeavours, therefore, should be made to seek sensual pleasures, for, that leads to sheer waste of life. Moreover, by such efforts, the *summum bonum*, viz. attainment of the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu, is not secured. OR Just as one can attain the Supreme Bliss by resorting to the lotus-like feet of

think) of your friends who are no more. Do not get blind by playfulness and follow a wrong path.

(2) Boys of yore did not lose their minds completely in sports. From the time of their birth (or since their childhood), they were desirous of seeking knowledge about the Supreme Soul and final liberation (*mokṣa*). Whatever has been taught to us by teachers (Śaṇḍa and Amarka, regarding the first three goals of life viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) is not acceptable, inasmuch as it represents wrong objectives (which involves us in *saṁsāra*) as the desirable aims in life.

(3) If a person who is engrossed in the sleep of ignorance is not wakened up to reality by the precept of a teacher, that precept or doctrine should not be believed, as such a teacher is like a blind person leading other blind persons.

(4) Who is an enemy or an indifferent person or a friend in the case of *Ātman* or my case ? (None). The same is the case with you. What is the propriety of studying politics ? Prosperity and adversity are caused by the Supreme Divine Agency.

(5) Such a person is very rare to be found as does not violate the righteous course leading to the accomplishment of the desire to realize the Supreme Soul—a person who is not under the control of his senses (which are born with him) or his own people (e.g. sons, relatives, friends) and who has transcended his natural (spiritual) blindness and who by following the *Nivṛttidharma* (path of renunciation), becomes proper (eligible) for this as well as the next world.

Mukunda (Viṣṇu) one cannot obtain this Bliss through such efforts for sensual pleasure).

5. Therefore, having fallen into this fear (-ful *saṁsāra*), a clever person should endeavour to attain that blessed state (of security, viz. *mokṣa*) immediately while one's body is in sound condition and is not yet incapacitated.

6. The span of human life is (limited to) one hundred years only. Half of that life (viz. fifty years) is wasted away in the case of a man who has not subdued himself (his senses and mind); for consigned to (and absorbed in) the blinding darkness of ignorance, he lies asleep at night.

7. (Out of the balance of fifty years) twenty years are lost while he is ignorant in childhood and is absorbed in play in boyhood; and twenty (more) years are wasted when his body is overwhelmed with senility and is rendered unfit.

8. Maddened and (deeply) attached to household life due to the forcible pull of desires (of sensual pleasures) which are difficult to be fulfilled, and under the powerful delusion (of one's ego and belongings expressed by 'I' and 'Mine'), he misspends the remaining portion of his life.*

9. What person who has not conquered his senses can have the power to liberate his own self; who is attached to his house-hold (including wife, children and property) and is tightly bound down with unbreakable ties of love and affection (to them).

10. Who indeed would forego his thirst (passion) for wealth which is dearer than life itself—wealth which thieves (in the house broken by them), servants (while on duty) and merchants (while accompanying their merchandise or cargo) barter in exchange of their life.

11. How can a man renounce his beloved sympathetic wife while remembering his dalliance with her in privacy and her sweet consultation and counsel? (How can one do so)

* 8-A Additicnal verse in VJ.'s text :

See (take into account) also the conflicts of opinions or quarrels of our householders even though related (to each other)—householders who desire to follow the course of *saṁsāra* with efforts which are detrimental to the attainment of final beatitude (and not a single moment is left for spiritual progress—VJ.).

with his friends while being tied down with bonds of friendship and with his sweet-lisping children to whom his heart is deeply attached ?

12. Remembering his sons and his beloved daughters (who are staying away in the houses of their fathers-in-law), his brothers, sisters and poor helpless parents, his houses furnished with beautiful abundant furniture, hereditary professions or vocations and his cattle (horses, elephants etc.) and retinue of servants, how can one go away from them ?

13. Like a silk-worm (which gets imprisoned by enveloping itself in a sheath without any outlet), he, due to his unsated desires and through boundless infatuation, goes on performing actions out of cupidity (in the hope of accomplishing them), holding pleasures relating to sex and palate in high estimation.—How can he become disgusted with the world (and renounce all worldly attachment) ?

14. The careless fellow, deeply attached to his family, does not realize that his turn of existence in this world is being wasted away, and that the purpose of his life (viz. attainment of the highest bliss by devotion to God) is being thwarted in his efforts to maintain his family. Though he is afflicted by three types of misery everywhere, he is not disgusted with the world (worldly objects) as he feels that his family is the (source of) delight to him.

15. With his heart always ever set on amassing wealth and knowing full well the punishment meted out here and the consequences of the sin hereafter, the householder of unsubdued senses and with desires unsated, misappropriates another's wealth.

16. Even a person noted for his erudition in scriptures, who is bent on maintaining his family in the manner described above, is not verily capable of realizing his own Self (*OR* of realizing himself as to who he is and what he is committing etc.). (Then what of you ?) Oh descendants of Danu ! He (even if he be well-versed in *Śāstras*) whose mind is corrupted with the notion of difference between one's own and another's ("mine and yours") enters the dark hell even as an ignorant person.

17. For the poor fellow whoever he be, who has become

a tool of amusement like a toy deer (or a monkey) for (the entertainment of) lascivious women, and who has forged fetters for himself, in the form of progeny, will not be able to liberate himself at any time.

18. Therefore, Oh descendants of Diti, avoiding from a distance the association with Daityas whose minds are absorbed in (enjoyment of) objects of senses, approach for refuge the most ancient God Nārāyaṇa who is the veritable Supreme bliss (liberation) coveted by recluses who have renounced all association with the world.

19. Being the very Soul of all (mobile and immobile) creatures, and being omnipresent and all-pervading, there is not much trouble and exertion in propitiating the unfailing Lord Viṣṇu, Oh sons of Asuras!

20-21. It is none else than the only one Supreme Soul (Brahman) that the Almighty, immutable Ruler who exists in and pervades the higher and the lower order of beings commencing from the immovables (e.g. vegetations etc.) and culminating in god Brahmā, in all the transformations of elements (the inanimate world of matter or *bhūtas*) in *bhūtas* (gross elements e.g. the sky, the wind), in *guṇas* (like sattva) in Pradhāna (the stage in which all *guṇas* are in a state of equilibrium)[1] and in Principles like *Mahat*[2] (which are evolved due to the uneven mixture of guṇas).

22 He, as the Inner Controller (of every being) is the seer, the enjoyer and as such is indicated as 'the pervader'. He is also the object of perception, the objective world enjoyed and is described as 'the pervaded'. He is, however, beyond description, and undifferentiated (though he is spoken of as being different).

23* The Supreme Lord is essentially pure consciousness and absolute bliss. But he conceals his glorious Lordly nature

1. *guṇa-sāmya*—(i) The primordial matter, Pradhāna—ŚR., SD., GD., BP. etc.
(ii) At the time of the Pralaya—VJ.
2. *guṇa-vyatikara*—(i) The evolute *Mahat*—ŚR., SD., GD., BP. etc.
(ii) At the time of the creation of the world—VJ.

VR. puts forward the Viśiṣṭādvaita theory re: God and the world as follows:

The Lord has *Jīva* as his special body and the perceptible inanimate or unconscious world as the gross body. Being incomparable, he is One

by his Māyā Power which gives rise to *guṇas*—the creation of the world.

24. Therefore, eschewing out your demonic nature, show kindness and friendliness to all beings, whereby Lord Viṣṇu (God transcendental to sense perception) will be pleased.

25. When the Lord of infinite excellences, the Prime Cause of all, is pleased, what can there be unattainable (to his devotees) ? What is the use to us of the objects of human life:Dharma (*artha* and *kāma*) which accrue of their own accord by the product of *guṇas* (designated as Providence, the result of one's past deeds) ? Of what attraction is the *Mokṣa* (Final Liberation) which is so covetable to all,—to us who sing of the glory of his feet and taste the nectar-like sweetness thereform ?

26. The triad of the highest purposes of human life, viz. *dharma* (religious merits), *artha* (attainment of wealth) and *kāma* (fulfilment of desires), the spiritual lore, the ritualistic lore, logic, politics and various means of livelihood—I regard all these, the subject matter of the Vedas, as true—only if it serves as the means of offering one's self to the Supreme Person who is the true friend of all. (Otherwise they are meaningless).

27. It is traditionally reported that Lord Nārāyaṇa, the companion of (the sage) Nara, imparted to Nārada this pure and sanctifying knowledge which is so difficult to obtain. It will, however, be attainable to those who have bathed their bodies in the dust of the lotus-like feet of the absolutely devoted votaries of the Lord—votaries who are devoid of all desires except God-realization.

Supreme Being who enters the body to support it but is unaffected by the modifications of the body and hence immutable. The Lord is perfect in his six excellences and he controls the *jiva* according to his *karma*.

VJ. He is within everything an *antaryāmin*, Inner controller. He pervades them from outside, in the form of Time. Under another designation Brahman, he is the one who is indicated both as pervader and the pervaded. He cannot be defined like a material object like a pitcher. Though Omnipresent he is invisible as he is concealed by Māyā or Prakṛti who is the source of Sattva and other attributes so essential for creation.

28. It is from the (sage) Nārada who has realized God that I heard (learnt) formerly this knowledge with the immediate apprehension of truth as well as teaching in the pure course of righteous duties and devotion to the Lord.

Sons of Daityas said :

29. Oh Prahlāda ! You and we do not know any other person except the sons of preceptor (Śukrācārya,) as our teachers, as they have been our masters since our childhood.[1]

30. Association with the great (sages) is extremely difficult for a child who is (brought up) in the harem. Please remove our doubt by confiding us with some evidence to give credence to your version, Oh gentle one.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Prahlāda, enlightened while in mother's womb

Nārada continued :

1. When he was thus questioned by the sons of Daityas, the great Asura devotee of the Lord smiled and remembering my teaching, replied to them as follows :

Prahlāda narrated :

2. When our father (Hiraṇyakaśipu) repaired to Mount Mandara to practise religious austerities, the gods made great preparations to wage war against the Dānavas.

3. Indra and other gods began to say thus : "It is really fortunate that the sinful Hiraṇyakaśipu, the scourge of the world, has been eaten up by his own sins, as a serpent is nibbled away by ants."

4. Having heard of the tremendous military preparations of the gods, leaders of Asura forces capitulated when attacked, and fled in terror to all directions.

1. We who are engaged in our studies are not seeking God—VJ.

5. All of them were so anxious and in haste to save their lives that they paid no heed to their wives, sons, friends, relatives, house, cattles and other belongings.

6. Desirous of total victory, the gods ransacked and devastated the king's palace, while Indra seized the chief Queen, my mother.

7. Fortunately, by a happy chance, the divine sage Nārada arrived there and saw her being carried away on the road while she was trembling (with fear) and crying like a female osprey.

8. Peremptorily he intervened, "Oh Lord of gods ! You should not carry away this innocent woman. Leave her, Oh blessed one, Let go this chaste lady who is the wife of another person."

Indra replied :

9. "There lies in her womb an unbearable force—the seed of the enemy of gods (Hiraṇyakaśipu). Let her stay in my custody till her delivery. I shall accomplish my purpose (by killing the new-born child) and then let her go."

Nārada said :

10. "This (child in the womb) is sinless and an eminent devotee of the Lord. This follower of Ananta is essentially so powerful by his excellences, that he will not meet death at your hands."

11. When addressed thus, Indra respected the words of the divine sage (Nārada) and set her at liberty. He circumambulated her out of devotion to the beloved votaries of the infinite Lord and returned to heaven.

12. Thereupon the sage brought our mother to his hermitage. He consoled her and said, "Oh my daughter, stay here till the return of your husband."

13. Agreeing to that proposal, she, being free from fear (from all quarters) dwelt in the hermitage (lit. presence) of Nārada while the king of Daityas did not return from his terrible austere penance.

14. That pious pregnant lady waited upon the sage with utmost devotion for the well-being of the foetus in the womb and the boon of delivery at any time desired by her.

15. Possessed of that Spiritual Power, the kind-hearted sage granted her both (the boons), and for assuaging her grief and with a view to communicating it to me, he imparted her instruction in the essence of righteousness (viz. devotion unto the Lord) and pure knowledge (regarding the nature of the Soul and the non-Soul).

16. (The memory of) that teaching however faded away in the case of my mother due to the lapse of a long time (that intervened), and also due to her being (after all) a woman. But being specially favoured by the sage, it (the recollection of the precepts) has not left me even up to this moment.

17. If you have faith in my words, even your intellect and understanding will be capable of destroying the (false ego of) identification of the Self with the body etc.[1] Just as that sense has been generated in me through faith, it will appear in the case of women and children as well.

18. Just as, through the agency of (eternal) Time which is capable of bringing about modifications, the six transformations, (viz. birth, existence, growth, ripeness, decay and destruction) are found in the case of fruits of a tree (while they are on the tree which lasts much longer), six modifications beginning with birth are observed in relation to the body (so long as it is associated with the Soul) but not to the Soul (which is eternal and unchangeable).

19. The Soul[2] is eternal (not subject to creation and destruction), undeteriorating (free from decay), pure (untouched by love, hate etc.), one (without second), the seer

1. *vaiśāradī dhī*—(1) More keen intelligence in grasping the reality—VR.

(2) Knowledge about God—VJ.

(3) Intelligence directed to God—VC, SD, GD.

2. *ātmā*—VR. takes this as *jīva* (individual soul) while VJ. understands *Paramātman* (Supreme Soul) by this term and interprets:

VR: This verse describes the essential nature of *Jīvātman* in the liberated stage. As distinguished from the body the *Jīva* is eternal, subject to no deterioration or modifications, untainted by the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*, one as it is of the nature of consciousness running through all bodies, knowing its own body, self-conscious, the support of the body, senses etc., the cause of the movement of bodies (the motive force behind them), all-

(the intelligent subject), the support (of the universe), the immutable, self-effulgent, the primary cause (of the world), the all-pervading, untouched (by anything) and perfect (or uncovered by Māyā).

20. With the help of the twelve supreme characteristics mentioned above, the learned person should renounce the wrong notions of 'I and Mine' with reference to one's body and belongings, as the notion arises out of delusion (and ignorance).

pervading through his power of knowledge, unassociated with another *jīva*, and uncovered (with nothing to hide his real nature).

VJ. takes together vv. 19 and 20 and interprets:

(19) Paramātman is eternal by his very nature, suffering from no loss of any member of the body, pure as he is free from the influence of *avidyā*, attachment etc., the Supreme-most and hence the One, knower of the nature of the body, the support of everything else, subject to no modification or change either due to his innate nature or through the influence of others, Self-seeing (Self-conscious of his Brahmahood), absolutely independent, all-pervading, unattached as he is above *Prakṛti*, not affected (by external forces, not subject to ignorance or other obscuring factors (19).

(20) He who realizes the *ātman* (the Supreme Soul) by these twelve distinguishing characteristics would (automatically) give up the false notions of 'I' and 'Mine' with respect to one's body (and property etc.) caused by delusion and ignorance.

VC. states: For, the purification of oneself is caused by the form of devotion called meditation (*cintana*). The Supreme Soul that is to be meditated is described as follows. VC. here quotes ŚR. verbatim.

SD. explains a few adjectives differently! *Kṣetrajña*—Knowing all (*vyaṣṭi-samaṣṭi*) bodies aggregatively and dis-aggregatively. *āśraya*—the material and instrumental cause for the creation, sustenance etc. of all mobile and immobiles. *Avikriya*—essentially unchangeable but by his eternal powers of mobility and immobility brings about the creation and destruction like the spreading out and withdrawing of the limbs of the tortoise.

SD. contradicts VR. by asserting that this verse does not refer to *jīva* (*jīva-paro nāyam ślokaḥ*).

GD. explains that though the characteristics of *jīva* and *Paramātman* are different, *jīvātman* is a part (*aṁśa*) of *Paramātman* and as such there is non-difference between them. This non-difference between the two is implied in this verse. The explanation of the epithets is the same as that of ŚR.

21* Just as a metallurgist specialised in gold extraction out of ore, is able to obtain gold from gold-bearing rocks found in gold-fields, by using the requisite processes (of smelting etc,), similarly a person expert in the spiritual lore (including the causal relations, will be able to attain to Brahmahood in the fields in the form of the bodies (of different *jīvas*), through the different processes of realizing the Soul (*ātman*).

22. (After analysis of the whole creation and reducing it to fundamental Principles), Teachers of yore (like Kapila and others) have stated that there are eight Prakṛtis (viz. the Primordial matter or *mūla Prakṛti*, *Mahat* (Principle of cosmic Intelligence), *ahaṁkāra* (ego, I-ness) and five subtle elements, three (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) as their *guṇas* (modes of *Prakṛti*), and sixteen modifications (viz. five gross elements, ten conative and cognitive senses and mind) but the Person or Soul is one, co-ordinating them all.

23. The body is the combination of these all. It is twofold—mobile and immobile. It is here (in the body) that the Soul is to be sought and discriminated, by a process of elimination (viz. This is not the Soul; it is not it).

24. By means of abstract deliberation of the positive and negative concomitance (the omnipresence of the Spirit yet its distinctness from others), by his power of discrimination, and with purified mind and patient reflection over the phenomena of creation, sustenance and the destruction of the universe, that the Soul is to be realized.

25.** The states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep

* (1) VR: The person who realizes the true nature of the Soul as distinguished from the body, not only attains the knowledge of the Supreme-most Person, but realizes the true essential nature.

(2) *adhyātma-vid*—One who is well versed in Vedānta-śāstra with reference to the Soul; realizes in practice the *Sāttvic* virtues; expert in the knowledge about elements.

SD: This verse deals with the knowledge of three Principles viz. non-sentient (universe), the sentient (the Soul) and God who, being different from these, controls them.

SD: It is the God or Brahman who is within all, is to be propitiated by all, through all forms of devotion.

** VJ. takes *buddhi* as *jīva* and interprets: "Guided and prompted by the Supreme Lord, the *jīva* experiences the states of wakefulness etc. The presiding Lord who assumes different forms, e. g. *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña* is different from *jīva*."

are the functions of the intellect (*buddhi*). He who is cognisant of (lit. experiences) these (three states) is the transcendent person (who is distinct from the body, senses, the mind etc.), the witness (of these all).

26.* Just as one perceives (the presence of) the wind by means of the different fragrant particles with which it is laden, due to the association of those particles with it (in spite of its distinctness from those particles), one should realize the essential nature of the Soul (*ātman*) by the transformations of the intellect which are associated with it, but are repudiated as not being the attributes of the Soul but of the intellect, and are permeated with three *guṇas*, and born of actions or *karmas* (even though due to his association with intellect—*buddhi*—the Soul appears to be characterised by the modification of the *buddhi*.)

27. The *saṁsāra* comes into being through the 'gates' of the intellect (*buddhi*) as it is perpetuated (lit. is fast bound) by the modifications and activities of *buddhi*. It is rooted in ignorance, and as such is unreal. It, however, is regarded as the dream (state) of man.**

28*** Hence you should at the outset, burn down the seed (viz. *avidyā* of the *karmas* which are motivated by the three

* As in v. 25 VJ., interprets *buddhi* as *jīva* and tries to substantiate the *Dvaita* thesis that the *jīva* is different from *Paramātman*. To summarize his gloss: The *jīva* (individual Soul) is different from the Lord who possesses three forms viz., *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña*. He directs the three states (e. g. wakefulness, dream and deep sleep). The three states and their *guṇas* characterised by the colours white, black and yellow distinguish the grades of *jīvas*. To the ignorant, the Lord seems like a *jīva*. But the intelligent people (*prājñajanāḥ*) perceive him to bethe same consciousness and the bliss incarnate.

** The text of VJ. gives the following additional verse:

As all the actions are created by the mind and are of momentary nature, they resemble the things in dream and wakeful states. They cause grief, delusion and fear to the person experiencing them (which would not have happened had they been unreal).

*** According to VR. the seed of *karmas* is 'the mistake of the body for the Soul'. The way to burn down this seed is to put an end to the stream of *buddhi*.

guṇas. This causes the cessation of the functioning (lit. current) of *buddhi*. (This is) *Yoga*—the way of merger with the Lord.

29. Out of the thousands of expedients (for annihilating the seed of *karmas*), the one specifically inculcated by the venerable sage Nārada is the proper performance of the acts which will automatically generate deep love and devotion directly unto the Supreme Lord.

30-31. (This is achieved) by rendering devout service to the preceptor (or by a sincere desire to listen devoutly to the teaching of the preceptor), by offering all one's earnings to him, by associating one's Self with pious devotees of the Lord, and by propitiating the Lord, by reverential liking for listening to the stories of the Lord, by extolling his excellent attributes and glorious deeds, by meditating on his lotus-like feet and by seeing and worshipping his images.

32. With an implicit belief in the presence of the venerable Supreme Lord Hari in all created beings, one should treat them with due respect at heart, and (as far as possible) offer them their desired objects.

33. In this way devotion unto the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva is practised by persons who have conquered the group of six passions (viz. lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, jealousy) or of six senses (external five cognitive senses and mind—the internal one). It is by (such) devotion that one develops (devotional love) unto the Lord.

34. When he hears (lit. having heard) the accounts of his great deeds, uncomparable attributes (e.g. love towards devotees) and his heroic exploits (e. g. killing of Rāvaṇa) unachievable by others but carried out by him through his incarnations (like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa) assumed by him in sport, he (the devotee) with his hair standing on end through rapturous delight, and in a voice choked with tears, sings loudly with an open throat, shouts and dances.

35. When like a person possessed by an evil spirit, he sometimes bursts out into laughter here and screams out there;

VJ: Saṁsāra is due to wrong identification of the *jīva* with the body or the Lord. To burn down the seed of *Saṁsāra* the stream of *buddhi* should be directed to find delight into Lord Nārāyaṇa.

now he meditates, now he bows down to the people. Frequently he breathes heavily and with his mind absorbed in *ātman*, losing his sense of bashfulness, he utters loudly, "Oh Hari ! Lord of the Universe ! Oh Nārāyaṇa".

36. (It is) then that a man is setfree from all bondages. His mind and body is attuned to the Lord through contemplation over his pastimes and sportive actions. The seed of ignorance and the consequent (latent) desires being burnt down, by the great device ofdevotion, he attains to Lord Nārāyaṇa (from Whom there is no return to *saṁsāra*.)

37. In the case of embodied beings whose hearts are polluted (with worldly attachment, love etc.), mental communion with Adhokṣaja[1] is the means of breaking the rolling wheel (cycle) of births and deaths. The (spiritually) wise people regard it as the absolute bliss of absorption in *Brahman*. Therefore, you do worship the Lord residing in your heart.

38. Oh children of Asuras ! What extraordinary effort is required in worshipping Lord Hari Who abides in your heart like space, and Who is your own Self and an intimate friend ? What is the good of acquiring the objects of senses which are commonly attained to by all embodied beings ?

39. Wealth, a wife, cattles, sons and others (kinsmen) houses, landed property (or the earth), elephants, treasures, luxuries of life and all desired objects are evanescent. How much pleasure can all these fleeting objects afford to one whose life may cease at any moment ?

40. In the same way, definitely susceptible to destruction are the heavenly worlds which are attained to by performance of sacrifices. They are excelled by others (in merit and affluence). Nor are they unpolluted (as they excite jealousy) —Therefore for the purpose of realizing the Self, do you worship the Supreme Lord with absolute, desireless devotion. For no fault in the Lord has been discerned by the Vedas or the Smṛtis.

1. (i) VJ. reads *adhokṣajālāpam* for *adhokṣajālambham* and states that this verse describes that the narration of and conversation about the glories of the Lord, leads to the bliss of final emancipation.

(ii) ŚR. notes v. l. *adhokṣajālambaṃ* 'Taking resort to god Viṣṇu.'

41. In this world a person who supposes himself to be learned and wise, many times performs (Vedic, ritualistic and other) actions with the aim of obtaining it (sensual pleasure), but invariably reaps fruit quite contrary to it.

42. The expectation of a person in undertaking the performance of some religious action is for obtaining happiness and release from miseries. But due to this desire or action he who was (full of happiness due to his desirelessness (i. e. before he was possessed with the desire of happiness or the performance of the action) encounters nothing but misery due to his desires.

43. The physical body for (the happiness of) which a man desires to secure objects of enjoyment by performance of actions actuated by motives, is transient and factually belongs to others (as food for carnivorous beasts and birds of prey). It passes away and (again) returns (to the Soul).

44. How much more so must be one's progeny, wives, houses, wealth and such other things (and in the case of kings their) kingdom, treasury, elephants, ministers, servants and relatives—(all of) which are indirectly connected (through one's body) and whom he regards as his own.

45* The Soul himself is an ocean of eternal bliss. To him, of what interest are these flimsy things (enumerated above) which are sure to perish along with the body—contemptible things which appear covetable as *Puruṣārtha* (ideal in life), but which actually lead to undesirable ends (like hell).

46. Oh Asuras ! Consider to what extent can self-interest (pleasure) be derived through sexual enjoyment etc.[1] by embodied beings who have been suffering miseries from their past actions since their conception (in their mother's womb and other further stages of life in this world till death).

47. The embodied being, with his body obedient to his dictates, begins to perform actions (meritorious or sinful) as

* To those who argue that Lord Viṣṇu assumes incarnation in physical bodies for sensual enjoyment, the verse replies: Hari who is by nature consciousness and bliss is not interested in physical pleasures of the *jīva* (individual Soul)—VJ.

1 ŚR. remarks: There is no scope for enjoyment of pleasures under the circumstances.

a consequence of which he extends (builds) a body (of his next incarnation)—(the process continues *ad infinitum*) as both body and *karmas* are promoted through ignorance.

48. Therefore, even though wealth, enjoyment and acts of righteousness (the three *Puruṣārthas*) are easily available to the devotees of Hari as they depend on Hari, you should, without cherishing any desire (for them), worship Lord Hari, your very Soul who is perfectly desireless.

49. The Supreme Ruler Hari, the beloved Ātman, the controller and indwelling Soul (*antaryāmin*) of all beings (whose bodies are) created out of the gross elements (e.g. the earth, water etc.) which (in their turn) are evolved by Him.

50. It is by resorting to the feet of Mukunda (Lord Viṣṇu) that a god, an *asura* (a demon), a human being, a *yakṣa* or a *gandharva*—whoever he be—becomes blessed like us.

51-52. Oh Asura boys ! It is not the (eminence of) birth as a member of the twice-born family or as a god or as a sage that is sufficient for the propitiation of Hari. Neither righteous conduct, nor extensive knowledge nor charity nor penance, or performance of sacrifices, cleanliness (of body and mind) nor observance of vows is enough for His grace. Lord Hari is pleased through pure (unalloyed) devotion. All the rest is sheer mockery.

53. Hence, Oh descendants of Danu, you focus your devotion on the Almighty Lord Hari who is the Soul of all created beings, by considering everything else as (dear as) your own selves.

54. (Through such devotion) the descendants of Diti (demons), Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, women, Śūdras (low caste people), cowherds (like Ābhīras etc.), birds. beasts and even sinful *jīvas* have attained to immortality (the self-same nature as Acyuta).

55. Unswerving absolute devotion to Govinda (Lord Viṣṇu) which requires viewing His presence in and regard for every creature (mobile or immobile)—this alone has been enunciated in the *Śāstras* as the highest *Puruṣārtha* of man in this world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Death of Hiraṇyakaśipu and Praise of Nṛsiṁha

Nārada continued :

1. Now, all the Daitya boys listened to the exhortation of Prahlāda and accepted it due to its faultlessness, but not so the teaching of their preceptors.

2. Thereupon, when the son of the preceptor Śukrācārya observed that their mind was exclusively bent on realization of a single purpose (viz. Lord Hari), he got alarmed and immediately he made a factual report of the state of affairs to the king (Hiraṇyakaśipu).

3. Hearing that unpleasant and unbearable misdemeanour on the part of his son, the Daitya, with his body trembling under the impulse of rage, made up his mind to finish with his son.

4-5. Severely reprimanding Prahlāda in a harsh language, though he did not at all deserve it, Hiraṇyakaśipu, cruel by nature as he was, glared askance at him with a wicked look, and heaving heavily like a serpent trodden under foot, he thundered at Prahlāda who, in perfect self-control, stood bent with modesty and with his hands folded.

6. "Oh ill-mannered, stupid wretch, a bane of my family! I shall today despatch you to the abode of Yama, as you have become an obstinate transgressor of my commands.

7. "You stupid fellow ! Relying on whose power did you undauntedly violate my command—I, at whose wrath, all the three worlds along with their guardian deities tremble with fear ?"

Prahlāda replied :

8. He is verily the source of power not only of me, Oh King, but of yours as well as of all other mighty beings. He is that force that keeps under control all creation, high and low, mobile and immobile, beginning from god Brahmā.

9. He is the Supreme Lord, the Eternal Time (—spirit), of mighty strides and of great prowess. He is the very essence of the mental and organic power, courage, intelligence, physical

power and that of sense organs. He is the Supreme Controller of the three *guṇas*. He alone creates, protects and destroys this universe by His potencies.

10. Do you give up this Asura (demonic) nature of yours. Keep your mind equable and serene. There are no (external) enemies except one's uncontrolled mind which goes astray. Know that equipoised mind (looking on friends and foes equably) is the highest form of propitiating the Infinite Lord.

11. Some persons (like you) regard themselves as conquerors of the ten cardinal points, even though they have not, in the first place, controlled the six robbers (viz. five senses and the mind) plundering within. Enemies are born due to one's delusion. How could there be external enemies to the wise who have subdued their mind, and look up all embodied beings as equal.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

12. Oh dull-witted fellow ! It is obvious that you want to court death. You are, therefore, bragging beyond limits. The words of people who are desirous of death, are certainly incoherent.

13* Hiraṇyakaśipu : Oh unfortunate boy ! Where is the Lord of the universe, if there be any other than I ?

Prahlāda : He is everywhere (Omnipresent).

Hiraṇyakaśipu : How is it that He is not seen in this pillar ?

(Prahlāda observes the pillar and bowing down exclaims :)

"Yes, He is seen."

14. "As you are vaunting too much, I now sever your head from the trunk. Let Hari whom you trust as a protector, save you."

* Ś.R. treats this as a dialogue between Hiraṇyakaśipu and Prahlāda. Other commentators treat this as the speech of Hiranya alone. "Where is the Lord of the universe, if there be any other than I ? Oh wretched boy ! If he be omnipresent how is it that he is not seen in this pillar ?" —

15. Thus he repeatedly tormented in rage, his son, a great devotee of the Lord, with reproachful words. (Finding his son gazing at the pillar respectfully with folded hands.) the extremely powerful great Asura, grasping his sword, sprang from his high seat (throne), and knocked the pillar with his fist.

16. Instantaneously there arose in the pillar an immensely terrific crash which rent asunder the shell of the cosmic egg. Hearing the sound as it reached their abodes, god Brahmā and others suspected that to be the time of *Pralaya* when their regions collapse, Oh child ! (Yudhiṣṭhira).

17. Hearing that unprecedented mysterious sound, while proceeding in long strides to kill his son forcibly, he failed to detect within the assembly hall, the source of that crash, at which the leaders of demonic forces were terrified.

18. In order to prove true the utterance of his devotee[1] and to vindicate His (omni-) presence in all creatures and things, He manifested Himself in the pillar of the assembly hall assuming an extremely wonderful form which was neither human nor beastly.

19. Looking (circumspectly) on all sides (for the source of that uncanny roar), he beheld this being coming out from the pillar. (Being astonished, he said to himself:) 'He is neither a beast nor a man. How wonderful is this Man-lion form!'

20. While Hiraṇyakaśipu was musing thus (about the strange figure), there stood before him the extremely terrible form of the Man-lion with his eyes fierce like molten gold, and his face majestic with dazzling hair of his mane.

1. ŚR. applies this expression to all devotees including Prahlāda, Sanaka, Nārada, Hiraṇyakaśipu and god Brahmā. Prahlāda said that Lord Hari was in the pillar pointed out by Hiraṇyakaśipu and he came out of that pillar. Sanaka stated the termination of his curse after three births of Jaya and Vijaya and to fulfil that Viṣṇu incarnated to finish the demonic birth. Nārada's words to Indra about the invincibility of Prahlāda were proved as Hiraṇyakaśipu was not allowed to kill him. Hiraṇyakaśipu's request for the conditions under which he was not to die were satisfied, and god Brahmā's boon to Hiraṇyakaśipu was respected by Viṣṇu in Nṛsiṁha form.

21. He had terrible tusks, a tongue sharp like the blade of a razor, and waving like a sword; his face struck terror with its knitted (frowning) eye-brows; His ears were motionless and erect. His mouth and nostrils were open and amazing like a mountain-cavern. He appeared terrible with his parted jaws.

22. He touched the heavens with his stature. He had a short thick neck, broad chest and slender waist. He was covered with hair white like lunar rays, and hundreds of hands on either side, armed with claws.

23. He was unassailable and he put to flight Daityas and Dānavas with all the choicest weapons peculiar to him (e.g. the Sudarśana disc) as well as to others (e.g. the *vajra*—the thunderbolt).

"Most probably this expedient for my death has been thought out by Hari, the master of the great potency of illusion. But of what avail are his endeavours against me ?"

24. Musing thus to himself, the foremost of (lit. the elephant among) the Daityas, armed with a mace (*gadā*) dashed against Nṛsiṁha (the Man-lion) with a roar. But just like a moth falling into the fire, the *Asura* disappeared in the effulgent nimbus of Nṛsiṁha.

25. There was nothing astonishing in the disappearance of the *asura* (the personified *tamas*) into effulgence of *Sattva* incarnate (viz. Nṛsiṁha) who formerly (at the time of creation) drank up all the *Tamas* (darkness). Then attacking Nṛsiṁha in rage, the great Asura struck him with the mace of tremendous force.

26. Like Garuḍa seizing a big serpent Nṛsiṁha (who was the wielder of a mace) caught hold of the Asura along with his mace while he was fighting. While the Asura was being played with by Nṛsiṁha, he slipped out of his hand like a serpent escaping from the clutches of Garuḍa.

27. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira! Gods and the protectors of all the spheres who were driven out of their abodes (by the Asura) and who concealed themselves behind the curtains of clouds, looked upon this escape as an evil turn (against their interest). The great Asura who freed himself from Nṛsiṁha's hands,

thought Nṛsiṁha to be apprehensive of his prowess. Feeling no fatigue in fighting, he armed himself with a sword and shield, and vehemently assailed Nṛsiṁha again.

28. While the Asura was moving up and down with the speed of a hawk, brandishing his sword and shield, leaving no weak point exposed, Hari roared forth a terrific and shrill peal of laughter, and with great rapidity, seized the Asura whose eyes blinked (by Hari's roaring laughter and dazzling splendour).

29. Just as a serpent would seize a mouse, Hari caught hold of the Asura who, afflicted with the tight hold (of Hari) was trying in every way to escape. At the door (on the threshold) of the assembly-hall, he laid him on his thighs, and though the demon's skin remained unscratched by (Indra's) thunderbolt, He sportingly tore him with his claws as Garuḍa does to the most poisonous serpents. (In this way, all the conditions of god Brahmā's boon were observed while killing Hiraṇyakaśipu).

30. His indignant and terrific eyes were too difficult to gaze at. He was licking the corners of his wide open mouth with his tongue. His face and mane were reddish due (to the stains of) the drops of blood. (Thus) he resembled a lion wearing the garland of the entrails of an elephant after killing it.

31. Throwing aside Hiraṇyakaśipu whose lotus-like heart was broken open, with his pointed claws, Nṛsiṁha who had a number of stout arms, struck down with his claws, weapons and heels, thousands of his (Hiraṇyakaśipu's) followers who closed on him from all sides with their arms lifted (to strike him).

32. The rain-clouds shaken by (the movements of) his mane scattered away (exposing to gods the full view of the battle below). Being outshone by his dazzling eyes, the lustre of the planets got eclipsed. Tossed by his breath, the oceans became turbulent. Terrified at his stunning roar, the elephant guards of the cardinal points wailed loudly.

33. Overcrowded with the aerial cars which were tossed up by the hair of his mane, the firmament was pushed up (from its original position). The earth got sorely pressed down under his (overwhelmingly heavy) steps. By his velo-

city, mountains were uprooted. Both the sky and the quarters were eclipsed by his dazzling splendour.

34. Then he occupied the excellent throne in the assembly-hall (out of curiosity and wonder at the affluence of his servant — the erstwhile Hiraṇyakaśipu). The Lord displayed such concentrated effulgence that no enemy remained in sight. Yet his indignation was not abated, and his countenance appeared so terrific that nobody dared approach him.

35. Hearing that the foremost of Daityas, the veritable brain-fever to the three worlds, has been slain by Hari in a combat, celestial women whose faces were blooming with overwhelming joy, repeatedly poured down upon him showers of flowers.

36. At that time, the whole firmament became crowded with rows of celestial cars of gods who were eager to see him. Heavenly drums and tabors were sounded. Prominent Gandharvas sang and their women danced.

37-39. Oh child ! Resorting to that assembly, gods headed by Brahmā, Indra, Śiva and others, sages, manes (*Pitṛs*), demigods like Siddhas, and Vidyādharas, great Nāgas, Manus (who preside over aeons called *Manvantaras*), Prajāpatis (lords of creation), celestial musicians like Gandharvas, Apsaras and Cāraṇas, other demi-gods like Yakṣas, Kimpuruṣas, Vetālas and illustrious Kinnaras and all the attendants of the Lord like Sunanda, Kumuda—all these placed their folded hands to their heads (to pay respects), and from a distance not far from him, severally offered their prayers to the Man-Lion of dazzling splendour, Who was seated (on the throne).

Brahmā said:

40. I bow down to propitiate the Infinite Lord (unlimited by Time, Space etc.) of incomprehensible limitless powers, of marvellous potency and hallowing deeds, who, out of sports, brings about the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe through the instrumentality of the *guṇas*, and yet himself remains undecayed and unchanged.

Śrī Rudra said:

41. The termination of the cycle of one thousand Yugas is the proper time for the exhibition of Your wrath. (If it be against Hiraṇyakaśipu) this puny demon lies slain. Oh Lord who is affectionate to his devotees ! Hiraṇyakaśipu's son your devotee, has approached you. Please protect him (now).

Indra said:

42. Oh Supreme Lord ! (As you are our in-dwelling controller and as such the real enjoyer of sacrificial oblations), in protecting us and securing our shares in sacrifices, it is (really) your own share that you have recovered (from the Daityas). The lotus of our heart, Your own abode, which was (till now) seized with the fear of the demon (and was thus crampled), got bloomed forth by You. Oh Lord ! Of what account is this sovereignty of three worlds which is to be devoured by Time ? To those who wish to serve You, Oh Man-lion, even liberation from Saṁsāra is of little consideration. What of other objectives in human life (like *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*) ?

Sages said :

43. (We pay obeisance to You) Oh Most Ancient Person, You taught us the Supreme form of penance, viz. meditation on Your glory, whereby You evolved this universe that lay latent in You. But it was completely obstructed by this demon. By assuming this form of Man-lion for the protection (of Your devotees), You have permitted us to perform it again, Oh protector of Your refugees.

The manes (Pitṛs) said :

44. This Asura forcibly misappropriated and swallowed up the balls of rice reverentially offered to us by our off-spring at the time of the *Śrāddha* ceremony, and gulped the water mixed with sesamum seeds proffered to us at the time of ablutions in sacred water. We bow to (You) Lord Nṛsiṁha, the Protector of the righteousness, Who (as it were) restored to us those offerings out of the fat of the Asura's belly split open with Your claws.

Siddhas said :

45. We humbly salute You, Lord Nṛsiṁha, who tore down with your claws this wicked demon who, by the force of his *Yoga* and penance, robbed us of our mystic powers acquired by us through Yoga, and was puffed up with pride for his various achievements.

Vidyādharas said :

46. This ignorant fellow, being elated with his physical power and valour, prohibited us the use of our *vidyā* (the power of becoming invisible etc.) acquired by us through Yogic concentration of various types. We ever respectfully bow to You who, assuming, by Your Māyā power, the form of the Man-lion, slew him like a beast in the encounter.

Nāgas (serpents) said :

47. Salutations unto You Who brought delight to our women by tearing open the chest of this wicked demon who wrested the jewels from our hoods, and abducted our gem-like beautiful wives.

Manus said:

48. We are Manus, the executors of Your commands. Oh Lord, all the bounds of social order (viz. the duties prescribed for different classes—*varṇas*, and stages in life—āśramas) have been violated by Diti's son (Hiranyakaśipu). Now that the wicked fellow is withdrawn (killed) by you, Oh Lord, what service should we render unto You? Be pleased to command us, Your servants.

Prajāpatis said :

49. Oh Supreme Lord ! We, the Lords of creation, are Your creatures. This demon, due to whose restrictions, we could not verily procreate beings, now lies definitely slain with his bosom split open by You. Oh embodiment of pure *Sattva*, Your incarnation itself is auspiciousness for the world.

Gandharvas said :

50. Oh Lord ! We are Your artistes—singers, dancers and actors. He who by dint of his prowess, might and energy

subjugated us to his service, has been reduced to this condition (death) by You. Can anyone straying away from the path of righteousness attain happiness ?

Cāraṇas said :

51. Now that this Asura, the thorn in the heart of the righteous, has been removed (killed) by You, we take shelter under Your lotuslike feet which is the means of emancipation from *Saṁsāra*, Oh Hari.

Yakṣas said :

52. By performing actions pleasing to You, we attained prominence amongst Your followers (servants). But here we were subjected to the position of palanquine bearers by this son of Diti. Being aware of the agony caused by him to the world, You finished with him (lit: reduced him to his five constituent elements), Oh Narahari, the twentyfifth principle (controlling the twentyfour principles[1] responsible for the evolution and involution of the universe).

Kimpuruṣas said :

53. We are (after all) Kimpuruṣas (insignificant beings), but you are the most exalted person, the Almighty Ruler. When denounced by the pious and the good, this wicked fellow was (as good as) dead.

Vaitālikas said :

54. We used to get great worship and respect and wealth by singing of Your pure, sanctifying glory in assemblies and sacrificial sessions. This wicked fellow harshly deprived us of it. We are glad that You have exterminated him like a disease.

1. The following is the usual list of Principles according to Sāṅkhyas: *Puruṣa*, *Prakṛti*, *Mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra* (ego), 5 subtle elements, 10 *indriyas* (sense organs), the mind and 5 gross elements. Out of these Prakṛti is uncreated; the seven from *Mahat* are both created and creative; the rest sixteen are created. Puruṣa according to Sāṅkhyas is neither created nor creative. (But *Bhāgavata* invests Puruṣa with all powers of creation.)

Kinnaras said :

55. Oh Master ! We hosts of *Kinnaras* are Your servants who were forced to labour hard without remuneration by this Daitya. Oh Hari, the wicked fellow is now slain by Your Lordship. Oh Lord Narasiṁha ! Henceforth You be the source of our prosperity.

Viṣṇu's attendants said :

56. Oh protector ! It is today that we have seen this wonderful half-human and half-leonine form which is an auspicious blessing to all worlds. Oh Lord ! (Now) we know that this (Hiraṇyakaśipu) was Your own servant cursed by Brāhmaṇas (Sanaka and others) and (we realize that) death done to him was bestowal of Your grace (on him).

CHAPTER NINE

Prahlāda eulogizes Nṛsiṁha

Nārada continued :

1. Thus all gods and others headed by Brahmā and Rudra dared not go near him who was still possessed (under the influence) of wrath and (hence) unapproachable.

2. The goddess Śrī (who always attends upon Lord Viṣṇu) was personally sent to his presence. But at the sight of the monstrous manifestation, unseen and unheard of before, she was afraid, and did not approach.

3. God Brahmā (ultimately) deputed Prahlāda who was standing near-by, (saying), "Oh dear child, you (at least) approach and propitiate the Lord who has been angry with your father."

4. Consenting (to Brahmā's proposal) the child, a great devotee of the Lord, slowly approached him, and folding his palms together, he prostrated himself on the ground before him, Oh king.

5. Seeing the child fallen at his feet, the Lord was thoroughly overwhelmed with compassion. Raising him up, he placed on his head, his lotus-like hand which dispels the fear of those whose minds are fraught with the fear of the serpent in the form of Kāla (Death, Time, the Destroyer).

6. At the touch of his hand, all the inauspiciousness (in the form of impressions left by past actions) in Prahlāda was washed out, and the highest knowledge of the Supreme Brahman instantly dawned upon him. He meditated upon the lotus like feet of the Lord in his heart. Being deeply gratified at heart, the hair of his body stood on their ends (through joy); his heart got drenched (with devotion) and his eyes were overflowing with tears of joy.

7. Fixing on him his heart and eyes with perfect mental concentration and composure, he praised Nṛsiṁha in inarticulate words in a voice choked with emotion (love).

Prahlāda said :

8. Is it possible that I who belong to a ferocious race (of Asuras), am eligible to praise Lord Hari when hosts of gods headed by Brahmā and others, contemplative sages and wise Siddhas whose minds are constituted of the products of *Sattva* (such as righteousness, knowledge and penance) have not been able, even to this moment, to propitiate him by their streams of prayers, glorifying his many excellences (couched in figurative language.).

9. As the Almighty Lord was pleased with the leader of the elephant-herd[1] due to his (whole-hearted unswerving) devotion (unto him), I presume that affluence, noble lineage, beauty, austerities, learning, keenness of senses, complexion, prowess, physical power, determined exertions, intelligence and the eight-fold process of Yoga are of little avail in propitiating the Supreme Person.

10. I consider that a man of the *cāṇḍāla* (the lowest) caste, who has thoroughly dedicated his mind, speech, deed,

1. This refers to the episode of 'the elephant and the crocodile' described infra VIII. 2-4 (Chapters).

wealth and his very life itself to the Lord,[1] is superior to a Brāhmaṇa endowed with the twelve qualities (mentioned in the above verse or enumerated in verses noted below[2]) but is averse to the lotus-like feet of Lord Viṣṇu (the lotus-naveled god); for the Cāṇḍāla (devotee) sanctifies his (whole) race but not so the Brāhmaṇa even though he is highly respected[3] (by the public).

11. The Supreme Lord is perfect in (the realization of) his blissful nature. Hence he does not expect any respect and worship for himself, from the ignorant (as all of us are before him). He is merciful and therefore he accepts it. For whatever respect (-ful worship) is offered unto the Lord, is returned to the devotee himself, just as the decoration of one's countenance goes to enhance the beauty of the face reflected in the mirror.

12. Therefore, despicable (by birth) as I am, I shall sing of the glory of the Supreme Ruler with all my heart and to the best of my understanding, without any fear or diffidence (about my intelligibility). It is by delineating the glory of the Lord that a man who has entered into *Saṁsāra* (a product of *guṇas*) due to the influence of Avidyā[4] (nescience), will be purified.

13. Oh Almighty Ruler ! All these gods such as Brahmā and others who are (now) terrified, are merely the executors

1. VR. brings in the Prapatti doctrine of Rāmānuja herein He raises the objection that due to the association of *bhakti* (devotion) to Vedānta, only the first three castes (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) are eligible for it. The Bh. P. implies *Prapatti* (complete surrender to the Will of the Lord)—here for all people, irrespective of castes and sex.

2. ŚR. and other annotators quote from Sanatsujātiya (in M.Bh.) the following list :

Righteousness, piety (*sattva*), self-control, austerities, non-jealousy, modesty (*hrī*), forbearance, tolerance or envylessness, performance of sacrifices, charity, courage and Vedic-learning—these are the twelve vows to be observed by a Brāhmaṇa.

3. *bhūrimānaḥ* who is puffed up with pride (ŚR.. VD., GS.. VR. etc.).

4. *ajayāpraviṣṭaḥ*—who has entered into the human body, a product of *guṇas* due to the force of *prakṛti*—VR.

of the orders of Your Lordship who is a receptacle of pure *Sattva* and not like us Asuras (who are Your inimical-devotees). The sportive activities of the glorious Lord through his beautiful incarnations, are conducive to not only the well being and prosperity of the world but also for the conferment of the blissful experience of Your sports (and not for striking terror).

14. Now that You have slain the demon today, You be pleased to withdraw Your wrath (wrathful attitude). Even a pious man is delighted at the destruction of a scorpion or a serpent. All the people have now attained to peace and tranquillity and are waiting (for the subsidence of Your anger). All the people will remember this form of Yours for deliverance from fear, Oh Nṛsiṁha. (Hence the recollection of Your form being enough, there is no need to continue Your angry mood).

15. (As far as I am concerned), I am not at all afraid of Your (present) form with the most ferocious countenance (with a formidable mouth and tongue), Sun-like dazzling eyes and frightful knitting of eyebrows, fearful tusks and the garland of the entrails (of my father) and the mane and conical ears soaked in blood. Nor (am I afraid of) the roar that terrified the elephants guarding the cardinal points, or of Your pointed claws that tore up the enemy, Oh Invincible Lord!

16. I am (really) afraid of the unbearable miseries involved in the inexorable and terrible cycle of transmigrations (*saṁsāra*), Oh Lord (who is) compassionate to the miserables. Bound down with (the fetters in the form of my past) actions, I am thrown in the midst of ferocious ones (Daityas). Oh most merciful Lord ! When will You be pleased to recall me to Your feet, which is the sole asylum of all beings and is the Final Emancipation ?

17 Inasmuch as I am being scorched with the fiery sorrows of separation from the dear ones and association with unpleasant situations and persons, during the course of my transmigrations in different types of births (like celestials, subhuman beings), and the so-called cure from miseries entails miseries, I am wandering about in *Saṁsāra* falsely identifying

me with the body, Oh Almighty Lord ! Be pleased to enlighten me in the remedy (for emancipation from *Saṁsāra*), viz. the method of serving You.

18. Oh Nṛsiṁha ! I (who am thus enlightened in the way of serving You) shall be completely free from (the influence of) *guṇas* (like love, hatred etc.) and associating myself with the enlightened ardent devotees who resort to the asylum of the pair of Your feet, I shall easily tide over all miseries, singing constantly all the while the marvellously sportive activities of my beloved Friend and the Supreme Deity extolled before by god Brahmā.

19. Oh Nṛsiṁha ! In this world, the parents are not (real) protectors of children. Medicine is not the remedy to the suffering patient (who may succumb to death despite medical care). To a person drowning in the sea, a boat is not a (sure) help (as he may go down with it). In the case of embodied beings who (not being favoured with your grace) are disregarded by you, and are afflicted in this *saṁsāra*, whatever remedy (against the misery) is regarded as easy, proves to be temporarily effective[1].

20. Whatever agent, whether ancient (like god Brahmā) or modern (like a human father) and possessing a characteristic nature (dominated by *Sattva* etc.) is prompted to create or transform a thing into whatever form, from whatever source and for whatever cause or purpose, irrespective of its time, instrumentality, its relatedness to anyone or its separation from anything else—all these are (identical with) you (and none else).

21. When Māyā, with its *guṇas* (like Sattva and others), is prompted into action by the Time-Spirit through the gracious approval of the Supreme Man (who is only) a part of yours, it creates the subtle astral body which is predominated by the Mind. It is evolved out of *karmic* activities. It is unconquerable and is predisposed to the performance of ritualistic Vedic

1. ŚR. alternatively : Is there any easy remedy in the case of those embodied beings who, not being favoured . . . . etc.

VR. supports this but to him *tanubhṛtām* = those who are solely devoted to the nourishment of the body.

rites.[1] It is the wheel of *Saṁsāra* which consists of sixteen spokes (in the form of mind, ten cognitive and conative sense-organs and five subtle elements) offered for *Jīva's* enjoyment by *Avidyā* (nescience). What person standing apart from you (i.e. not devoted to you) can (hope to) transgress this, Oh Unborn Lord !

22. Oh Almighty Lord ! You have by your inherent power (in the form of consciousness), always kept under perfect control the properties of *Buddhi* or intellect[2] (such as pleasure, pain, love, avarice etc.) Oh Supreme Controller (of the universe), you are the Time-Spirit who as the director of Māyā, exercise full control over the powers of causal relations[3]. Such as you are, be pleased to take me unto your proximity as I have sought your protection. I have been thrown by the Unborn (*avidyā*) into the wheel (of *saṁsāra*) of sixteen spokes and am being crushed in it.

23. The people of this world yearn for longevity, affluence and glory of the celestial guardians of different worlds. But, Oh Lord, I have seen how they were swept away by the contraction of my father's eyebrow knitted in wrathful laughter. But even he has been disposed of by you.

24. Therefore, I who know the consequences of the blessings coveted by embodied beings do not seek long life, wealth, glory, sensual pleasure (of anybody) right from those of god Brahmā. Nor do I aspire after the mystic powers which are destroyed by You in the form of the Time-Spirit of immense

1. *chandomayam*—Full of desires characterised by mental resolves and suspicions—VJ.

VR. contradicts that the word *chandas* is never used in the sense of desire.

The import of the verse according to VJ. : It is impossible to transgress the wheel of *saṁsāra* except through the grace of Lord Hari attained through devotion. People of uncontrolled mind find it hard to secure that grace.

2. *ātma-guṇa*—(i) Properties inherent in one's body—VR.
(ii) Birth, death and such other conditions of the body—VJ.
(iii) Properties of jīva e.g. pleasure, pain, affection, greed—GD.
All *jīvas* like god Brahmā and others and their qualities—SD.

3. *visṛjya-visarga-śaktiḥ*: (*i*) effects and their means—ŚR.
(ii) *jīvas* and *Prakṛti*—VR.; *jīva and Māyā*—SD.
(iii) The world consisting of men, gods etc. and the creation—VJ.

prowess. Do be pleased with me to place me by the side of your servants.

25. Where are the pleasures which are pleasant merely to hear of, but are unreal like the mirage? Where is this body which is the nursery of all diseases? (Such a body is incapable of enjoying the so-called pleasures). The people, however, knowing this all as they do, are too engrossed to quench the fire of desires with drops of honey-like pleasures so difficult to obtain, to get disgusted with this world. (How wonderful is the working of your Māyā !).

26. What a world of difference there is, Oh Lord, between me, born out of *rajas* in the family of demons (lit. non-gods) dominated with *tamas*, and your immense grace (towards me) ! You were pleased to place your lotus-like palm graciously only on my head but not on that of gods Brahmā, Śiva and the goddess Lakṣmī.

27. Inasmuch as you are the Soul, well-wisher and friend of the world, this notion of inferiority and superiority which is entertained by ordinary beings cannot be there in your case. But your grace, like the favour bestowed by the wish-yielding heavenly tree, depends proportionately on the service performed. Your grace (leading to righteousness etc.) varies directly as per service rendered to you, and not on the ground of superiority and inferiority.

28. Oh Lord ! This *saṁsāra* is like a well infested with a serpent in the form of birth (and death). People desirous of sensual pleasures are falling into it. Due to the force of association, I was about to fall headlong along with them, but was regarded as his own by the divine sage Nārada and (in the way as you favoured me with your grace), was favoured (with knowledge) formerly (while I was in my mother's womb). Thus, how can I possibly give up the service of your servants (devotees) ?

29. When my father, intent upon doing evil, took up a sword and threatened me, "If there be any God other than I, let him protect you while I cut off your head", your act of saving my life and execution of my father was, I think, accomplished to vindicate the word (curse) of the sage (Sanaka, Sanandana etc.), Oh Infinite Lord.

30.* It is you alone who are (manifest as) this universe. You exist independently (as the cause) of the universe at the beginning before it came into being, and stay as such in the middle (while the cosmos exists), and after its dissolution as well. Having created this (universe which is the) product of (the permutation and combination of) the *guṇas*, by dint of your *māyā*, you re-enter it and appear as many (as protector and destroyer) through them.

31.** Oh Lord ! You are verily none else but this universe consisting of cause and effect. But you are, however, different from it (as you exist independently before the creation and after the destruction of the universe). Hence the notion of distinction between 'this is mine and this is another's, is nothing but an illusion (and as such) unreal. A thing which depends for its creation, destruction, subsistence and manifestation on another is really identical with it, just as a tree (the effect) is the same as the seed (the cause) which is essentially the same as the earth and its subtle cause.***

32. Having withdrawn this universe within yourself by your own agency, and being above desires, you lie on the cosmic waters of the Deluge, absorbed in enjoying your own essential blissfulness, and in perfect rest (inactivity). With your eyes closed in Yogic meditation which transcends sleep by your self-illumination, you stay in the fourth state which lies beyond the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. Therein you neither cognize *Tamas* (the characteristic of deep sleep), nor enjoy any *guṇas* (objects of senses).

* (i) You constitute the entire world consisting of the conscious (individual selves) and the unconscious matter. You maintain your separateness in the beginning, the end and the middle of the universe.—VR.

(ii) The *Śāstras* have conclusively proved your separate existence at the creation, destruction and during the sustenance of the universe—VJ.

(iii) As a matter of fact, *rajo-guṇa* is the creator, *tamoguṇa*, the destroyer, and *sattva guṇa* the sustainer of the universe but (in spite of) your unconcerned entry into them, you are called the slayer (of Hiraṇyakaśipu) —VC.

** Cf. supra 1.6

*** VR.: Oh Lord ! This world consisting of sentients and non-sentients is yourself as you are the cause of it and are non-different from it. The notion that the individual Soul is the same as the Controlling Lord (*Īśvara*)

33. The universe is the body of Him (i.e. Yours) who through His potency called the Time-Spirit, prompted into action the modes of *Prakṛti* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which combine and create the universe). While He, i.e. You lay in the bed of the serpent Śeṣa on the cosmic waters of the Deluge, and while Your *Yogic* trance was coming to a close, there sprouted forth from Your navel, like a banyan tree from a tiny seed, a large lotus which was (erstwhile) lying hidden in You.

34. The wise seer (Brahmā) who was born of that lotus, did not see anything else than the lotus. Considering that You who were the seed (material cause) pervading his self internally, were outside himself, could not discover You though he immersed himself into the inundatory waters for a hundred years. Oh how can one find out the seed when the sprout shoots forth from it.

35. That self-born god (Brahmā) was greatly astonished (at his failure to discover the 'seed'), Oh Lord. (He reverted to his place). Seated in the lotus and performing austere penance, he got his heart thoroughly purified in due course. He realized You as pervading in the subtlest form, his own Self consisting of *bhūtas* (elements), *indriyas* (cognitive and conative sense-organs) and heart, just as a discriminating person perceives subtle smell pervading the earth.

is unreal, meaningless and is due to *Avidyā*, just as the notion of the identity of the soul and the body is illusory. So is the identification of the Soul with God. That which causes the origination, sustenance, destruction and manifestation of anything is identical with its material cause, just as the divisions of time are not different from the eternal flow of time or the tree is not different from the soil which germinates the seed.

ŚR., VR. etc. interpret *vasu* as subtle elements and *kāla* as the earth, the basis of blue colour etc.

(ii) SD. regards that this verse asserts the difference-cum-non-difference relation between the world and the *Brahman*. That on which the origination, maintenance, manifestation and destruction of a thing depends is both different and identical with it, as a plant is both different and not different from the soil from which it grows.

(iii) GD. emphasizes that this world of causal relationship is identical with the Lord. He is essentially transcendental to the world (*Prapañca*). The whole world being the Lord's and identical with him, the notion of difference is unreal.

36. In the same way, Brahmā visualized You as the Supreme (cosmic) person endowed with thousands of faces, feet, heads, thighs, noses, mouths, ears, eyes and decorated with rich ornaments and furnished with weapons. The disposition of Your various limbs was indicated by different parts of the universe (nether world and other regions). You assumed this form by Your *Māyā* power. And he (Brahmā) was filled with great joy.

37. Assuming the form of a horse-necked god, Your worshipful self killed the extremely powerful enemies of the Vedas, Madhu and Kaiṭabha by name who were the very embodiments of *rajas* and *tamas*. You thus restored the corpus of the Vedas to him (Brahmā). The Vedas declare that Your most beloved person consists of pure *Sattva*.

38. In this way, Oh Supreme Person, You incarnate Yourself, as a human or a subhuman being, as a sage or a god, or as a fish and protect the world, and kill the enemies of the people. You uphold the path of righteousness suitable to that particular Yuga (epoch). You remain unmanifest in the Kali age and hence You are designated *Triyuga*.

39. Oh Lord of Vaikuṇṭha ! This mind of mine, vitiated as it is by sins, extroversion, extremely morbid, lustfulness and afflicted with joy, grief and three yearnings (for progeny, prosperity and popularity), finds no interest in Your stories. How can I, a poor wretch with such a mind, contemplate on Your essential nature ?

40. Oh Acyuta ! My ungratified palate drags me in one direction and sexual desire (lit. the genital organ) pulls me to a different direction, while the senses of touch, hearing and the abdomen gravitate me to some other direction. My olifactory sense, the constantly moving eye and faculties of action draw me in different directions—all these pull (in different directions) like a number of co-wives dragging their lord of the house (to their bed-rooms).

41. Be pleased to cast a gracious look at these ignorant people who, as a consequence of their actions, have fallen in the Vaitaraṇī[1] in the form of *Saṁsāra* and are frightened extre-

1. *Vaitaraṇī*—a mythological river bordering on the region of Yama, the god of death. It is full of blood, bones, hair etc. and rushes very rapidly and hence unfordable.

mely with the terror of successive births, deaths and sufferings (from want of food), and who entertain the notions of friendship to bodies whom they consider their own and enmity towards others. Out of compassion for their plight, be pleased to protect them by ferrying them today across the *saṁsāra*-Vaitaraṇī, Oh Lord who stays beyond (*saṁsāra*) !

42. Oh Lord ! You are the father (creator and guide) of all. What exertion could there be in lifting up these ignorant people (from *saṁsāra*) to You who are the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe ? Oh friend of the afflicted ! It is quite meet that the great should verily be gracious unto the ignorant. To us who already serve Your beloved devotees such rescuing from *saṁsāra* is immaterial (as we are sure to be liberated. It is to others that you be pleased to show Your favour).

43. As my mind is immersed in the rare nectar of your prowess, I am not at all afraid of the (so-called) unfordable Vaitaraṇī, Oh Supreme Lord ! I feel grieved for these ignorant fellows who being averse (to this nectar of singing the great deeds of the Lord) carry on the burden of the family etc. in the hope of securing pleasures caused by objects of senses, which again are illusory.

44. Oh Lord, sages, desirous of self-emancipation, generally meditate on you silently in solitude. But they are indifferent to the interests of others. Leaving aside these helpless creatures, I do not long to attain the final beatitude for me alone. Nor do I see any refuge other than you for these, who are wandering in *saṁsāra*.

45. The so-called pleasures of a householder's life such as sexual intercourse and others are positively insignificant, contemptible and leading to a chain of miseries like the scratching of one itching hand with another. Lascivious people though subjected to various miseries, are never satiated (by enjoying the pleasures) in this world. It is only some person endowed with strength of mind and wisdom who (through your grace) (can repress their passion of lust like the temptation to scratch (an itching limb).

46. Oh Inner Controller ! Means conducive to the attainment of emancipation, viz. observance of the vow of

silence, listening to sacred books, performance of austerities, studies of spiritual texts, discharging one's religious duties, exposition of the *Śāstras*, living in solitude, chanting of the Lord's name and concentration of mind in *Yoga*—all these generally become only the means of livelihood for those whose senses are uncontrolled (and who wish to sell these for worldly gains). In the case of hypocrites it is doubtful whether these might be of any use even for earning the livelihood (as they are likely to be exposed easily.

47. The Vedas have revealed your two symbolic forms, the cause and effect (or the *Prakṛti* and the atoms) which are like the seed and (its) sprout. You are devoid of any form or colour, yet the universe of causal relation is not other than (different from) you. It is by means of the Yoga of Devotion that persons who have controlled their senses, can visualize you directly, both in the cause and its consequence, just as people can perceive fire in (the friction of) the two pieces of wood. Knowledge about you cannot be attained by any other means. (Hence you are pervading everything as its cause).

48. You are (the elements such as the air, fire, earth, sky, water and objects of senses (viz. sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell), the (five) vital airs, the cognitive and conative organs, the heart, the intellect and the Ego (or deities presiding over senses and the mind). Everything possessed of qualities[1] (gross) or devoid of qualities (subtle) is you. There is nothing other than you even if it be conveyed by Mind or Speech, Oh great Lord !

49. Neither these *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) nor the deities presiding over the *guṇas* or endowed with *guṇas* such as *Mahat* and others (viz. *mahat*, *ahaṁkāra*, five subtle and five gross elements, and ten *indriyas*—cognitive and conative senses) nor the mind etc. nor the various beings including gods and mortals—all these having a beginning-and an end—comprehend you, Oh most highly praised God. It is, therefore, that wise men endowed with high intellect, after careful deliberation (of this) give up the study of the Vedas (and other acts

1. VJ.: *saguṇa*—The *Jīva* in *saṁsāra*—possessed of qualities and *nirguṇa*—the emancipated Soul or anything devoid of qualities.

prescribed therein), and worship you alone with concentrated mind.

50. Therefore, Oh most worshipful Lord! How can a person cherish devotion to you who are the goal of the highest order of ascetics (the *parama-hamsas*), without the (following) six constituents of worship, viz., (1) paying obeisance to the Lord, (2) singing of his glory, (3) offering of all acts to the Lord, (4) waiting on you (worship in the form of service), (5) meditation on the feet of the Lord and (6) listening to the recital of stories of the Lord.

Nārada said :

51. When, in spite of the Lord's transcendence to attributes, the excellences of the Lord were highly extolled with deep reverence and devotion by his devotee Prahlāda, the Lord was pleased with him. Restraining his anger, he spoke to Prahlāda who was respectfully bowing to Him.

The Lord said :

52. "Oh gentle Prahlāda ! May good betide you ! Oh the best among the Asuras ! I am verily pleased with you. Ask whatever boon you like. I am the bestower of all the desires of men.

53. For, Oh long-lived one, even a glimpse of Mine is difficult to get to those who have not propitiated me. Having but once visualized me, a being never suffers an affliction any more.

54. Hence noble and pious Souls who are highly fortunate and are desirous of attaining bliss, try to propitiate me with all their heart, as I am the Lord (and bestower) of all blessings."

Nārada said :

55. Even though Prahlāda, the best of Asuras, was thus tempted with boons which excite allurement in all beings, he desired none of them, as he was exclusively devoted to the Lord (expecting no reward for his unflinching devotion).

CHAPTER TEN

Prahlāda enthroned. The conquest of Tripura

Nārada said :

1. The child, Prahlāda who looked upon all that (offer of boons etc.) as an impediment to the practice of *Bhakti-Yoga* (*Yoga* of Devotion), slightly smiled, and addressed Lord *Nṛsiṁha* (the Lord of the sense organs) as follows:

Prahlāda said :

2. Pray, do not tempt me who am addicted by nature (lit. birth) to pleasures, with (the promise of) those boons. Being afraid of contacts with them and in (sheer) disgust of them, I have resorted to you with the desire of securing liberation (from *saṁsāra*).

3. Oh Lord! Meseems it is with the desire of ascertaining the characteristics of a real servant or devotee that your worship directed me to choose objects of pleasure which are the seeds of the transmigration of the Self (*saṁsāra*) and are like so many knots binding the heart.

4. Otherwise that (offer) would have been impossible from you who are full of mercy, Oh Father of all![1] He who hankers after blessings from you, is but a merchant, and not a real servant (devotee)[2].

5. Verily he is not a real servant who desires to secure worldly pleasures (in return for services) from his master. Nor is he a real master who grants such comforts to play the lord upon his servant.

6. But I am your devotee who cherishes no desire and you are the Master who expect nothing (from your servant). Here, between us, there is no object (to be gained) as between the king and his servant.

1. Some editions add here:
naṣṭa-dṛṣṭes tamasyāndhe tvameko hi pāradarśanaḥ/
You are the only guide to lead across to the other shore of the ocean of *saṁsāra*, the people who have lost their eye-sight in blinding darkness.

2. After this line Andhra edition adds:
Sa vai svāmī, sa vai bhṛtyo, gunalubdhau na kāmukau !
Verily he is the master and he is the servant. They are so due to their appreciation of qualities, but not for any gain or pleasure.

7. Oh foremost one among the bestowers of boons ! If (at all) You (want to) confer any boons on me, Oh Lord, I seek of your Worship the boon that no desire should germinate in my heart.

8. For, with the rise of desires, the (powers of) the senses, the mind, the vital air, the Soul, righteousness, fortitude, judgment, modesty, prosperity, energy, memory and truth come to an end (once for all).

9. When a man gets rid of desires fixed (deep) in the heart, then alone he becomes fit to attain to thy status, Oh lotus-eyed Lord.

10 (Now I remember the *Mantra* to which I was initiated by Nārada).

Salutations to You, Oh Almighty Lord, the Supreme Person, the High-Souled One, Hari, the wonderful lion, Supreme Brahman and Paramātman

Lord Nrsiṁha said :

11. Those who are exclusively devoted to Me like you, never expect from Me any blessing in this or in the next world Still (it is my order that you shall enjoy throughout this *Manvantara* the luxuries of the overlordship of the Daityas here.

12. You continue to enjoy listening to my stories so dear to you. Realize within your own heart Me, the Lord present in all beings, and the presiding deity of sacrifices. Dedicating all your activities to Me, worship Me, in meditation.

13. Having exhausted your merit by enjoying pleasure and sin by doing meritorious actions (or by *prāyaścitta*—expiatory rites) and given up your body in course of time, and spread such extremely pure renown as to be sung in heaven, you shall attain to Me completely liberated from all bonds.

* Here ŚR. quotes Katha Upa. 2.3. 14—

Yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hṛdi śritāḥ|
atha martyomṛto bhavatyatra Brahma samaśnute||

When one gets rid of all the desires residing (fixed) in one's heart, the mortal becomes immortal immediately and attains oneness with Brahman in this very life.

14. A person who recites this song (prayer) sung by you to Me and remembers you and Me, becomes free from the bondage of *karman* in due course.

Prahlāda said:

15-17. Oh Supreme Lord ! The Lord of those who graciously confer boons ! I seek from you this boon that my father, ignorant of Your being the Divine Light, and with his mind overwhelmed (lit. pierced through) with indignation, reviled you who are the veritable Father of the World and the Master, by calling You the murderer of his brother, and through wrong outlook, behaved sinfully to me, Your devotee. May (my father) be absolved of the terrible sins which are too difficult to be crossed, even though he must have been purified when he was glanced at by you who are compassionate to the afflicted.

The Lord said :

18. Oh sinless righteous saint ! Inasmuch as you, the purifier of the family, have been born in his house, your father along with twentyone generations of his fore-fathers stands absolved of all sins[1].

19. Wherever my devotees, extremely serene, impartial in outlook, noble in character and of pious behaviour, are present, they sanctify that country (along with its inhabitants) even if it be sinful like that of *Kīkaṭa*.

20. Oh Lord of Daityas ! They (My devotees) who, out of devotion unto Me, have become devoid of desires[2] (which are at the root of anger, violence etc.), do not trouble any creature in any category of beings, high or low, by any means.

1. ŚR. explains that as Hiranyakaśipu was the 3rd in generation from god Brahmā, here the twentyone generations of his previous birth are implied.

VC. adds: Twentyone generations of forefathers in your (Prahlāda's) twentyone previous incarnations are included here

2. mad-bhāvena gataspṛhaḥ—Realizing my presence everywhere, they entertain no jealousy against anyone—VJ.

21. In this world, there are men who follow your way of life and become My devotees. But certainly, you stand as a model to all my devotees.

22. Oh child Prahlāda ! (As a formality) perform the obsequies of your father who has been thoroughly purified through contact with My person (and has become hence sinless). Now, being blest with you as a pious son, he will certainly attain to higher worlds.

23. As directed by exponents of the Vedas, you occupy the throne of your father. Concentrating your mind on Me, carry out your duties with complete devotion to Me, Oh child !

Nārada said :

24. In compliance of the command of the Lord, Prahlāda also performed all the funeral rites of his father. And he was installed as a king by excellent Brāhmaṇas (and governed as per instructions of the Lord.)

25. Seeing the countenance of the Man-Lion Hari graciously pleased, Brahmā who was surrounded with gods, praised Him with holy Vedic hymns and submitted (as follows):

Brahmā said :

26. Oh God of gods ! The Supreme Ruler of all! The Creator of all beings! Oh the First born one! It is fortunate that You have slain the wicked demon, the tormentor of the world.

27. It was this demon who, having secured boons from me, could not be killed by anyone of my creation. Being arrogant with (the powers acquired by) penance and *Yoga* and with prowess he violated the code of righteousness.

28. Luckily, his son, though a child, is a pious Soul and a great devotee of Yours. Fortunately he has been saved by You from death, and he has now attained to You.

29. Oh Lord ! He who, with concentrated mind, contemplates on this form of Yours, will be protected on all sides from fear—even from the god of death wishing to kill one.

Nṛsiṁha said :

30. Oh lotus-born god ! No such boon is to be conferred by you on Asuras. A boon bestowed on those who are cruel by nature, is harmful like feeding serpents with milk.

Nārada said :

31. Oh king Yudhiṣṭhira! Having spoken thus, Lord Hari Who is normally invisible to all beings and Who was worshipped by god Brahmā, vanished on that very spot.

32. Then Prahlāda worshipped god Brahmā, Śiva, Prajāpatis and gods—all of whom were parts of the Almighty Lord—and bowed them with his head.

33. Thereafter, the lotus-seated god Brahmā, together with sages headed by Śukra, crowned Prahlāda as the Lord of Daityas and Dānavas.

34. Then, having felicitated Prahlāda and bestowed their highest blessings on him, the gods headed by Brahmā who were worshipped by him again, returned to their respective places, Oh King.

35. In this way, the two attendants of Viṣṇu (Jaya and Vijaya) who were born as sons to Diti (due to the imprecation of Brāhmaṇas) were killed by Hari. present in their heart due to the hostile attitude adopted by them towards Hari.

36. And due to the curse of a Brāhmaṇa, both of them were born again as the demons Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa of ten heads, who were killed by Rāma's arrows.

37. While lying on the field of battle with their hearts pierced with Rāma's arrows, both of them quitted their physical bodies with their hearts fixed on Him (Rāma), as (it happened) in their previous birth (as Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu).

38. Both of those (attendants of Viṣṇu) were now born here as Śiśupāla and Dantavakra. It is in Your very presence that they merged in Lord Hari by entertaining continuous enmity towards Him.

39. Kings who were the enemies of Kṛṣṇa shed off, at the end of their life, whatever sins they have committed in the previous life, and become like unto Him through constant meditation like a caterpillar which, through constant brooding, is transformed into a wasp.

40. Just as votaries of the Lord, through their unflinching devotion to Hari attain to perfect identity with Him, (inimical) kings like Śiśupāla and others, through their constant brooding over Him (as their enemy) attained to similarity of form like Him.

41. I have answered to you in details all the queries made by you and also the identity with Hari attained by His enemies like the son of Damaghoṣa (Śiśupāla).

42. This is the sacred story of the (Man-lion) incarnation of the noble-souled Kṛṣṇa, the devotee of Brāhmaṇas —a story (containing the narration) of slaying the two ancient Daityas (viz. Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu).

43-44. This narration includes the life (and character) of Prahlāda, the great votary of the Lord, and (a detailed description of) his devotion, knowledge non-attachment and also of the true nature and an account of the glorious deeds of Hari who is the Lord of the creation, maintenance and the destruction (of the universe). (It describes) the great revolutions in the positions of gods and demons in course of time.

45. In this chronicle has been described the righteous path of the devotees of the Lord which leads to the attainment of (one-ness with) Him; and all topics relating to the soul (spiritual knowledge) have been thoroughly discussed.

46. Whoever, after reverentially listening to this holy narrative of the heroic deeds of Viṣṇu, recites it to others is liberated from the bonds of Karmas (good or bad).

47. Whoever peruses piously with concentrated mind the sportive actions of Lord Viṣṇu (the Most Ancient Person) in assuming the Lion form and slaying Hiraṇyakaśipu, the leader of the legions of demons, and listens to (lit. having listened to) the (recital of the) hallowing glory of the demon Hirayṇyakaśipu's son (Prahlāda), the foremost among the righteous, attains to the region (Mokṣa) which is beyond the range of fear.

48. (Oh Yudhiṣṭhira!) You are certainly immensely more fortunate in this world (as compared with Prahlāda etc. his spiritual preceptor Nārada, as well as your forefathers and other great sages) inasmuch as great sages who sanctify the world, pay visit to you from all quarters, and the

Supreme Brahman Himself, concealing His greatness in the guise of a human being, resides with you in your houses.

49. This Kṛṣṇa who is your dear friend and well-wisher, your maternal uncle's son, your very adorable self, guide and advisor carrying out your behests (as your representative or charioteer), is verily the *Brahman* who is the embodiment of the ecstatic experience of the absolute Supreme bliss (unconditioned by any *upādhi*) which is sought after by the great.

50. May Lord Krsṇa, the Lord of the Sātvatas whose direct essential nature has not been actually comprehended or described with their intellect by gods like Śiva and Brahmā, and who has been devoutly worshipped by us through silent meditation and renunciation, be gracious unto us. [The Supreme Brahman does not reside in Prahlāda's palace. Nor do sages go there to have an audience with him. Nor does He act like a cousin. Hence, Oh Yudhisṭhira and Pāṇḍavas, you are immensely more fortunate than Prahlāda and we.]

51. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira ! he is that very Lord who, in days of yore, extended the glory of god Rudra as it was eclipsed by Maya, the master of innumerable delusive powers.

The King (Yudhiṣṭhira) asked :

52. Be pleased to describe to us in which action Maya destroyed the glory of god Śiva and the way in which Lord Kṛṣṇa (re-established and) enhanced it.

Nārada said :

53. Asuras who were completely vanquished in the battle by gods who were strengthened by Lord Kṛṣṇa, sought the refuge of Maya the Supreme Preceptor of all conjurors (experts in the arts of illusion or magic).

54. The master-conjuror constructed three (flying-fortress-like) cities made of gold, silver and iron respectively. Their movements (arrival and departure) were undetectable and the (war) materials and equipments provided therein were beyond the conception of gods (And he handed these over to Asuras).

55. Remembering their old hostility, the leaders of Asura armies destroyed the three worlds along with the rulers,

themselves remaining invisible with the help of those (flying) cities, Oh King.

56. Oh King, thereupon all residents of the three worlds, along with their rulers, approched god Śiva and prayed, "Be pleased, Oh God, to protect us, Your own people (who are practically) destroyed by Asuras residing in three (flying) cities.

57. Out of grace unto the celestials, the almighty god Śiva reassured the gods not to be afraid, and fitted an arrow (charged with mystic powers) to his bow, and discharged the missile at the (flying) cities.

58. Fiery arrows, like streams of rays emanating from the orb of the Sun, shot forth from that shaft and the cities, being screened by them, became invisible.

59. Struck with those shafts, all the citizens of those cities, fell dead. But the great *Yogī* Maya brought them and put them into a well of nectar (excavated by him in the cities).

60. At the touch of the resuscitating fluid prepared by him (Maya), they sprang to life with adamantine bodily frames endowed with extraordinary vigour, like fires of the lightening tearing open the clouds.

61. Finding god Śiva (the bull-bannered god) frustrated in his undertaking and dejected, this Lord Viṣṇu devised an expendient for it.

62. This Lord Viṣṇu assumed the form of a cow and Brahmā became the calf. Entering the cities at midday, he drank out the nectar from the well of that (immortalizing) fluid.

63-65. Though witnessing it, the Asuras (guarding the well) became too bewildered to prevent it. Knowing that and remembering that it was destined to be so, Maya, the past-master in devising expedients addressed the following (words) to the guards of that well of nectar who were stricken with grief : "No one whether a god, a demon, a man or any other being is capable of thwarting what has been ordained by Fate regarding one's own Self or another or of both."

Then by His own potencies, He (Lord Kṛṣṇa) devised the equipment of battle (war-materials) for god Śiva.

66. By means of His powers like righteousness, wisdom, renunciation, affluence, asceticism, knowledge, action and others, (He created for god Śiva) a chariot, a charioteer, the flag, horses, a bow, an armour, shafts and others.

67-68. Clad in the armour and seated in the chariot, god Śiva took up his bow and arrow. At noon, at the auspicious time, called *Abhijit*, Hara (Śiva) fixed the shaft to the bow and burnt down the three impregnable cities. Kettle-drums were sounded in the sky which was crowded with hundreds of celestial cars.

69. Gods, sages, manes (*pitṛs*) and leaders of Siddhas shouted "Victory" in joyous exclamation, and poured showers of flowers. The troupes of celestial nymphs danced in ecstasy.

70. Having thus burnt down the three (flying) cities, the venerable god Śiva (destroyer of cities) returned to his own residence while being praised by Brahmā and others.

71. Such and others are the exploits of this Hari who with his Māyā Potency imitates the human form (i.e. way of life) that the heroic achievements of the Preceptor (or father) of the world which purify the worlds are sung by sages. What else should I relate next ?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Eternal Path of Religion

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having heard the narrative—so highly praised in the assemblies of the righteous and devotees of the Lord like (god Brahmā and others—of Prahlāda (the ruler of Daityas), the leader of illustrious devotees of the Lord, whose, mind was absorbed in the meditation of God Viṣṇu, Yudhiṣṭhira was filled with delight. He again made a further query of Nārada, the son of the self-created god Brahmā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

2. I am anxious to hear from you, Oh Omniscient sage the eternal Law—the righteous course of conduct prescribed for men—enjoining the duties to be performed by persons belonging to different classes of society (*varṇa*) and stages in life (*āśrama*) —the observance of which (*Dharma*) leads one to attain knowledge and devotion.

3. Your worshipful self is the son of no other than the highest deity, Brahmā, the Lord of all created beings. Out of his sons, you have been the most beloved one by virtue of your asceticism, Yogic powers and meditation of the Lord, Oh Brahman ! (You must, therefore, have learnt from him the secret of *dharma*).

4. Merciful, pious, tranquil Brāhmaṇas like you who are devoted exclusively to Nārāyaṇa know the highest secret of Dharma but not others (the so-called Law-givers—*Smṛtikāras*).

Nārada said :

5. Saluting the venerable birthless God Nārāyaṇa, the source of Dharma, I shall explain to you the Eternal Law as I heard it from (His) Nārāyaṇa's lips.

6. He incarnated along with his part-manifestation Nara, as the son of Dharma and Mūrti, the daughter of Dakṣa. He still continues to perform penance for the welfare of the people, at the hermitage at Badarikā.

7. For Lord Hari, the embodiment of all Vedas, is the source of *Dharma*; *Smṛtis* are codified by those who knew him. And it is by abiding by that *Dharma* that one's Soul gets pleased, Oh King.[1]

8-12. (1) Truthfulness, (2) mercy, (3) asceticism, (4) purity, (5) endurance, (6) power of discrimination between right and wrong, (7-8) control of mind and the senses, (9) non-violence, (10) celibacy, (11) charity, (12) the study of Vedas or repetition internally of prayers to god, (13) straight-

1. *Vedo'khilo dharma-mūlaṁ Smṛti-śīle ca tad-vidām /*
ācāras caiva sādhūnām atmanas tuṣṭir eva ca // —Manu-Smṛti
Śrutiḥ smṛtiḥ sadācāraḥ svasya ca priyam ātmanaḥ /
samyak-saṅkalpajaḥ kāmo dharma-mūlam idaṁ smṛtam //
—Yājñavalkya-smṛti

forwardness, (14) contentment, (15) service unto thou who regard all beings as equals, (16) gradual withdrawal from worldly activities, (17) Observation of the fruitlessness of human actions, (18) refraining from useless talk, (19) investigation of the nature of the Soul (and its distinctness from the body), (20) equitable distribution of food, eatables etc. among creatures according to their worth (and needs), (21) to look upon them, especially human beings as one's own self and as the deity, Oh Pāṇḍu's son (Yudhiṣṭhira); (22) hearing (the holy name or stories of the Lord), (23) chanting of his name, (24) contemplation on, (25) service of, (26) worship of, (27) Bowing to, (28) rendering service to God, (29) behaving as his friend and (30) dedication of oneself to Hari who is the goal of the noble Souls—these thirty characteristics are said to constitute the highest *dharma* of all human beings whereby the Soul of the Universe is propitiated and pleased, Oh King.

13. He is called a *dvija* or twice-born one whose (sixteen) purifying rites (accompanied by recitation of *mantras*) have been performed without any break in succession, and to whom god Brahmā has designated as such. Performance of sacrifices, study of scriptures and charity are prescribed for all twice-born classes (viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) who are of pure birth and conduct. It is for these that duties incumbent on different stages in life (*āśrama*) are prescribed.

14. Scriptural study and others (such as teaching, performance of sacrifice, charity and acceptance of gifts) six (in all) are prescribed for the Brāhmaṇas. Non-acceptance of gifts is laid down for the other (Kṣattriyas). The means of livelihood of a king who protects his subjects, is derived from taxes levied on subjects, with the exception of Brāhmaṇas (who were exempted from taxation).

15. The Vaiśya is to maintain himself by agriculture (cattle-breeding) and trade, and should follow the Brāhmaṇas. A Śūdra is to render service to the twice-born castes whose means of livelihood constitute his means of subsistence also.

16. Means of livelihood for Brāhmaṇas is of four types: (1) various occupations (e. g. agriculture, cattle breeding), (2) acceptance of articles modestly (without asking any one for anything), (3) begging for grain from door to door like

Yāyāvaras (vagrant mendicants) and (4) gleaning grains of corn from the leftover of the threshing floor in the field (*śila*) or of the market place (*uñcha*)—these types are in the ascending order of preference.

17. With the exception of Kṣattriyas[1], no person born in a lower class should adopt the vocation ordained for the higher class under normal circumstances (lit. when not threatened with serious danger. The Kṣattriyas can adopt Brahmanical means of livelihood, except that of accepting charitable gifts). In times of danger anybody (belonging to any class) may resort to any profession(prescribed for any class).

18. A person may sustain his life by following the vocations or professions (technically) known as *ṛta, amṛta, mṛta, pramṛta* or *satyānṛta*, but should never lead a dog's life (*śvavṛtti*) (even) for preserving one's life.

19-20. The gleaning of corn from the leftovers of field or of the marketplace is called *ṛta*; whatever is given to one unsolicited is known as *amṛta*; *mṛta* is daily begging, and *pramṛta* means cultivation; trading is *satyānṛta* (a mixture of truth and falsehood), while rendering service to the low-born is *śva-vṛtti*. A Brāhmaṇa and a Kṣattriya should always shun that 'dog mode of life' which is detested by all; for a Brāhmaṇa is an embodiment of all the Vedas and Kṣattriya (the ruler) is the personification of all deities.

21. Control over mind and senses, asceticism, purity, contentment, forbearance and forgiveness, straightforwardness, knowledge, compassion, fervent devotion to Lord Viṣṇu and truthfulness are the characteristics of a Brāhmaṇa.

22. Valour, prowess, fortitude, adventurous spirit, liberality, self-control, forgiveness, devotion to Brāhmaṇas, majestic graciousness and defence of the weak, constitute the characteristics of a Kṣattriya.

23. Devotion unto gods, teachers and Lord Viṣṇu, maintenance (and achievement) of three objectives in life (viz. *dharma, artha* and *kāma*), faith in *Śāstras*, constant effort (in making money) and skill in transactions, form the characteristics of the Vaiśyas.

1. With the exception of Kṣattriyas, other lower *varṇas* (viz. Vaiśyas and Śūdras) may follow the professions of the higher classes—VJ.

24. Submissiveness, purity, faithful (lit. untreacherous) service of the master, performance of the five daily sacrifices by bowing down only (without uttering the *mantras*) abstention from theiving, truthfulness[1] and protection of the cattle and the Brāhmaṇas—these are the characteristics of the Śūdras.

25. Th duties of women who look upon their husband as a (veritable) god are: rendering service to the husband, compliance to his wishes, friendliness to his relatives and ever-observance of the same vows as those of their husband.

26-27. A pious lady should keep the house clean by sweeping and plastering (with cowdung), and decorating it with auspicious coloured diagrams and pictures on the floor. She should adorn her person with ornaments and clean clothes and always keep the utensils etc. in the house clean and polished. She should, at every time, abide by the desires, great or small, of her husband with modesty, self-control and address him lovingly in true yet pleasant words.

28. Contented (with what she has), not covetous, diligent, knowing what is *dharma* (righteousness), sweet yet true in speech, careful, pious, affectionate—thus she should serve her husband who is not fallen (by committing any of the five major sins, viz. murder of a Brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, theft, adultery with his preceptor's wife and fellowship with a criminal of above type).

29. A woman who, as goddess Lakṣmī would do unto Lord Hari, serves her husband with a single-minded devotion, regarding him as Lord Viṣṇu, would like Lakṣmī in the company of Lord Viṣṇu, rejoice hereafter in the region of Hari (Vaikuṇṭha) along with her husband who (through her devotion) has attained the resemblance of Hari (in form).

30. The means of livelihood of mixed castes[2] such as the *antyajas* (the low-born ones) *antevāsīyas* (communities living at

1. v.l. *mauḍhya* in VJ. which he explains as the cutting of hair, moustaches, nails etc.

2. ŚR. states that children born of a marriage between a woman of a higher caste and a man from a lower caste are *pratiloma* and are regarded as a low-born *antyaja*. Those castes are as follows: Washermen, Workers in leather, Naṭas (ropedancers), Buruḍas (basket-makers), Kaivartas (fishermen), Medas (followers of degraded positions and Bhillas (Bhils—a mountain tribe).

the farther end of a village such as *cāṇḍāla*, Mātaṅga and Pukkasa) are the hereditary callings followed by their respective families, provided it is not robbery and any sinful vocation[1].

31. In every age the *dharma* (the course of duties) of people is generally determined by their innate nature (according as they are predominantly *sāttvic*, *rājasa* or *tāmasa*). Sages—the Vedic seers—have regarded that (particular) course of *dharma* as conducive to happiness (of persons with such natures) both here and hereafter.

32. One who follows a vocation determined as suitable to his special nature (as determined by his caste) and does his duty, goes on relinquishing that type of work suitable to his disposition) and gradually attains to the state of the attributeless *ātman*.

33. A field which is constantly sown with seeds automatically becomes unfertile. It is unsuitable for sowing seeds again and if seed be sown, it perishes.

34. Similarly the mind, the seat of desires, becomes sated and disgusted by overindulgence in pleasures, but not by drops of enjoyments, like fire with drops of clarified butter.

35. If what has been described as the characteristic of a particular caste or class in the sociey be found in another person belonging to a different community, then the latter should be distinctly designated as coming under the class.

1. *Śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt /*
-- B.G.325; 18.47

CHAPTER TWELVE

Inquiry into the Right Conduct.

(*Duties of Brahmacārins and Vānaprasthas*)

Nārada continued :

1. A Brahmacārin should dwell in the house of his preceptor. He should be self-controlled and comply with what is agreeable to the preceptor. He should behave humbly like a servant, and entertain very strong affection to his teacher.

2. In the morning and in the evening, he should wait upon the preceptor and worship the Fire-god, the Sun-god and other prominent deities. Observing perfect silence at both the twilights (and in the mid-day), he should repeat the *Gāyatrī mantra* with concentrated mind (while performing *Sandhyā*).

3. If (and when) called by his preceptor, he should study the Vedas (at his feet) with a perfect concentration and disciplined manner. He should bow down to his (teacher's) feet with his head, both at the beginning and the completion of the lesson.

4. With his hair braided, he should wear a *mekhalā* (a girdle of *muñja* grass), the deer-skin and (two pieces of) cloth, the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*) and carry with him a staff and a *kamaṇḍalu* (water-pot of gourd) and a handful of *darbha* grass as prescribed (in the *Śāstras*[1]).

5. He should beg alms both in the morning and in the evening, and offer it to his teacher. If permitted, he should partake of the food, if not (as a test or a punishment or as occasionally required on days of observing fast), he should fast.

6. He should be of a good character, moderate in eating, alert and prompt (in work), of reverential faith in *Śāstras* and self-controlled. It is only when absolutely necessary and to that much extent only (e. g. getting alms) that he should deal

1. According to Śāstras, a Brāmaṇa pupil should carry a staff of *Palāśa* tree, a Kṣattriya of a *Bilva* tree and a Vaiśya of the *Audumbara* (Indian fig) tree.

with women or with those who are influenced (lit. enslaved) by women.

7. A person other than a householder, who has taken the great vow of celibacy, should avoid all talk with young women. For the senses are (by nature) so powerful and violent that they carry away the mind of even a recluse (*Yati* who is expected to be perfectly self-controlled).

8. A youthful Brahmacārin (student) should not allow a personal service, e. g. combing his hair, massaging, bathing and anointing his person, done by women from his teacher's family, especially if they are young.

9. For verily a young woman is (like) a fire and a man like pot containing clarified butter. One should avoid (the company of) one's daughter in a secluded place, and at other times he should remain with her so long as the work or duty demands it (even in public places).

10* So long as by self-realization one has not firmly determined that his body, senses or the universe etc. are illusory

*VR (I): (So long as Iśvara keeps this body (which is the illusion of the Soul) capable of doing work, the notion of duality (viz. one is a god or a man or a Brāhmaṇa) is found to persist and leads to illusions, he should not give up the duties laid down in *Śāstras*.

Or

(II) Even though one realizes that his Self is distinct from his body, he, so long as he persists to live in his body, should not give up the duties prescribed for him in the *Śāstras* so long as he is able to discharge them.

VJ. states that the world is real and so long as God keeps the *jīva* in a worldly knowledge which is unreal and not true, the perverse notions shall persist and bondage of the world due to ignorance shall continue.

VC.: What danger is there to self-controlled man who has abandoned the company of relatives? (The reply:) Even though one has renounced worldly objects, so long as one has not completely wiped out one's affinity to them from the mind, the notion of duality shall not cease to persist.

GD.: Even though a man is an *aṁśa* (a part) of the blissful Lord, he experiences the contrarity viz. miseries of hell etc.

BP.: So long as the notion of duality persists one should not give up the duties laid down in the *Śāstras*.

and the *jīva* has not attained perfect mastery over himself by identifying himself with the Supreme Lord, the notion of duality (between a man and woman) will continue to persist (provoking thereby the desire to enjoy) through false attribution of *guṇas*.

11. All these (instructions contained from verses 6 to 10) are laid down for the householder, and much more so, even in the case of Saṁnyāsin (a recluse). A householder who is expected to be with his wife at particular period of time, may optionally stay with his preceptor.

12. Those who have taken the vow of Brahmcharya (celibacy)should avoid the use of collyrium, unguents, massage of the body, dealings with women, painting or viewing pictures of women, meat, spirituous liquor (in the case of those who are permitted to drink, honey in the case of Brāhmaṇas), garlands. sandal pigment and ornaments.

13. In this way, having stayed in the preceptor's house, a *dvija* (a twice-born-Ārya) should study and understand to the best of his ability and to the extent of his requirements, the meaning of three Vedas (Ṛk, Sāman and Yajus), along with their (six) auxiliaries[1] and the *Upaniṣads* (Vedānta, philosophical treatises).

14. Having presented, if at all he can afford to do so, with what is desired by his preceptor (as "fee for the course") and having obtained his permission, he (the student) should enter the householder's life, or retire to the forest (for performing penance etc.), or renounce the world to wander as a *Yati* (recluse), or stay with his preceptor (as a lifelong Brahmacārin).

15. He should look upon (conceive) Lord Viṣṇu as if having entered into the fire, the preceptor, himself and the elements (e. g. the earth, the fire) together with all creatures sheltered in Him; for He is their Inner Controller, even though

1. These are intended as aids for the correct pronunciation, and interpretation of the Vedic texts and the correct applications of the *Mantras* in the religious rites. The *aṅgas* are six in number, viz. 1. *Śikṣā*—'Phonetics, the science of proper articulation and pronunciation. 2. *Kalpa* (application) ritual or ceremonial, 3. *Vyākaraṇa* 'Grammar' 4. *Nirukta* 'Etymological explanation of difficult Vedic words'. 5. *Chandas*—'Science of prosody', 6. *Jyotiṣa*—astronomy.

the Lord (having already pervaded these from within and without) does not actually enter.

16. A person belonging to the order of Brahmacharya, Vānaprastha (an anchorite), a saṁnyāsin (a recluse) or a householder who contemplates thus (the omnipresence of the Lord), and follows the course of duties ordained for his particular *āśrama* (stage of life), realizes what is required to be known, and attains to the Supreme Brahman.

17. I shall now explain to you the code of conduct approved by the sages and prescribed for Vānaprasthas (anchorites), by observing which, a sage easily attains Maharloka, the heaven of sages.

18. An anchorite should not eat the product of cultivation (e.g. rice, wheat) or anything (like fruits, roots etc.), which though not a product of tillage, ripened before time. He should not partake of food cooked on fire. He should subsist on what is ripe or cooked by rays of the Sun.

19. He should prepare *caru*[1] and *puroḍāśa*[2] of corn wild growth (Nīvāra) and of a permanent nature. When he procures new and fresh eatables, he should reject the old ones (stored by him).

20. It is just for the preservation of the (sacred) fire that he should take shelter in a house or cottage or a cave in mountains. He himself should bear exposure to snow, wind, fire, rain and heat of the Sun.

21-22. The anchorite with matted hair (on the head) should wear (without shaving) the hair on his body, moustaches, beard and nails and dirt (not properly washed). He should take with him *kamaṇḍalu* (a pot of water), deer-skin, staff, bark-garments and utensils of fire worship. The sage should thus wander in the forest for twelve, eight, four, two or one year, i. e. to that length of time which the mind does not get perverted through the (severity of) austerities.

1. *caru*—An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to the gods and the manis. *ASD*. p. 204.

2. *purodāśa*—Boiled rice rounded into a cake and usually divided into parts which are kept in separate receptacles for offering to different deities.

23. If (after the period of stay in the forest) he finds that, owing to ill health (diseases) or old age, he is incapable of pursuing his courses of duties (as a Vānaprastha) or prosecuting his studies in philosophy, he should adopt the vow of fasting etc. (If he is capable, he should become a *saṁnyāsin*—a recluse).

24. (Before beginning the fast) he should withdraw and deposit the sacred fires (e. g. *āhavanīya* and others) within his Self. He should renounce the notions of 'I' and 'Mine', and should merge the constituents of his body in their own causes (viz. the sky, the air and other three elements).

25. A self-controlled man should merge the cavities in his body (e. g. eyes, ears, nostrils) into the sky (the element-the *mahābhūta* called *ākāśa*), his exhalations (vital-breaths) into the air, the temperature of his body into the fire, (fluids like) blood, phlegm and pus into the water and the rest (hard substances like bones, muscles etc.) into the earth--thus assigning them each to its respective origin. (Thus he should merge his gross body).

26. He should consign his speech along with the organ of speech to the Fire, even his hands and handicraft to Indra, his feet along with (the power of) locomotion to Viṣṇu, the organ of pleasure (along with the power of procreation) to Prajāpati (deity presiding over procreation).

27. (He should merge) the organ of defecation and act of excretion in Mṛtyu (the god of death) directing these organs to their proper places (viz. the deities presiding over those particular organs); his auditory sense along with (its object), sound into (deities presiding over) cardinal points; and his tactual organ along with its tactility to the *ātman* or wind-god).

28. Oh King, he should deposit his eyes (eye-sight) and the colours and forms (the objects of the eye) with the Sun-god, the tongue or its objects of taste such as sweet, bitter etc. in water (or god Varuṇa), and the olifactory sense along with its objects i. e. various smells, with the Earth.

29. He should merge his mind along with its desires and objects in the Moon-god, the intelligence and the objects to be grasped by it in the highest god Brahmā. He should

consign actions with self-consciousness to god Rudra through whose instrumentality the activities actuated by the notions of 'I-ness' and 'Mine-ness' proceed. He should merge his chitta (reason, heart) along with *Sattva* in *Kṣetrajña* (Hiraṇya-garbha) and *Vaikārika ahaṁkāra* along with *guṇas* in the Supreme Brahman).

30. He should then dissolve the earth into water, absorb water into fire, fire into the air and the air into the ether. The ether or *Ākāśa* is to be merged into the principle called ego (*aham*), and that into *Mahat* (the principle of cosmic Intelligence), and that into the unmanifested *Prakṛti* and that unmanifest *Pradhāna* into *Paramātman* (the Supreme Soul).

31. Having thus realized the Soul as identical with Paramātman, and nothing but indestructible consciousness and becoming free from the notion of duality[1], he should cease to function like fire that has consumed its own source (fuel).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Code of Conduct for Saṁnyāsins
and a dialogue between Avadhūta and Prahlāda

Nārada continued :

1. If a person is thus capable and fit (physically and mentally), he should take to the life of a vagrant recluse. Owning nothing else except his body, he should observe the rule of staying one night in a village, and thus wander over the earth, being totally desireless.

2. If at all he is to wear a piece of cloth, it should be a strip of cloth just sufficient to cover his private parts. Uuless there is some serious danger, he should not take anything which has been renounced except the staff and other emblems (e. g.kamaṇḍalu-water-pot) characteristic of a *saṁnyāsin.*

1. *advaya*—with the faith that there is no independent absolute thing other than Hari.

3. Delighted in his own Self and seeking no shelter, he should wander all alone as a mendicant subsisting on alms. He should be friendly to all beings, serene and devoted exclusively to Nārāyaṇa.

4* He should visualize this universe in the immutable *ātman* (Self) who is beyond (and distinct from) cause and effect and should perceive the Self as the Supreme Brahman present everywhere in the universe, (a product) of causes and consequences.

5. During the mediate state between sleep and wakefulness, one should concentrate on the soul within, and should try to perceive the true nature of the Self. He should look upon bondage and emancipation as merely illusory and not real.

6. He should welcome neither death, which is inevitable, nor life that is transitory. But he should simply wait for the Time which brings about the birth and death of beings (and that of one's body as well.

7. He should not be attached to *Śāstras* dealing with topics other than *ātman*. Nor should he try to maintain himself by following any profession (like astrology, medicine practised by him as a *gṛhastha*). He should avoid all form of disputation. He should not persistently adhere to any party.

8. He should not attract students. Nor should he study numerous books[1] (lest they should cause confusion or distraction). He should not undertake the exposition of some sacred text[2]. Nor should he take up the establishment of any institution or monastery.

9. The duties etc. prescribed for the order of recluses (*saṁnyāsins*) are not meant for securing religious merit in the case of the noble-souled ones (*Paramahaṁsas*) who are of serene and equable minds (The rules are to be observed till the recluse realizes the highest wisdom). Thereafter he may

* VR. asserts the Viśiṣṭādvaita position: *Paramātman* is distinct from the Sentient (*Cid*) and the Non-Sentient (*Acid*). By nature he is free from modifications. He (the recluse) should look upon the universe as the inseparable body of Paramātman Who is the Inner Controller.

1. Books not dealing with Vedānta.
2. Texts other than those on Vedānta—VD.

continue to practise the rules (for setting up an ideal life before the public) or discard them.

10. One whose external signs of being a recluse are not evident but continues his purpose (i. e. concentration with the Self), may, though learned, show himself (i. e. behave externally like) a mad person or an ignorant child; though highly intelligent and wise, he should appear to be dumb in the eyes of the public.

11. On this point an old historical (-cum-legendary) account has been traditionally handed down as an illustration. It is the conversation between Prahlāda and a sage Dattātreya[1] observing the *Ajagara*[2] mode of life.

12-13. While Prahlāda, the beloved (devotee) of the Lord, accompanied by a few ministers, was touring through various worlds with a view to acquaint himself with the true nature of the people, he happened to see on the top of the Sahyādri (Western *ghats*) on the bank of the Kāverī, some person lying on bare ground, his pure effulgence being concealed under a coat of dust covering all the part of his body.

14. By his actions, appearances, words of external emblems indicative of his caste (*varṇa*) and stage in life (*āśrama*), people could not recognize him who or what he was and what he was not.

15. Having bowed the sage by touching his feet with his head and having worshipped him with due formalities, the Asura, (himself) a prominent votary of the Lord, who was curious to know (the truth about) him, (the sage) asked him the following question.

16. "You have a robust body like an industrious person who enjoys a luxurious life. Wealth accrues to persons

1. Vide Supra 1.3.11. The Lord incarnated as Datta, the son of Atri and Anasūyā, and taught spiritual lore to king Alarka and Prahlāda.

2. *Ajagara* is a python which is supposed to swallow what comes its way, without making any move on its part. As described in the illustration of Dattātreya below, a person who has adopted the vow of leading Python's way of life, has just to lie on the bare ground under the sky waiting for his death without making any movement—throwing his body at the mercy of the fate. His object is to enjoy all the fruits of his *karmas* then and there before falling away of his body.

who are industrious and comforts and luxuries can be afforded by moneyed people. Indeed only the bodies of those who are given to luxurious life become corpulent and not otherwise.

17. Lying supine without doing any work as you do, Oh Brahman, you obviously possess no wealth which is the source of enjoyment (of a luxurious life). If you think proper (to disclose), please tell us how your body is corpulent despite your non-indulgence in luxuries and lack of comforts.

18. Learned, capable, clever, possessing wonderfully sweet power of speech and of equable temper as you are, how is it that you lie down (doing nothing) simply looking on that other people are exerting themselves."

Nārada said :

19. Being thus questioned by Prahlāda, the king of Daityas, the great sage, being magnetized by his nectarlike speech, smilingly spoke to him.

The Brāhmaṇa said :

20. Oh foremost of Asuras ! Your honour is esteemed by all great and learned people. By your spiritual insight you certainly know this, viz. the consequences of activity for (obtaining) worldly objects and of renouncing them.

21. Due to your absolute and pure devotion, the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa always abides in your heart. He dispels your ignorance like unto the Sun dispersing darkness.

22. We (I) however, shall (try to) answer your questions according to what I have traditionally learnt (about them). For you deserve respect from those who desire to purify their hearts.

23. Being (induced) to do various actions by powerful desire which is never satiated by enjoyment of suitable objects, and thus becomes the source of the stream of births (and deaths), I was forced to take birth in various species.

24. While wandering (through various types of existence) by force of *karmas*, and through sheer providence, I was brought to the human form of existence which is a gate-way to heaven or final emancipation or to sub-human life or to human life again.

25. Having observed the frustrations and failures of married couples while performing actions for securing happiness and avoiding pain in this life as well, I retired from worldly-activities.

26. Happiness is the essential nature of the Soul[1]. It is manifested after withdrawal and cessation of all activities. Having perceived that enjoyments and experiences are fanciful creations of the mind I lie down (supine enjoying whatever is ordained for me by destiny).

27. Having forgotten that this blissful nature is inherent in one's self, a man is verily enmeshed into *saṁsāra* which is terrible (owing to birth, death and other miseries) and strange (as it consists of birth in celestial, subhuman, human and other-species).

28. He who (being ignorant of his innate blissful state) thinks of finding his object (happiness) elsewhere (outside his Self), is like an ignorant fellow who with a desire to get water (to quench his thirst) leaves water (near him but) covered with acquatic weeds and other overgrowth and runs after the mirage.

29. The body and sense-organs are controlled by Destiny. All the actions and efforts repeatedly done through their instrumentality for securing his happiness and removing his miseries by a luckless person, become fruitlesss.

30. (Granting that a man's efforts are successful) what pleasure can be derived from the hard-earned wealth and desired objects obtained with great difficulty to a mortal (obsessed with the fear of death) and plagued by (lit. not immune from) three types of miseries such as bodily ailments and others.

31. I perceive the agonies and tensions of wealthy covetous persons who have no control over themselves, and who have lost their sleep, out of fear, as they are suspicious of everybody on all sides.

32. I observe that those who are anxious about their life and wealth, entertain fear from kings, robbers, enemies, their

1. VJ. thinks that the grace of the Lord is necessary for the realization of His bliss.

kinsmen, birds and beasts, beggers, Time and themselves, at every moment.

33. (Therefore) a wise man should give up longings for life and property which are the source of sorrow, infatuation, fear, anger, attachment, despondency, over-exertions and such other (troubles).

34. In this world the bee and the big python are our best teachers, for following their example we have attained renunciation and contentment.

35. I have learnt renunciation of all worldly objects from the bee, the gatherer of honey, for any other person may kill the lord and usurp the hard-earned money like honey after killing the bees.

36. Being free from all desires and with contented mind, I accept what is brought to me by providence. If not, I lie inactive like a big serpent for many days, depending on my power.

37. Sometimes I eat scant food; sometimes I enjoy a heavy meal irrespective of the sweetness or otherwise of the food. Sometime I partake of highly rich and dainty dishes and sometimes worthless food.

38. At some places I eat food, that is offered to me with respect and sometimes with irreverence. Sometimes I do justice to food after eating; sometimes I eat food by day or by night as it is offered to me by chance.

39. Remaining contented in mind, I enjoy what is ordained by fate, and I wear linen garments or silks or deer-skin or rags or any other (fabric) that is offered to me.

40. Sometimes I sleep on the bare ground; sometimes on grass or on a heap of leaves or on a slab of stone or in ashes; sometimes I lie inside a mansion on a rich bed over a precious bedstead as desired by God (or other people).

41. Sometimes I take bath with my body anointed with fragrant pigments. I put on rich garments and wear garlands and ornaments. Sometimes I ride in a chariot or on an elephant or on a horse and sometimes I wander stark-naked like an evil spirit, Oh king.

42. I neither revile nor praise people who are of diverse

nature. I pray for their welfare and bless them with their union with the Almighty Lord Viṣṇu.

43. One should oblate (merge) one's notion of diversity in the mental faculty that perceives such differences, that mental faculty into mind which mistakes the unreal for the real, the mind into the *sāttvic ahaṁkāra* and should absorb that *ahaṁkāra* through *mahat* in the Māyā regularly.

44. The sage who perceives the Reality, should merge that Māyā into the realization of his soul. Being devoid of all desires, he should establish himself in self-realization and cease all activities.

45. In this way I have described to you my way of life which is closely guarded as a secret, though it is far different from secular and Śāstric canons of behaviour. (I have thus frankly explained this to you) as you are the beloved of God.

Nārada said :

46. Having heard the code of conduct of the highest order of recluses, the Lord of Asuras (Prahlāda) worshipped him respectfully. Being pleased in mind he bade good-bye, and returned home.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(The Duties of a householder)

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

1. Oh celestial sage, please explain to me that course of conduct by which a householder like me whose mind is clouded with attachment to house and property, will attain to the above state of emancipation (*mokṣa*) without difficulty.

Nārada said :

1-A (VRs' text adds) : Even though you know it, you have asked this question for the good of the world, Oh king.

I shall explain to you how the duties of a householder lead one to the state of actionlessness (or attainment of *Jñāna-yoga*.

2. Staying in the household and performing duties (such as *sandhyā*, worship and five *mahā-yajñas*) laid down for a householder as direct offering to Lord Vāsudeva (without expecting any return for it), one should wait upon great sages in order to learn truth.

3. Devoutly listening to the nectar-like sweet stories of the incarnations of Viṣṇu during the leisure time after performance of duties he should constantly be associated with (lit. surrounded by) persons who are tranquil by nature.

4. Through companionship with saintly people, he should gradually release himself from attachment to himself, his wife, his sons etc. which are in the process of being separated from him, and should rise above them like a person awakened from a dream (does in the case of objects seen in the dream).

5. A wise man should be disinterested in and dispassionate to his body and house, but should attend to it to the extent to which it is indispensable. Simulating attachment to them, a man should transcend his status as an ordinary human being and be a recluse. *Or* (carry out his duties in life).

6. Being free from attachment to himself and his property, he should acquiesce in what his kinsmen, parents, sons, brothers and other well-wishers propose and desire.

7. A wise man should carry out his duties while enjoying what he gets from the heaven (e. g. crops due to rain fall), from mines (e. g. gold, precious stones etc.) and what he gets accidentally by wind fall, as all wealth is created by god Viṣṇu (and is obtained through his grace).

8. Embodied beings can lay claim to that much wealth as is just necessary for filling his belly. He who lays claims on the surplus is a thief and deserves punishment.

9. One should look upon beasts, camels, donkeys, monkeys, rats, serpents, birds and flies like one's own sons (and hence these should not be driven out of the house or fields if they enter and begin to eat), for there is very little difference between them and his sons.

10. Even though a man be a householder, he should not put in extraordinary trouble for getting the three *puruṣārthas*. He should enjoy what is afforded to him by providence according to its place and time.

11. He should duly share his objects of enjoyment with all down to dogs, sinners and people belonging to the lowest strata of the society (lit. who dwell at the end of a village). He should allow his wife whom he ardently claims as his own, to receive guests (unmindful of his inconvenience. ŚR warns that this should not be misconstrued).

12. He who can forego his claim on his wife for whose sake he should lay down his life or would kill his father or preceptor (if he suspects them about their contacts with her) has conquered (secured the grace of) the unconquerable Lord Viṣṇu.

13. How despicable is the body that is convertible into worms (if buried), excretion (if eaten up by carnivorous animals) or ashes (if cremated) ! Equally despicable is (the body of) a wife which contributes to its erotic pleasures ! How great is the Soul which pervades the whole of the sky !

14. A wise person should maintain his livelihood by food, after offering oblations to the deities in five *mahā-yajñas* and should relinquish the notion of his claim of what remains as surplus. Thus he would attain to the position of *paramahaṁsas*.

15. A man should worship the *antaryāmin* (the Inner Controller) daily by sharing what he has obtained in his own vocation, with gods, sages, human beings, other living beings, *pitṛs* and his own self.

16. If he possesses all the required materials as well as the requisite qualifications for performing sacrifices, he should worship the Lord according to the procedure laid down in the Śrauta and Kalpa Sūtras.

17. But verily, this Venerable Lord, the Enjoyer of Sacrifice is not propitiated to that extent by oblation offered through the (sacrificial) fire as through (morsels of food offered to Him) through the mouths of Brāhmaṇas, Oh King.

18. One should, therefore, worship this Inner Controller (God) through the Brāhmaṇas, gods presiding over five *Mahā-yajñas* as also through mortals like human beings and

other creatures, by offering them objects of enjoyment, according to their respective order, after (feeding) the Brāhmaṇas.

19. If sufficiently rich, a twice-born person (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) should perform according to his means, the *Śrāddha*, i. e. *Mahālaya* in honour of his (departed) parents as well as their kinsmen and others, in the dark half of Bhādrapada.

20-23. He should (also) perform their *Śrāddha* at the time of the summer and winter solstices (*ayanas*), and the vernal and autumnal equinoxes (*viṣuva*), during the division of time called Vyatipāta; on the day when a *tithi* i.e. the lunar day begins and ends between two sun-rises (technically known as *dinakṣaya*); during the lunar and solar eclipses; on the twelfth lunar day, and when the constellations known as Śravaṇa, Dhaniṣṭhā and Śata-tārakā are on the ascendance; on the third day in the bright half of Vaiśākha (i. e. on *Akṣaya tṛtiyā*); on the ninth lunar day in the bright half of Kārttika (known as *Akṣaya-navamī*); on the four *Aṣṭakas* (eighth lunar day in the dark halves) during the seasons called *Hemanta* and *Śiśira* (i.e. on the eighth day in the dark half of the months of Mārgaśīrṣa, Pauṣa, Māgha and Phālguna); on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha; on the fullmoon day when the constellation Maghā is ascendant (which is in the month of Māgha) on days when the constellations associated with the names of other (lunar) months are ascendant on a full moon day, or even when the moon rises one digit less than the full on that day; on any twelfth lunar day when the constellations Anurādhā, Śravaṇa and the three constellations beginning with the word Uttarā (viz. Uttarāṣāḍhā, Uttarā Bhādrapadā and Uttarā Phālgunī) are ascendant; or when the eleventh lunar day (of any month) is associated with (any of) these three constellations; (and lastly) on any day when the constellation under which a person was born or the constellation called Śravaṇa is ascendant.

24. These are very auspicious times which are conducive to the attainment of prosperity to men on these days. On these days a person should, by every means, try to perform pious acts to the best of his abilities. Thus his merits become most effectual and contribute to his longevity.

25. On these days, performance of ablutions, muttering prayer or *mantra* (*Japa*), oblations to fire, observance of a sacred vow, worship of gods and Brāhmaṇas and gifts donated in the names of manes, gods, men and creatures bear everlasting fruit.

26. Oh King, *Śrāddhas* should be performed when it is the time of the purificatory rites observed in the behalf of himself, his wife or children; as well as at the time of the cremation of a dead body or on the death anniversary of a person; and at the time of any other function like marriage.

27. Now I shall narrate to you the (holy) places which enhance religious merits and other good. That is the most sacred place where a worthy and virtuous recipient is found.

28. For he (such worthy recipient) is the very image of the Almighty Lord in whom abides the whole creation—mobile and immobile. That is the hallowed spot where Brāhmaṇas characterised by penance, knowledge and kindness dwell.

29. All the places where the image of Hari or Śāligrāma is found (or wherever the worship of Lord Hari is being done) that place is the abode of blessings; and the regions through which rivers like the Gaṅgā and others celebrated in Purāṇas flow.

30. And lakes like Puṣkara and others are situated; and places inhabited by venerable sages and spots known as Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Prayāga (the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā) the hermitage of Pulaha known as Śālagrāma Kṣetra.

31. Forest like Naimiṣa (modern Nimsar) Kanyātīrtha (Cape Comerin), the holy bridge built by Rāma at Rāmeśvara, Prabhāsa, and Dvārakā, Vārāṇasī, Mathurā, the lake Pampā and Bindusara where stood the hermitage of Kardama the father of Kapila.

32. The Hermitage of Nārāyaṇa (Badarikāśrama), the Alakanandā, Citrakūṭa where stood the hermitage of Rāma and Sītā and such other places; all principal mountain ranges such as Mahendra (Eastern Ghāṭs), Malaya (Western Ghāṭs) and others, Oh King.

33. Those are the sacred-most spots where the idols of Hari are installed. He who is desirous of blessings, should constantly sojourn at these places. Righteous duties per-

formed here yield fruits thousand times more than what accrues at other places.

34. The foremost judges of worthy recipients and wise people have decided that in this world Hari and Lord Hari alone is the only worthy recipient. Oh Lord of the earth, everything mobile and immobile is constituted of him.

35. Accordingly, Oh King, even though gods, sages, worthy persons, such as the sons of god Brahmā and others were present at your Rājasūya sacrifice, Lord Kṛṣṇa was conclusively selected as deserving the first place in the adoration at the sacrifice, owing to his worthiness.

36. The great tree in the form of the universe (Brahmāṇḍa) is crowded with multitudes of *jīvas* and is very extensive, but Acyuta, being the root of that tree, Hari's worship brings gratification to all the *jīvas* and to one's own soul.

37. The dwellings (bodies) in the form of those of men, sub-human beings, sages and gods have been created by him. He dwells in these bodies in the form of *jīva* and hence he is called Puruṣa (the Dweller of habitations or Inner Controller).

38. In these bodies, the Lord is present (i. e. manifests himself) in different degrees (of intelligence, wisdom etc.). Hence, even though every man is a worthy recipient, he is proportionately so according to the manifestation of the Soul (i. e. spiritual wisdom, penance etc.) in him.

39. Oh King, wise sages took into account the mutual hatred, disregard among men in the Tretā and other ages, and have therefore instituted Hari's idols for worship, and other religious duties.

40. Some persons with perfect devotion in the worship of Hari propitiate him thereby, but to some the worship of Hari, even though performed, is not fruitful as they hate the Lord in the form of his creation.

41. Oh Lord of Kings, even amongst men Brāhmaṇa is regarded as the really worthy recipient as he bears in him the body of Hari, viz. the Vedas, along with the virtues of penance, learning and contentment.

42. Oh King, the Brāhmaṇas who purify the three worlds by the dust of their feet form really the Supreme Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the Soul of the universe.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Exposition of right Conduct (Concluded).

Nārada said :

1. Some Brāhmaṇas (*gṛhasthas*) are devoted to rituals prescribed for their particular *āshrama*, some (*vānaprasthas*), are bent on performing austere penance, others (*brahmacārins*) to the study of the Vedas, some to the teaching and exposition of the Vedas, while some to spiritual enlightenment, (as in the case of *saṁnyāsins*) and some to perfection in *Yoga*.

2. A person desirous of attaining eternally lasting merit should offer the gifts of food etc. intended for manes—(*pitṛs*) and those meant for gods, to persons who are solely devoted to spiritual knowledge, and in their absence to others according to their merits.

3. One should feed two Brāhmaṇas in rites connected with gods, three for ceremonies (*Śrāddha*) intended for (*pitṛs*) or may feed one only in each. Even though a person is very affluent, he should not invite a large number.

4. If invitations are given on a large scale, and food etc. is distributed among relatives, conditions regarding proper place, time, piety, devotion, proper materials, worthy recipients etc. are not properly observed.

5. When proper time and place offers itself, food proper for sages and offered to god Hari, if given with proper formalities and devotion to a worthy person, yields desired objects and everlasting fruit.

6. While distributing food to gods, sages, *pitṛs*, beings and one's relatives, one should look upon these all as identical with the Supreme Person.

7. A person who knows the essence of *dharma* should not give (serve) flesh (non-vegetarian food), nor should eat it at the time of *Śrāddha*, for there is no real gratification in slaughter of animals (flesh); for there is supreme satisfaction with the type of food proper for sages.

8. For those persons who desire to follow the right course of conduct, there is no supreme *dharma* other than

abstinence from violence to living beings caused by thought, word and deed.

9. Some persons who are well-versed in sacrificial lore and who have spiritual wisdom, become desireless and offer the ritualistic sacrifices requiring external actions, into the fire of self-control kindled by spiritual knowledge.

10. Living beings become apprehensive on seeing a person who performs sacrifices with gross materials. (They say) "This cruel man, not grasping the spirit of the rules prescribed for *Yajñas*, and thirsting after my life, will surely kill me".

11. Therefore, a person knowing the real path of righteousness should be satisfied with the hermit's fare providentially obtained by him, and should every day carry on the prescribed daily and occasional duties.

12. A man versed in righteousness should steer clear of the five forms (branches) of *adharma* (impiety), viz. *vidharma, paradharma, ābhāsa, upamā, chala*, regarding them all as *adharma* (impiety).

13. *Vidharma* is that which, though practised as a *dharma*, obstructs real *dharma* (e.g. black-magic of the *tantras*). *Para dharma* is the course of conduct ordained for another (varṇa or *āśrama* (e.g. Fighting in the case of Brāhmaṇas). *Upadharma* is the heresy opposing the Vedas (e.g. path or duties prescribed in *āgama*) or hypocrisy, while *chala* is the distortion of the text showing apparent conformity to the letter of the scriptures or quibbling.

14. The course of conduct different from the duties (prescribed by Vedas for different *varṇas*—classes in society—and *āśramas*—stages in life) but adopted according to one's fancy (e.g. the *avadhūta* mode of life is (*dharma-*) *ābhāsa*. Who would regard *dharma* which is agreeable to his innate disposition, as not conducive to his (inner) peace and prosperity !

15. An indigent person should not try to earn money either for the sake of charitable donations etc. or for the maintenance of his life. Effortless state of one who ceases from activities becomes his means of subsistence, as in the case of the (proverbial) Python.

16. How can the happiness enjoyed by a self-contented person cherishing no desires and delighted in his own self, be obtained by a person who, actuated by passion and covetousness, runs in all directions in quest of wealth.

17. All directions are full of happiness to a man who is ever contented in his mind, just as the feet protected by shoes have complete safety against gravels, thorns and others.

18. With what will not a self-contented man pull on—say even with water? Due to beggarly yearnings for the pleasures of the sex and tongue, a man behaves like a dog.

19. The spiritual power, learning, (power accrued from) penance, and glory of a discontented Brāhmaṇa leak away (and are exhausted) and his spiritual knowledge is also dissipitated.

20. A person may cease to feel the sexual urge due to intensity of hunger and thirst (as these are much more powerful), he may see the end of anger when its fruit (revenge) is achieved. But he never sees the end of avarice even after conquering all the quarters and enjoying the sovereignty of the world.

21. There are a number of learned scholars of extensive knowledge, capable of dispelling the doubts of others and leaders of assemblies who have fallen down (into deep hell) through discontent.

22. One should overcome passion by foregoing the desire of love for it, anger by eschewing desire; greed, by looking upon wealth and worldly things as evil; and fear, by the perception of the truth (about the objects of fear).

23. (He should conquer) grief and delusion by realizing the distinction between the Self (*ātman*) and the non-self (*anātman*); hypocrisy, by association with the great; interruption to *Yoga* (mental concentration) by observing silence; and violence to other beings, by bodily inactivity (to secure merit, wealth etc.).

24. He should overcome troubles given by other beings by cherishing compassion (even towards the trouble-makers); and those caused by destiny or gods by equipoise and concentration of the mind; the ailments of the body by the force of

Yoga (*prāṇāyāma* and other *Yogic* expedients); and sleep by recourse to *sāttvic* food.

25. He should vanquish *rajas* and *tamas* by *sattva*, and *sattva* by complete withdrawal of attachment (and activity for it). A man can easily overpower all these above-mentioned through intense devotion to the spiritual preceptor.

26. The spiritual guide is verily the Venerable Lord Himself who imparts to a man the light of knowledge. But the spiritual knowledge or learning of a person who entertains the perverted notion that his preceptor is an ordinary mortal, is as useless as the bath of an elephant (which besmears itself with dust immediately after the bath).

27. For the spiritual preceptor whom people regard as merely a human being, is directly the Almighty God, the Supreme Ruler both of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (matter and the individual Soul) and His feet are sought after by masters of *Yoga*.

28. All the precepts ordained (for performance of sacrifices etc.) are intended for one purpose, viz. restraint of six passions (e.g, desire, anger and others or alternatively five senses and the mind). If they do not lead to the accomplishment of *Yoga* (viz. *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā* and *samādhi*) all the above is a source of sheer (fruitless) labour.

29. Just as the rewards and procurements of agriculture and other pursuits do not bear the fruits of *Yoga* (viz. Final Emancipation from *saṁsāra*), the performance of sacrifices and undertakings for public welfare (e. g. construction of tanks etc.) will lead to evil results in case of a person whose mind is attached to external objects (of worldly nature).

30. He who has resolved to subjugate his mind should dissociate himself from all attachments and belongings; he should become a recluse and live alone in secluded place, eating moderately what he gets as alms.

31. One should arrange his seat in a clean hallowed level place and seat himself in an erect, stable, comfortable posture, repeating silently the sacred syllable Om, Oh King.

32. With his gaze fixed on the tip of his nose one should control one's breath (*prāṇa* and *apāna*—inhalation and exhalation) by inhailing, suspending and exhaling his breath till his mind gives up desires.

33. A wise man should retrieve his ever-roving mind smitten with desires from whatever external object it goes and confine it into his heart.*

34. A recluse who strives to exercise such control day and night, finds in a short period that his mind attains quiescence like fire for lack of fuel.

35. When the mind, not agitated by desires and passions, and with its activities calmed down, is touched by the ecstasy of the realization of the Brahman, it never responds to external objects in *saṁsāra*.

36. If a recluse who has formerly renounced his house which is a nursery of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* (three objects of human life) again takes to the householder's life and enjoys them, the shameless fellow (is like a man who) is swallowing up his vomited food.

37. If those who have regarded their own body as distinct from Soul, mortal and reducible to excrement (if the body is eaten up by a carnivorous animal), worms (if interred in a grave), and ashes (if cremated on a pyre), highly extol it as if it is the *Ātman*, such persons are the vilest ones.

38-39. Avoidance of religious rites and duties in the case of *gṛhastha*, non-observance (of the vow of celibacy, studies etc.) in the case of a *brahmacārin*, residence in an inhabited locality in the case of ascetics performing penance, and lack of self-control in the case of recluses (*saṁnyāsins*)—all these are the accursed banes of their respective *āśramas* as these certainly reduce their *āśramas* to mockery. Out of compassion, one should neglect these fellows who are deluded by the illusive power (Māyā) of the Almighty God.

*

(1) *Śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthiram āsanam ātmanaḥ /*
nātyucchritaṁ nātinīcaṁ cailājinakuśottaram //

B.G. 6.11

(2) *Samaṁ kāya-śiro-grīvaṁ dhārayannacalaṁ sthiraḥ /*
samprekṣya nāsikāgraṁ svaṁ diśaścānavalokayan //

B.G. 6.13

(3) *Yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram /*
tas tato niyamyaitad ātmanyeva vaśaṁ nayet //

B.G. 6.26

40. If a person realizes his Self as Supreme Brahman, all the traces of attachment are shaken off from his mind by that spiritual knowledge. (It is not known) with what ulterior motive or for whom does this addict to worldly pleasures nourishes his body.

41. The wise say that this body is a chariot, the senses are the horses, mind, the controller of senses[1], is the reins, the objects of senses are the paths, intellect (reasoning faculty) is the charioteer, and the heart (power is the all-embracing cordage created by God.

42. The ten vital breaths[2] from the axis, *Dharma* and *Adharma* its two wheels, the Soul who identifies himself with the body due to Ego (*ahaṁkāra*) is the owner (occupant) of the chariot. They say that the sacred syllable OM is the bow[3], the pure Self is the arrow and Paramātman (the Supreme Soul) is the target.

43-44. Love, hatred, greed, sorrow, infatuation, fear, pride, haughtiness, disgrace, jealousy, deceitfulness, violence, envy, passion, negligence, hunger, sleep—these and the like are the enemies to be vanquished. These are born of *rajas* and *tamas* and rarely from *sattva*. (At the time of concentration of the mind, the appearance of ideas of doing good is also a distraction and hence inimical.

45. While yet he continues to hold the chariot in the form of human body with all its constituent parts (the sense organs) under his control, he, deriving his strength from Lord Viṣṇu, and wielding the sword of spiritual knowledge sharpened through the service of the highly exalted Souls, should put an end to all the (aforesaid) enemies. Enjoying to his utmost satisfaction the highest bliss of the Self, he should attain (perfect) tranquillity and cast off this (body).

1. *ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ viddhi Śarīraṁ ratham eva tu /*
buddhiṁ tu sārathiṁ viddhi, manaḥ pragraham eva ca /
Indriyāṇi hayānāhur viṣayāṁś teṣu gocarān //
—*Kaṭha Upa.* 1.3.3-4

2. They are: Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Vyāna and Udāna, Nāga, Kūrma, Kṛkala, Devadatta and Dhanañjaya.

3. Cf. *Praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā—Muṇḍaka Upa.* 2.2.4.

46. Otherwise, these wicked horses in the form of senses and the (feeble) charioteer take the careless and unwary occupant astray to the path of *Pravṛtti* and land him among a band of robbers, viz., objects of sense-enjoyment. Those robbers hurl him among with the horses and the charioteer in the deep well of blinding darkness in the form of *saṁsāra* beset with the terrible fear of death.

47. Acts prescribed in the Vedas are of two kinds : *Pravṛtta* (leading to enjoyment of worldly life) and *Nivṛtta* (leading to spiritual life). By performance of *Pravṛtta karma* a person is born again in *saṁsāra*, while by *Nirvṛtta karma* he attains to immortality (*Mokṣa*).

48-49. Ritual (like *Śyena-yāga*) to destroy the enemies and sacrifices involving slaughter of animals, *Agnihotra* (maintenance of daily domestic sacrificial worship), *Darśa* (sacrifice to be performed on the New Moon day), *Paurṇimāsyā* (sacrifice on the Full Moon day), *Cāturmāsya* (a sacrifice to be performed at the beginning of a quarter—four monthly division—of the year), animal-sacrifice, Soma-sacrifice, *Vaiśvadeva* (oblations to the *Viśvadevas* offered before taking meals) and *Baliharaṇa* (symbolic offer of food to demigods, household divinities, men and other creature) are known as sacrificial acts; while construction of temples, gardens, tanks or wells and booths supplying water to men and animals, form (what is known as) *Pūrta* acts. Both of these (*iṣṭa* and *pūrta*) are included under *Pravṛtta karma.*

50-51. (The gradual ascension of the departed soul is marked by the subtle modifications of materials of his astral body *liṅga śarīra* which is supposed to be escorted by the deities presiding over), the smoke, the night, the dark half of the month, the *dakṣiṇāyana* (representing the Sun's apparent movement to the South of equator), the orb of the Moon. (After enjoying the fruit of his action, the path of descent of that *jīva* is through) the New Moonday, annual plants and creepers, food grains and the semen (resulting thereby)—this is the *path of Pitṛs* which leads to birth again. Having gone through these stages one by one, a *jīva* is born again in this world[1].

1. The belief in the journey of the Soul by the Path of *Pitṛs* (*pitṛ*.

52. A twice-born person (viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) who is consecrated with the sixteen purificatory rites from *garbhādhāna* to the funeral obsequies, oblates all his activities as sacrifice into his five cognitive senses kindled by the light of spiritual wisdom.

53. He offers (i.e. merges) the senses into the mind or the thinking faculty full of thoughts, the mind born of *Vāikārika* (*sāttvic*) *ahaṁkāra* into the Speech; the speech into the body of articulate sounds (which go to form Speech), and that collection of sounds into *Praṇava OM*; he should merge that into *Bindu*, the *Bindu* into *Nāda*, the *Nāda* into *Prāṇa* (vital breath) and *Prāṇa* in the Supreme (*Brahman*).

54-55. The path wherein the progress is watched by deities presiding over Fire, the Sun, the Day Time, the Evening (close of the day), the bright fortnight, the full Moon day, *Uttarāyaṇa* (the period when the Sun appears to move to the North of the equator), god Brahmā.[1] (Brahmā's region marks the highest point in the ascent of the departed Soul. After the termination of the person of enjoyment in the *Brahma loka* he proceeds to) *Viśvu* (when the Soul identifies himself with gross matter), *Taijasa* (wherein the Soul merges the gross into the subtle *upādhi*, and with his subtle *upādhi* is absorbed into Kāraṇa *upādhi* he becomes) *Prājña*, (after merging of *Kāraṇa upādhi* he becomes) the Turīya (when he is mere witness of all the states) —all these stages being absorbed into one he becomes Pure Self, i.e. is liberated. This path is known as the path of gods (*deva-yāna*). Going through these stages serially, this propitiator of the (Supreme) Self being established into the Supreme Self attains to perfect tranquillity and never returns (to *saṁsāra*)[2]

yāṇa) is very old. In fact the above verses echo *verbatim Chāndogya Upa.* 5.10. 3-6.

Also : *Dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ ṣaṇmāsā dākṣiṇāyanam /*
tatra Cāndramasaṁ jyotir Yogī prāpya nivartate //
—B.G. 8.25.

1. *agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam /*
tatra prayātā gacchanti Brahma Brahma-vido janāḥ //
—BG. 8.24.

2. VJ. states that every higher stage is more blessed than the former. When he ultimately attains to the Supreme Self, he becomes established in perfect bliss whence there is no return to *Saṁsāra.*

56. He who, through Śāstric point of view, distinctly and correctly understands these paths of *Pitṛs* and gods as created by the Vedas, does not get deluded[1] (and does not fall down to a lower stage in life), even though he still abides in this (physical) body.

57.* For, the knower of the path factually constitutes whatever exists before the creation and after the extinction of the body; he himself is whatever is outside the body (external world to be enjoyed) and inside the body (the enjoyer of the world), what is high and low, knowledge and the object of knowledge, the world and the object denoted by it, darkness as well as light.

58.** Just as a reflection, though logically disproved in everyway, is supposed to be something real, so objects which are cognised by senses are imagined to be really existent. But their objective reality is difficult to be proved.

59.*** (Here the unreality of the body is logically proved). This "shadow" (-like psycho-physical organism called

1. Is not attached to either of the paths—S.D.

* VR. : Before the creation and after the destruction of the universe in and out of the living beings during the tenure of the universe whatever exists high or low, consciousness (Jīva) and the insentient things to be known, the word and the thing described darkness (*Mūla Prakṛti*) and light (*Samaṣṭi-jīva*)—these all are *Paramātman*.

** VR. interprets *ābhāsa* as (1) the visible physical body and (2) the body in the dream state and gives two explanations:

(1) The actual body though continues to be undestroyed does not deserve to be regarded as *Puruṣārtha*. So are the objects of senses, unworthy of pursuit as objects of human life (*Puruṣārtha*).

(2) Just as the body in the dream state disappears at the time of waking, so is the body in the waking state unreal as the eternal qualities of the Soul are not found therein.

B.P. and SD. seem to accept this interpretation.

VJ states the *dvaita* point of view as follows:

The body which is *pratibimba* is (as per *smṛti* texts) *Vastu* as the Supreme Self, abides in it. The body and other objects have a real existence as god and nobody else can create them.

*** VR. : The shadow of trees etc. which are products of the elements like the earth and other lements is neither their collection nor modification; it is neither apart from the tree nor connected with it but is impermanent (*anitya*); so is relation of the body and the *ātman*. The body is not the *ātman*.

VJ. interprets *chāyā* as an aspect of state. He explains, "As none else but god has created everything in this universe it is real; for the *bhūtas* are neither a collection, compound or the modification of other *bhūtas* e.g. the earth or water etc.

body which is regarded as a combination of five elements such as the earth and others) is nothing of (unrelated to) the earth and other elements; for it is neither a collection or a mixture nor a compound or modification. It is neither of them separately or conjointly. Hence, it is unreal.

60. (He now shows that the constituents making up the body are unreal). The ingredients or "the roots" of the body, viz. the five gross elements being themselves composed of components, cannot exist apart from their subtle forms (*tanmātras*) which form their components. And when the whole i.e. combination of constituents) proves to be unreal, the parts (or constituents) *ipso facto* cease to be real.

61. Objection : In case the existence of an individual *avayavin* is denied, the identity of the same individual at different stages in life or periods of time cannot be recognized. The reply :

When there is no difference in Paramātman, it is through similarities between the successive appearances that the mistake in identification will take place while the influence of *avidyā* survives. The force of Śāstric injunctions and prohibition is similar to the distinction between wakefulness and sleep, both perceived during the dream-stage[1].

62* A contemplative sage who, through the realization of the Self comprehends the unity of *Bhāva*[2] (thought), *Kriyā*[2] (action) and *Dravya*[2] (materials) of the *ātman*, shakes off the three dreamy states, viz., wakefulness, dream and sleep.

63. Bhāvādvaita (non-duality of thought) is the comprehension of the essential one-ness of cause and effect like that in the thread and cloth (woven out of thread), their difference being unreal.

64. Oh Yudhiṣṭhira (son of Pṛthā Kuntī) ! The resignation of all acts performed through the instrumentality of

1. VR. : The injunctive and interdictory orders in the Śāstric texts may be binding till this body lasts, just as the distinction between the state of wakefulness and sleep in dreams lasts till the dream continues.

2. The terms are defined in the following verses.

* VJ. : A sage who comprehends the meaning of *Śāstras* knows the identity (*advaita*) in *Bhāva*, *Kriyā* and *Dravya*.

thought, words and deeds directly to the Supreme Brahman himself, is the *Kriyādvaita* (non-duality of action).

65. The *Dravyādvaita* (non-duality of substances) is the realization of *artha* and *kāma* (wealth, property and desire) of one's own self and his wife, children as well as all other embodied beings.

66. Except in the case of calamity (i.e. normally) one should perform one's duties with the materials the acquisition of which is permitted by whatever means, from whatever source and at whatever time and place, (to the man's class and stage in society).

67. Oh King! He who abides by these and other duties prescribed for him in the Vedas and is deeply devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa, attains to the Lord's realm (or state of god-hood) even though he be staying at home.

68. Oh King of kings! Just as you (and your brothers) tided over a series of unsurmountable difficulties by the grace of the Lord and have performed sacrifices after conquering the guardian-elephants of all quarters, so you may cross over this *saṁsāra* through the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the saviour of all.

69. In the previous Mahākalpa, I was born as a Gandharva named Upabarhaṇa and was highly respected among the Gandharvas.

70. Being an amiable person with beautiful appearance, comeliness, sweet in speech and fragrance, I was a favourite with women. I was always intoxicated and extremely lascivious.

71. Once upon a time, in a sacrifice performed by gods Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and Apsaras (heavenly damsels) were invited by the Prajāpatis (Lords of creations) to chant verses in honour of Lord Hari.

72. On coming to know of that invitation, I, in the company of women, went there (drunk) singing (profane songs). Being informed of my contemptuous conduct the creators of the universe cursed with their ascetic power: "Being bereft of your glory, do you be born instantly as a Śūdra, as you have behaved disrespectfully."

73. At first I was born of a female-servant. Even in that birth through my reverential service to and association

with sages who had realised Brahman, I became (lit. attained the status of being) Brahmā's son.

74. The righteous course of conduct prescribed for house-holders and which is capable of destroying sins, has been described to you in details. Following this course, a house-holder easily attains to the goal of a *saṁnyāsin*, viz. *Mokṣa* (Liberation).

75. In this world you are certainly highly fortunate inasmuch as sages who sanctify the world come to your house where the Supreme Brahman disguised in a human form resides (with you).

76. This (Lord Kṛṣṇa) is verily the Supreme Brahman who is the embodiment of the realization of the ecstatic bliss of eternal emancipation which is sought after by great sages. This venerable Lord is your beloved friend, maternal cousin, your most adorable preceptor, your (very) Soul, and the executor of your commands.

77. May this Lord of Sātvatas (Lord Kṛṣṇa) be propitious unto us—Lord Kṛṣṇa whose essential form (nature) could not be adequately (comprehended and) described with their intellectual faculties even by great gods like Śiva, Brahmā and others, and who is worshipped by us in silence, devotion and tranquillity.

Śrī Śuka said :

78. Hearing the above discourse of the divine sage Nārada, the foremost one of Bharatas (Yudhiṣṭhira) was highly delighted and overwhelmed with devotional love worshipped Kṛṣṇa.

79. The sage who was duly worshipped, took leave of Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira. Yudhiṣṭhira was highly amazed to learn that Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Brahman.

80. Thus the genealogy of the different dynasties of the daughters of Dakṣa have been severally described to you, and gods, Asuras, human beings and other mobile and immobile creation in the world are included in these (dynasties).

SKANDHA EIGHTH

CHAPTER ONE

Description of Manvantaras

The King (Parīkṣit) requested :

1. Here (in the 7th book) I have heard from you, in details, the history of the dynasty of Svāyambhuva Manu in which were born the progenitors of the universe like Marīci and others and their progeny. Now relate to us, Oh preceptor, the history of other Manus[1].

2. Oh Brahman ! Be pleased to relate to us who are (eagerly) listening, the history of all those Manu-epochs (wherein) wherever the incarnations and great exploits of Hari, the greatest of the great, are sung by the wise.

3. Do you also tell (in details), what Lord Hari, the creator and protector of the universe has accomplished in the past Manvantara, is doing in the present one, and will work in the Manu-epochs to come, Oh Brahman.

The sage (Śuka) replied :

4. In this current *Kalpa* (—Brahmā's day), six Manu-epochs beginning with Svāyambhuva have elapsed. Of these, the first Manvantara (Svāyambhuva) has been described to you, along with the creation of gods and other creatures, during this period.

5. The Lord incarnated as (Yajña) the son of (Svāyambhuva) Manu's daughter Ākūti to enlighten her in the righteous path and as (Kapila) the son of (the same) Manu's daughter Devahūti for imparting spiritual wisdom.

1. GS. adds :
v.l. the second half of this verse :
atra dharmās' ca vividhās' cāturvarṇyā'śritāḥ subhāḥ |
Here various courses of righteous and auspicious duties pertaining to four *varṇas* are described.

6. I have previously (in Skandha III) narrated to you the work done by venerable Kapila. I shall (now) relate to you, Oh Chief of Kurus, what the glorious Lord Yajña did.

7. Being indifferent and unattached to sensual enjoyment, and having abdicated his kingship, Lord Svāyambhuva Manu, the spouse of Śatarūpā, entered the forest, along with his queen, to practice penance.

8. Touching the ground with one foot (standing on one leg) for one hundred years, on the bank of the Sunandā, he practised terribly austere penance, Oh Bhārata, and chanted the following (prayer :).

*Manu said**

8A. With his vision uninterrupted, this Vāsudeva dwells in all bodies. He does not perceive the (evolution, continuance and dissolution of) universe with the help of another. He is the cause of the (sentient and nonsentient) universe. Hence his vision (and power of controlling from within).

9.** By him the universe is endowed with consciousness, but unto whom (none in) the universe (can) impart consciousness. He remains awake (as a witness) while the universe is in sleep (even during *Pralaya*). No creatures can know him but he knows all. (He is the *ātman*).

10.*** Whatever is animate (and inanimate) in this uni-

* The next verses are based ou Upaniṣadic texts and are known as *Mantropaniṣad.*

** It is the Sun which prompted by Hari gives light and heat to the universe, and from which, *tapas*, the root cause of all power becomes possible. Even the Sun does not know Lord Hari who remains awake while it (the Sun) sets. But Hari knows it fully—VJ.

*** (i) Everything sentient and insentient in the universe has been penetrated and controlled (from within) by the Supreme Soul who is its main support. Do not think that the re is anything absolutely independent of and existing separately from Him. Everything belongs to Him. Do not covet for anything as it depends (for its very existence) upon Him only.—VR.

(ii) The whole of the universe (beginning with the Sun) consisting of the created and yet-to-be-created mobile and immobile objects in the range of *Prakṛti*, is the abode of the Lord (who is their creator). Therefore,

verse,—the whole universe is pervaded by the Supreme Soul. Therefore you should make your living by whatever has been allotted to you by him (or what is given to you, after offering it to him[1]). Do not covet another person's riches.[2]

11. Resort to the self-illuminating Lord who is the abode (the Inner Controller) of all beings and yet unconcerned and aloof from them like Suparṇa (or the bird of beautiful wings, the symbol of *Ātman*, the companion of *jīva* in *Upaniṣads* like the Muṇḍaka 3.1.1), whom though he sees all, no eye (created being) can see (as he is beyond sense-perception), and whose vision (knowledge) never vanishes, (as he is knowledge incarnate).

12. The attributes like beginning, middle and the end cannot be predicated of him (being present in all), he has none that is his own or as belonging to another. (Being all-pervading) the distinction of 'in-ness' and 'out-ness' is not-applicable to him. All these stages (of creation, subsistence and destruction) are attributable to the universe which is his manifestation. Hence, he is the Reality, the supreme truth, the great Perfect Brahman.

13. He (the Supreme Being) has the universe as his body (or he contains the universe within himself at the time of the Deluge) He has innumerable designations. He is the Absolute Ruler, the Supreme Truth, self-effulgent, uncreated, eternal ancient Being. By his (Māyā) Potency, which is also uncreated, he brings about the creation (sustenance and destruction) of this (universe). By his eternal knowledge and wisdom, he sets aside Māyā and remains actionless (in his original state as *Brahman*).

14. (As the Lord initiates action e.g. creation of the universe etc. just to return to actionlessness) so the sages wish

Oh mind, be satisfied, maintain yourself with whatever has been given to you by Him. Do not covet for His omniscience and absolute blissfulness. Nor long for what the Lord has given to another person—VJ.

(iii) Everything in the universe is created by the Lord for His sport. Even if you possess abundant wealth, maintain yourself like a worker getting his wages after giving the 1st priority to His service (and that of His devotees). —VC.

1. Even the wealth in your house belongs to God—GS.

2. This is a *verbatim* reproduction of *Īśa Upa.* 1.

to undertake the religious duties with the object of attaining to actionlessness[1] or Liberation (*Mokṣa*). For, a person who performs actions (dedicating them to the Lord) generally attains to *Mokṣa* (lit. stage of actionlessness).

15. The Supreme Lord of glorious powers engages himself in acts, but is not attached to them, for through realization (of the blissful nature) of his Self, he has all his objects achieved. Hence, those who follow him do not come to grief.

16. I (Svāyambhuva Manu) take shelter in the Almighty Lord who (out of grace) engages himself in activities (such as creation etc. of the universe or follows the path of Veda in his incarnations as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc.) yet is absolutely free from egotism as he is full of wisdom. Being Perfect, he is above all cravings (for blessings etc). Being himself the Master, he is not impelled by others; he is yet steadfast in the path of action (according to the incarnation taken by him) as he has to set an example to people and he is the exponent of the path of righteousness

Śrī Śuka said :

17. Seeing him thus repeating the *Mantropaniṣad* (the mystical prayer based on *Upaniṣadic* texts) in meditation, Asuras and Rākṣasas fell upon him to devour him out of hunger.

18. The all-pervading Hari in the form of Yajña, seeing them determined to kill Manu, killed them with the help of gods known as Yāma (who were his sons), and ruled over the Heaven (as the Indra thereof).[2]

19. The second Manu was Svārociṣa, the son of Fire God. He had Dyumat, Suṣeṇa, Rociṣmat as his prominent sons.

1. v.l. *Karma-hantave* : for the destruction of *karmas*.

2. Bh.P. 12.7.15 mentions that each Manvantara is presided over by a Manu as its head, a group of gods (the Manu's sons), an Indra, seven sages and an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. Thus in the first Manvantara Svāyambhuva (the son of Brahmā) was the Manu; the gods were known as Yāma; Yajña was the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu who officiated as Indra also; and the seven sages were Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vasiṣṭha.

20. There Rocana was the Indra, and the gods were (his sons) Tuṣita,and others (Toṣa, Pratoṣa, Santoṣa, Bhadra, Śānti, Iḍaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva, Rocana as listed in the fourth Skandha). The seven sages, well-versed in the Vedas and the knowledge of Brahman, were Ūrja (son of Vasiṣṭha), Stambha (son of Kāśyapa) and others (prāṇa, Bṛhaspati, Datta (son of Atri), Atri, Cyavana as enumerated in the *Harivaṁśa*).

21. From the sage Veda-Śiras and through his wife Tuṣitā by name, the Lord Viṣṇu was born and was well known as Vibhu.

22. Eighty-eight thousand sages who have undertaken the vow of austerities, followed his vow of celibacy, as he was celibate since boyhood.

23. The third Manu was by name Uttama, the son of Priyavrata. He had sons prominent among whom were Pāvana, Sṛñjaya, Yajñahotra, Oh King.

24. In that Manvantara, Pramada and other seven sons of Vasiṣṭha were the seven sages. The three groups of gods were Satya, Vedaśruta and Bhadra, and Satyajit was the Indra.

25. The glorious Supreme Lord was born from Dharma through his wife Sunṛtā and became known as Satyasena. Satyavrata gods were also born along with him.

26. As a friend of the Indra Satyajit, he killed wicked Yakṣas and Rākṣasas who practised hypocrisy and were of bad character, and also the hosts of evil spirits who harmed living beings.

27. The fourth Manu was by name Tāmasa, and was the brother of Uttama. He had ten sons such as Pṛthu, Khyāti, Nara, Ketu and others.

28. In the Manvantara called Tāmasa, the gods were of three groups, Satyaka, Hari and Vīra, and the Lord of the Heavens was Triśikha, and the seven sages were Jyotis, Dhāma and others (namely Pṛthu, Kāvya, Caitra, Agni, Dhanada, and pivara according to *Harivaṁśa*).

29. The gods were called Vaidhṛti, as they were the sons of Vidhṛti, Oh King. They, with their own intellectual

power, retained the Vedas which were lost in the course of time.

30. In that Manvantara was born Lord Hari from Harimedhas through Hariṇī, and he rescued the big elephant from the grip of an alligator.

The King Requested :

31. Oh son of Vyāsa, we are desirous of hearing from you how Hari delivered the abovementioned King of Elephants seized by the alligator.

32. Wherever the Supreme Lord Hari of most hallowed renown is sung, that story is extremely sacred, praiseworthy, auspicious and contributory to our welfare.

Sūta said :

33. When the son of Vyāsa was urged to continue the narration by King Parīkṣit, who had determined to die of starvation, Śuka congratulated the king with delight and continued (his narration) in the assembly of sages who were listening with rapt attention, Oh Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER TWO

The Elephant Leader seized by the Alligator

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh King, there was a mountain well known as Trikūṭa. The beautiful mountain was ten thousand *yojanas* in height and was surrounded by the milky ocean.

2. It was wide on all sides to the same extent as its height. It had three peaks of gold, silver and iron (respectively) wherewith it illuminated the milky ocean, the cardinal points and the sky.

3. (It stood radiating its charms) in all directions by its other summits which were variegated (in colours) with precious stones and mineral ores, and were covered with clusters of

trees, creepers and shrubs of various kinds, and was resounded with the cascades of mountain torrents.

4. With its feet washed by the waves of milk on all sides, it makes the earth appear dark-green with its rocks and pebbles of emeralds.

5. Its valleys were resorted to by sporting *Siddhas*, *Cāraṇas*, *Gandharvas*, *Vidyādharas*, big serpents, *Kinnaras* and *Apsaras* (celestial nymphs).

6. While its caves were resonant with the echoes of the music (of *Kinnaras* etc.), proud lions suspecting it to be due to the presence of a rival lion, impatiently roared back in indignation towards them.

7. It appeared picturesque (lit. was adorned) with valleys infested with herds of wild beasts of various kinds. In its celestial gardens abounding in a variety of trees, birds of sweet voice were warbling.

8. It appeared beautiful with streams and lakes of crystal waters, with banks covered with (sparkling) sand of jewels and precious stones. Their waters became highly fragrant by the bathing of celestial women in them, and the breezes blowing over them were charged with sweet scent.

9. In one of the valleys of that mountain, there is a garden called *Ṛtumat* belonging to the glorious highsouled god Varuṇa, which was the sporting ground of celestial ladies.

10-14. On all sides, it was adorned with celestial trees ever laden with fruits and blossoming flowers such as *Mandāras*, *Pārijātas*, *Pāṭalas*, *Aśokas*, *Campakas*, mangoes (of various species), *Priyālas*, bread fruit (Jack-fruit) trees, *Amrātakas* as well as with *Kramukas* (arecas), cocoanut trees, date-palms, *Bījapūrakas* (citrons), *Madhūkas*, *Śāla* trees, tala (palmyras) *Tamālas*, *Asanas*, *Arjunas*, *Ariṣṭas* (soap-berries) *Udumbaras* (Indian fig trees), *Plakṣas*, banyan trees, *Kiṁśukas*, sandal trees, Neem trees, *Kovidāras*, *Saralas* (pine trees?), *Deodars*, grape vines, sugar-canes, plantains, rose-apples, plum-trees, *Akṣas*, the yellow myrobalan, Emblic myrobalan trees and was surrounded by *Bilva*, *Kapittha* (wood apple tree), *Jambīra*, *Bhallātaka* (the marking-nut plant) and others. In that garden there was an extensive lake resplendent with golden lotuses.

15. It looked excellently beautiful with the splendour of

lilies and various species of lotuses such as *Utpala*, *Kalhāra* and *Śatapatra* (white, blue and ordinary types). It was resonant with (the ceaseless) humming of intoxicated bees and with melodious notes of warbling birds.

16. It was swarmed with aquatic birds like swans, ducks called *Kāraṇḍava*, ruddy geese (*Cakravāka*) and cranes. It was resounded with the cries of water-fowls *Koyaṣṭis* and *Dātyūha* (the gallinules).

17-19. Its waters were covered with filaments of lotuses shaking with the movement of the fishes and tortoises. It was surrounded with trees and plants such as *Kadambas*, canes, *Nalas* (a variety of reed) and *Nīpas* (a kind of *Kadamba*), *Vañjulaka*, *Kurbaka*, *Aśoka*, *Śirīṣa*, *Kuṭaja*, *Arguda*, *Kubjaka*, *Svarṇa-yūthi* (yellow jasmine), *Nāga*, *Punnāga*, *jātis*, *millikā*, *Śatapatras*, *Mādhavī Jālaka* and other creepers.

It appears superbly beautiful with other trees growing on its banks, and bearing fruits and flowers throughout all seasons.

20. Once upon a time, there came in that garden the leader of a herd of elephants dwelling in the forest over the mountains. It was ranging about in the company of female elephants breaking and treading down thorny shrubs and clusters of various types of bamboos and canes (on their way).

21. Even at the scent of that King-elephant, lions, big elephants, carnivorous animals like tigers, rhinoceroses, huge serpents, white and black Śarabhas (an extinct animal more powerful than the lion), *Camarīs* (female yaks) take to flight through sheer terror.

22. It is by its sufference that weaker animals like wolves, boars, bisons, bears, procupines, baboons, hyenas and monkeys as well as the deer, hares range about without fear.

23-24. The elephant which was exuding the temporal fluid as a consequence of which he was attended by swarms of blackbees feeding on that intoxicating fluid, was surrounded by (a herd of) elephants, male and female, and was followed by their young ones. Being oppressed with the heat of the Sun, and scenting from a distance the breeze blowing from the lake—(and hence) laden with the pollen of lotuses—he, with

his eyes rolling under intoxication and accompanied by his herd, all panting for water, speedily approached the vicinity of the lake, shaking by its huge weight the mountain on all its sides.

25. Plunging into the lake, he, with the tip of his trunk, drank to his fill the translucent, nectarlike water perfumed with the pollen of golden and blue lotuses. Bathing himself with the waters of the lake, he became refreshed.

26. The proud yet compassionate elephant, like unto a house-holder, made his female mates and young ones drink water and bathe, spraying them with the cool water by means of his trunk. Being deluded by the *Māyā* power of the Lord, the poor creature could not foresee the (impending) peril.

27. There, some powerful alligator, directed by the will of the Providence, indignantly caught hold of the elephant by the leg, Oh King. Finding himself caught up into this calamity by the will of the Lord, the mighty elephant exerted himself to his utmost capacity (to extricate himself from the hold of the alligator).

28. Noticing that the leader of their herd is being dragged with powrful force, and is rendered helpless, the female elephants, with their minds perplexed, began merely to shriek. The other elephants, though helping him from behind and sides, did not succeed in their attempts to rescue him.

29. In this way, while the mighty elephant and the powerful alligator were struggling, the former trying to drag the other outside the water and the latter pulling him inside, one thousand years rolled by. Finding them equally powerful, even the gods marvelled greatly at this (tough fight).

30. In this way, due to his being dragged into the water and harassed for a very long period, the energy, strength and vitality of that king elephant became greatly depleted, while the very reverse of it took place in the case of the acquatic animal (the alligator).

31. When that mighty elephant, dependent on his physical strength only thus found himself in the peril of life and absolutely helpless and incapable of rescuing himself, he pondered over for a long time, and through the will of the Lord, arrived to the following conclusion.

32. "These elephants, my own kinsfolk are not able to liberate me in this plight. What to speak of these poor she-elephants ! Caught up and bound down as I am in the snare of the Providence, in the form of this alligator, I shall now approach the Supreme Lord who is the last resort of all.

33. We seek refuge in that indescribable Supreme Lord through fear of whom even the (God of) Death flies away, and who, when resorted to as an asylum, protects in every way the affrighted fugitive, vehemently pursued with irresistible force by the mighty serpent (in the form) of Death."

CHAPTER THREE

The Liberation of the Mighty Elephant

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having thus decided by force of his reason and concentrated his mind within (the region of) his heart, he began to repeat mentally the (following) prayer which he learnt by heart in his previous birth (as Indradyumna).[1]

The Lord of Elephants Prayed:

2. (Due to my leg being caught by the alligator) I can but mentally offer my salutations to the glorious Lord denoted by the sacred syllable OM—the Lord who is the source of animation to all this intelligent (and non-intelligent) creation, who enters all bodies as their cause both as *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* and who is the Supreme Lord of all (including great gods like Brahmā).

3. I seek asylum unto the Self-created Being in whom this universe exists and from whom as the natural course, it is evolved and by whose instrumentality it is brought about and

1. Vide *infra* Ch. IV. 7-12.

who constitutes the universe itself,[1] but who is totally different from and transcendental to this phenomenal existence (the effect) as well as its cause (*Prakṛti*).

4. May the self-illuminating Lord protect me—the Lord who is beyond revealing agencies (such as the eyes etc.) as their illuminator; Who as a disinterested witness, observes with his unobstructed vision, both the cause and the effect, this universe superimposed on him by his deluding potency (*Māyā*) both in its occasional manifested form (at the time of the creation) and the occasional unmanifested form at the time of destruction).

5* When, due to the force of time (the period of two *parārdhas*, the life-period of Brahmā), all the (fourteen) worlds along with their guardian deities are reduced to the state of five gross elements (of which they are constituted and when all the causes (viz. the principles such as the *Mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* upto gross elements) become dissolved (into *Prakṛti* or Primordial matter), there prevailed (nothing but) profound incomprehensible and unfathomable darkness (called *Prakṛti*. May that Omnipresent Lord who through its *Prakṛti's* substratum) is not affected by it and who sheds his lustre all round (even beyond that darkness) protect me.

6. Not even gods and sages (with all the predominance of *Sattva guṇa*) could comprehend his real nature. How is it possible for a creature (like me dominated by *rajas* and *tamas*) to understand and describe it? (To gods, sages and us) his nature and course of conduct is difficult to understand and

1. Though Hari and the universe are different, He is identified with it as the universe is under His perfect control; Who is superior (and transcendental) to this phenomenal world as well as from those who have attained Liberation—VJ.

*VR. : *tamas*—the extremely subtle sentient material (*cid-dravya*) that exists after the dissolution of the universe (*tamaḥ śabdaḥ niratiśaya-sūkṣma-daśāpanna-cid-dravya-vāci*). So also BP.

Para abhivirājate—The Lord, as a controller of this *tamas* or subtle composite principle, exists in His glory. VR. derives *para* from *Pṛ* to protect.

VJ. : *Pare abhivirājate*—Who through His form called Time, stays self-refulgent in the region least affected by and thus beyond *tamas*

JG: —*Para*—In the great Vaikuṇṭha regions.

describe, like the real identity of an actor playing different roles to an ordinary spectator. May he rescue me.

7. My asylum is that Lord for the realization of whose most auspicious nature, the exceedingly pious contemplative sages, have given up all attachment (to their wives, children and also to objects of senses like sound, fragrance etc.) and having identified their Self with the Self of all beings and thus being benevolently disposed to all, perform in a faultless manner extraordinary austerities (such as *Brahmacarya*—celibacy and others) in the forests.

8. The Lord is not conditioned by birth (as a consequence of past actions). He has no *Karma*—(bondage), no name or form (as a result of past *Karmas* as in the case of ordinary beings). However, for the sake of creation and destruction of the world, he assumes them from time to time by his *Māyā*-Potency (or will Power).

9. I bow again and again to that Supreme Lord, the Brahman of infinite potencies, Who, (though) devoid of forms, possesses innumerable forms and performs miraculous activities.

10. I pay obeisance to the Lord who is self-luminous (and as such requires no other light to reveal him); who is the witness (and hence the revealer) of all; and the controller of all beings; I bow to him who is absolutely beyond the ken of speech, mind and its powers.

11. Salutations to him who can be realized by the wise, through purity of the mind developed by cessation (of activities or dedication to the Lord) of Karmas, (and by observance of *nivṛtti* (*dharma* characterised by devotion); Who is the Lord (and hence the bestower) of *Mokṣa* and who is the blissfulness of the final beatitude *incarnate*.

12* I bow to him who assumes the (three) attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and appears as serene, terrible, and immersed in ignorance; who is devoid of differentiating characteristics, equal to all, and an embodiment of pure consciousness.

*VJ. classifies the various incarnations of Viṣṇu on *guṇa* basis and offers them salutations. He regards the last epithet—*jñānaghana*—as a refutation of the formlessness of Viṣṇu (*arūpasya śūnyatvaṁ nivārayati*)

13* I bow to you who are the controller of all, the only knower of the psycho-physical organism (called *kṣetra*), a witness (to everything). You are the source of all Jīvas, and even that of *Prakṛti* (the primordial cause) as you exist before all.

14. I pay my obeisance to you, who perceive all senses along with their objects; who are indicated (as the basis) by all cognitive activities; whose existence is suggested by the shadowy, unreal phenomenal existence (*ahaṁkāra* and other principles) like that of a material body by its reflection, as it is you who are reflected in every phenomenon.

15. I bow again and again to you who are the cause of everything, but yourself are without a cause; who are the wondrous cause (inasmuch as you produce the effect—viz. assuming the form of the world—without undergoing any change in you); who are the great ocean wherein all *Āgamas* (like the *pañcarātra*) and the Vedas meet (and are directed to you); who are the embodiment of *Mokṣa* (Liberation) and (hence) the ultimate resort of the great.

16.** I salute to you who are the fire of knowledge and consciousness lying hidden in the *Araṇī* (the pieces of wood for kindling sacrificial fire by friction) in the form of *guṇas*; whose will (to create the universe) manifests itself through the commotion (caused by the disturbance in the equilibrium) of *guṇas*; who, out of your own will, reveal yourself to those who, (through the renunciation of *Karmas* or dedication of Karmas to God), meditate on the true (nature of the) soul and have risen above the prescriptions and prohibitions enjoined by *Āgamas*.

VR: *interprets*:

Salutations to you who (at the time of the destruction of the universe) have drunk up (withdrawn within you) the fire of the aggregate of all *jīvas* lying hidden in the *Prakṛti*

* Salutations to You to Whom the *kṣetrajña* (individual soul) is like a body, the Supreme Ruler of all beings, the Witness to all; Who are the Inner Controller (of all); and Who are self-existent (not created by any other cause) and are the primary material cause (of all) as well.—VR.

** VJ. reads a combination of vv. 16 and 18.

(constituted of three *guṇas*); whose will to create begins to function (at the time of the creation of the world) leading to the commotion in *Prakṛti* and *jīvas*; who grants Liberation (*Mokṣa*) to his votaries; whose being beyond the comprehension of speech and mind, stands self-revealed.

17. Hail to you who are yourself not only eternally free, but who, out of boundless grace, promptly[1] (without any idleness in such matters) and absolutely severe the bonds of *Avidyā* or *Saṁsāra* which have fettered creatures like me, (now) completely submitted to your mercy. I bow to you who, by a part of your being, exist in all embodied beings as their inner controller[2] and are capable of directing them all, even though you are infinite (and spatially unlimited)

18. Bow to you who (though the inner controller of all beings) are difficult to be attained by persons who are attached to their bodies, sons, kinsmen, household, wealth and people, as you are devoid of any association with *guṇas*. You are constantly meditated upon in their hearts by souls unattached to their bodies, etc. I bow to you who are an embodiment of pure knowledge, the most omnipotent Ruler of all.

19. May the Lord of infinite mercy (at least) rescue me (from the clutches of the alligator or *Saṁsāra*)—The Lord, by worshipping whom persons desirous of religious merits, sensual objects, affluence, wealth or Liberation (from *saṁsāra*), gain not only their coveted goal but also have other unexpected blessings and undeteriorating (divine) body conferred upon them.

20. His votaries of unflinching constant devotion and even those who have taken refuge with the Lord (or His devotees full of spiritual wisdom) do not seek any boon (from him), but are immersed in the ocean of bliss, while singing his most miraculous and auspicious deeds.

21. I offer my hymn of prayer unto that absolutely perfect imperishable First Principle, the all-pervading highest

1. *ālayāya*—By resorting to whom the devotee never meets destructions —VR.

2. *Svāṁśena sarvatanubhṛt* etc.: Who are realized as being identical with the *jīva* in the heart of every being as the *jīva* is essentially a part of your body—VR.

Brahman, the Supreme Ruler (even of great gods like Brahmā), unmanifest and beyond the range of senses, as it is very remote and subtle, yet is accessible (to his devotees) through internal (path of *bhakti*) *yoga*.

22-24. May the Lord, manifest himself (for my Liberation)[1]—

22. The Lord by whose single minutest modicum of energy (all the) gods headed by Brahmā, the Vedas, the worlds, the mobile and immobile creation of distinct (yet) infinite variety of forms, are created.

23. From that self resplendent Lord issues forth (and is again withdrawn) the stream of *guṇas*[2] and their products such as the intellect, the mind, the senses and aggregates of gross bodies (like those of gods and others), even as sparks and flames go forth from the self-shining Fire-god and rays emanate from the self-luminous sun and are withdrawn again into them constantly.

24. Verily he is neither god nor demon; neither a human being nor a sub-human creature (a bird, a beast etc.); he is neither a famale nor a male nor an important person or an a-sexual being; he is neither an attribute (*guṇa*) nor an action (*Karma*); he is neither effect nor cause; he is the substratum of what is left after negating these all and yet constitutes them all (by his *Māyā*).

25. I do not wish (to get my body) extricated from the clutches of the alligator and) to survive here (in this body). What interest have I with this elephant-life which is enveloped internally and externally with the darkness of ignorance? I crave for emancipation (lifting up of) from that Veil of ignorance which shrouds the spiritual light of the Soul, and which cannot be destroyed merely by (lapse of) time but only by the knowledge of the (*Ātman*).

1. (i) May remove all obstacles in my God-realization—VR. (ii) May relieve me from the misery of *saṁsāra*—VJ. (iii) SD., GD., BP. follow ŚR.

2. This asserts the eternality of the stream of the universe (*guṇa—saṁpravāhaḥ...anena jagat-Pravāhasya nityatvaṁ jñāpitam*)—VJ.

26* Being thus desirous of getting liberated I (who do know the Lord) simply bow down to that all pervading spirit, who is the creator of the universe; whose body is the universe and yet who is beyond and other than it; who uses the universe as his instrument, yet is the soul of it (as its Inner controller); who is unconditioned by birth and is the highest resort of all.

27. I have bowed[1] unto the Lord of *yoga* (who confers the fruit of *yogic* practice), whom the *yogins* visualize in their hearts purified by burning down of their *Karmas* by *yoga* (or devotion unto the Lord).

28. I salute to you again and again. The force of your three-fold power (of three *Guṇas* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) is irresistible; who manifest yourself as the object of all senses; who protect those who have resorted to you for shelter and are of unfathomable powers; whose path is inaccessible to those whose senses are directed to external objects.

29. I have sought the protection of the Lord whose glory is unsurpassable and enveloped by whose Māyā power expressed as the ego-sense, this Jīva does not realize (the real nature of) his self.

Śrī Śuka said:

30. When all these gods like Brahmā and others who identified themselves with their special forms and attributes (such as four-headedness, three-eyedness in the case of gods Brahmā, Śiva etc.) did not approach (to rescue) the Lord of elephants who thus glorified the Supreme Lord as being devoid of (and hence without any reference to) any particular form or attribute,[2] Lord Hari, being the Soul (ātman) of all,

* Being desirous of removing the veil of ignorance that obscures the vision of the soul, I bow to You Who are the Wealth or the highest goal in the life (of people) in the universe, who enter the universe to protect it: Whose manifestation is not conditioned by Karmas, yet is full of good attributes; Who are absolutely inaccessible I merely bow to Him as I do not know any other way of propitiating Him—VR.

1. The yogic way being now impossible I can simply bow to Him —VR.

2. And as he has under-rated gods like Brahmā in verse 22 above —GS.

and the embodiment of the aggregate of all gods, manifested himself there.

31. Knowing that the elephant was in that distressed condition and having heard his hymn of prayer (mentally addressed to him), the Lord, the abode of the universe, equipped with his weapon the discus *sudarśana* and riding *Garuḍa*, the embodiment of the (*sāma-*) *veda* (and capable of ranging anywhere with any speed according to his will) and accompanied by celestials singing his praise, instantaneously appeared on the spot, where the Lord of elephants was (in that wretched plight).

32. Beholding in the sky Lord Hari, seated on *Garuḍa* and with his discus upraised (in his hand), the elephant, though greatly distressed, as he was seized by a very powerful alligator inside the lake, lifted up his trunk holding a lotus (as an offering for worshipping his feet!) and uttered with great difficulty the words "Oh glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa!" the Father (or Preceptor) of all the universe! I (reverentially) bow to you."

33. Seeing the elephant greatly afflicted, Lord Hari, the birthless God (feeling the speed of *Garuḍa* as too slow) at once alighted (from *Garuḍa*), and immediately dragging out the elephant out of the lake along with the alligator, out of compassion, rescued the lord of the elephants from its jaws by rending them open with the discus, while gods stood simply looking on.

CHAPTER FOUR

Liberation of the Lord of Elephants

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Then (seeing the rescue of the lord of elephants), gods headed by Brahmā and Śiva, sages and Gandharvas extolled that mighty deed of Hari, and discharged a shower of flowers on him.

2. Celestial kettle-drums were sounded, the Gandharvas danced and sang; sages, Cāraṇas and Siddhas eulogised the Supreme Person.

3. Verily, he who was (till then) the alligator, instantly assumed the most wonderful form. He was Hūhū, the foremost among the Gandharvas, who was thus redeemed from the curse of the Sage Devala.[1]

4. He bowed down to the eternal Supreme Lord of excellent renown with his head, and he chanted the praise of his worth extolling (innumerable) virtues and sacred episodes of that abode of glory.

5. Being favoured by the Lord with his grace, he was purged of all sins. Going round the Lord (reverentially) and paying him obeisance, he repaired to his own region (of Gandharvas) in the very presence of all the people.

6. By virtue of his being touched by the Lord, the lord of elephants became completely free from the bondage of ignorance, and attained to the form resembling that of the Lord (Viṣṇu) clad in yellow garments and endowed with four arms.

7 It is traditionally reported that he was in his previous birth a king of the Pāṇḍya country wellknown as Indradyumna—the foremost among the Draviḍa people—and devotedly attached to the austere observance of Viṣṇu-worship.

8. Once upon a time, the king who, as an ascetic, wearing matted locks of hair, was staying in his hermitage on the Malaya mountain, had undertaken the vow of silence. At the appointed hour of the propitiation of the Lord, he took his bath and began to worship with due formalities, the imperishable supreme Ruler, Lord Hari.

9. (It is reported that) by chance there arrived (at his hermitage) the celebrated sage Agastya accompanied by hosts

1. ŚR. narrates the cause of the curse as follows:—Once while Hūhū was indulging in watersport with his women in a lake, the sage Devala entered the same lake for bath. Hūhū was upset and he pulled Devala by his leg. The sage cursed him to be an alligator. When entreated, Devala advised him to seize the lord of elephants that way, so that Lord Hari will emancipate him and he would be reinstated to his original position automatically.

of his disciples. Finding Indradyumna seated in solitude and remaining silent (without showing the courtsey of greeting orally) and without paying the due homage (usual formalities of receiving a guest of honour) the sage flared up in rage.

10. He pronounced the following imprecation on the king : "This sinful, uncultured, wicked soul has today insulted a Brāhmaṇa (like me). He is dull-witted like an elephant. Let him be born in the species of elephants steeped in blinding darkness of ignorance."

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Oh king ! Having uttered this curse, the venerable Agastya went way along with his followers. The royal sage Indradyumna, on his part, considered the incident to be the will of the Providence.

12. He entered the species of elephants which obscures the knowledge of the self. But by virtue of his propitiation of Hari the reminiscence of his past life remained unblurred (even while he was an elephant).

13. Having thus rescued the lord of the herd of elephants and accompanied by him after elevating him to the position of his attendant, the lotus-navelled god (Viṣṇu) seated on Garuḍa repaired to his region Vaikuṇṭha, while Gandharvas, Siddhas and gods were glorifying his miraculous feat.

14. This glorious deed of Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), viz. The Liberation of King of elephants, has been narrated to you by me, Oh great king. Listening to this leads to heaven, confers glory, removes the sins of the Kali age and destroys the effect of bad dreams of the hearers, Oh great Kuru.

15. Persons belonging to the twice-born castes desiring to secure their welfare, get up early in the morning, and purifying themselves (after taking a bath) recite this sacred narration (of the liberation of the elephant king) for obliterating the effects of bad dreams (and securing their welfare).

16. It was while all creatures were listening that the Omnipresent Lord Hari who embodies all creation, being highly pleased with the Lord of elephants, addressed the following (words) to him; Oh the best of Kurus.

17-24. Rising up at the close of the latter part of the night i.e. at dawn (known as *Brāhma muhūrta*), and after purifying themselves (by taking a bath), those who, with concentrated mind, remember me, you, this lake, the mountain (*Trikūṭa*) along with its caves and valleys and the forest (covering them), the clusters of canes and *Kīcaka* bamboos, the heavenly trees, the (three) mountain peaks, the abodes of Brahmā, Śiva and myself, the ocean of milk, my favourite resort, the resplendent Śveta-dvīpa (My beloved place), the Śrivatsa mark (the characteristic curl of hair) on my breast, the Kaustubha gem, and the garland known as Vaijayantī, my weapons, the mace called Kaumodakī, the discus Sudarśana, the conch Pāñcajanya, my vehicle Garuḍa, the king of birds, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa who is my subtle emanation, goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī) who rests on my bosom, god Brahmā, the divine sage Nārada, god Śiva and (my devotee) Prahlāda, and all my deeds performed during my incarnations as Fish, Tortoise, Boar and others—listening to which confers infinite merit (to the hearers), the Sun-god, the Moon-god, the Fire-god, the sacred syllable OM, the Eternal Truth, the unmanifest (*Prakṛti*), Cows and Brāhmaṇas, the eternal path of religion (consisting of devotion unto the Lord, the daughters of Dakṣa who are the wives of Dharma, Soma and Kaśyapa, the rivers—the Gaṅgā, the Sarasvatī, the Nandā, the Yamunā, the White elephant of Indra (Airāvata), Dhruva, the Seven Brāhmaṇa Sages and great men of hallowed fame, (such as Nala, Yudhiṣṭhira, Janaka, the king of Videha)—all these being my forms, those who remember them, become free from all sins.

25. Oh dear Gajendra ! To those who, after getting up at dawn (after the expiry of night), pray to me with the hymn (composed by you), I promise to keep their memory unclouded at the time of their death.

Śrī Śuka said :

26. Having addressed thus, Lord Viṣṇu (the Lord of senses) blew his excellent conch (*Pāñcajanya*) gladdening thereby the host of gods and mounted his carrier Garuḍa, the king of birds.

CHAPTER FIVE

Description of V and VI Manvantaras—Brahmā Hymns the Lord.

Śrī Śuka said :

1. I have narrated to you, Oh King, the sacred story of the liberation of the Lord of elephants which destroys all sinful deeds. Now listen to the account of the Manu-period presided over by Raivata.

2-3. The fifth Manu, Raivata by name, was the brother of Tāmasa. Bali, Vindhya and others, the eldest of whom was Arjuna, were his sons. Vibhu was the Indra, Bhūtaraya and others were the gods, while Hiraṇyaromā, Vedaśiras, Ūrdhvabāhu and others were the Sages[1], Oh king.

4. Vikuṇṭhā was the wife of Śubhra; with a portion of his energy, Lord Vaikuṇṭha was born of these of his own accord, along with great gods known as Vaikuṇṭhas.

5. It was at the request of his spouse, the goddess Ramā (Lakṣmī) and with a view to please her that he created his realm known as Vaikuṇṭha[2] which is highly respected by all the worlds.

6. His prowess (viz. restoring to their original position his attendants who, by the curse of Sanatkumāra, became demons called Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu—vide Skandha III), excellences (such as friendliness to Brāhmaṇas), and his great prosperity have been described to you. (But I could not do so adequately as) he who would be able to describe the excellences of Viṣṇu fully may as well count all the particles of the dust on the entire earth.[3]

7-8. The sixth Manu was known as Cākṣuṣa, the son of Cakṣus; his sons were Puru, Puruṣa, Sudyumna and others. Mantradyumna was the Indra, and the hosts of gods were headed by Āpya. The (seven) Sages were, Oh king, Haviṣmat,

1. GS quotes Harivaṁśa and gives Devabāhu, Sudhāman, Parjanya and Mahāmuni as the names of the remaining (seven) Sages of the *Raivata Manvantara*.

2. GS adds : The Vaikuṇṭha region being eternal, its 'creation' is 'manifestation' only.

3. An echo of RV. 1.154. *Vide infra* 8.23.29.

Vīraka and others (viz. Sumedhas, Anuttama, Madhu, Atināman, Sahiṣṇu).

9. In this Manvantara, the glorious Lord of the worlds appeared, by a ray of his essential nature, as Ajita, the son of Vairāja and Sambhūti.

10. By him, the nectar as secured for gods, by getting the sea (of milk) churned, while he supported, in the form of the (Divine) Tortoise, the Mount Mandara while it was whirling in the waters of the sea.

The King enquired :

11-12. Be pleased to describe to me Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage, this most wonderous deed of the glorious Lord : as to how the ocean of milk was got churned by the Lord, as also the object (said) of doing so, and why he had to support the mount (Mandara) assuming the form of an acquatic animal (a tortoise); how the nectar was obtained by gods and what else happened at that time (in connection with this event).

13. My heart which has been tormented for a long time by afflictions (of three types) does not get satiated, when you describe in details, the great glory of the Lord of Sātvatas (Kṛṣṇa).

Sūta said:

14. Being thus respectfully requested. the venerable son of Vyāsa (viz. Śuka) appreciated the (king's) query and began to describe in details the prowess of Lord Hari, Oh Brāhmaṇas.

Śrī Śuka said :

15-16. When formidably assailed with sharp weapons by Asuras in battles, gods were killed in large numbers, and they did not revive, and when due to the curse of the sage Durvāsas,[1]

1. ŚR & GS mention the following incident (from the *Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*) as the cause of the curse. Once while the sage Durvāsas was wearing a garland gifted to him by Lord Viṣṇu, Indra riding his Airāvata elephant, passed by him. Out of courtesy and with a view to bless Indra with permanent sovereignty of the three worlds, Durvāsas presented the garland to him. Out of arrogance, Indra threw it on the

the three worlds along with Indra were deprived of their glory and wealth, all sacrificial performance and other religious rites ceased to be performed.

17. Seeing this (state of affairs), the hosts of gods headed by the great Indra and Varuṇa met in a conference for mutual consultations, but failed to arrive at a conclusion.

18. All of them went to the court of Brahmā, situated on a crest of mountain Meru. Bowing god Brahmā humbly, they submitted to him all their grievances.

19-20. Observing that gods like Indra, Vāyu and others are bereft of power, energy and splendour and the people (practically) devoid of auspiciousness, and the Asuras (proportionally) better-off, he, with a concentrated mind contemplated the Supreme Person, and with a cheerful countenance, the great Venerable Brahmā addressed the gods as follows:

21. "Let us all—I who am but a portion of the Lord, and Asuras, human beings, sub-human creation like birds, beasts, trees and sweat-born beings (like lice, bugs etc.) who are the progeny of Marīci (and others) who in turn are just a modicum of his energy approach for refuge to him, the imperishable Lord.

22. According to his view-point, none deserves to be killed or protected; no party is worth neglecting or supporting. It is for the creation, subsistence and destruction of the world that he assumes the attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* at the proper time.

23. And the present is an opportune time for his creation and protection of the universe for which he has assumed the Sattva attribute for the creation of embodied beings. Let us therefore, approach the Preceptor of the world for protection. Being beloved of gods, he will do whatever is good for us, his devotees."

Śrī Śuka said :

24. Having thus spoken to the gods, god Brahmā, accom-

head of his elephant. The animal in its turn, lifted it from its head and trampled it under its feet. Seeing the gift of the Lord so treated, Durvāsas got enraged and cursed him to be bereft of wealth along with his kingdom of the three worlds.

panied by celestials, went directly to the abode of the unconquerable Lord which lies beyond the region of darkness, Oh destroyer of enemies.

25. There, with the concentration of all his senses (including the mind), he, in the divine (or Vedic) language, addressed the following hymn of praise, to him whose essential form was not seen as yet, but about whom much was heard formerly, Oh king.

Brahmā said :

26. "We bow to the Supreme God, Who is changeless, eternally true, infinite (in time and space), beginningless, present in (everybody's) heart, unconditioned, incomprehensible quicker than the mind and beyond the range of words (indescribable).

27. We go (as a refuge) to him Who is the knower of the vital airs, the mind, the intellect and the soul; Who appears as senses and their objects; Who is devoid of sleep and is bodyless (and hence) imperishable; Who is all-pervasive like the sky, and is unaffected by the darkness of *avidyā* and the sunshine of *Vidyā*;[1] Who is free from desire and other attributes of *Jīva* and who manifests himself in every *Yuga*.

28. I seek asylum in that Deity, the Truth, which the Vedas call as the axle (the main support) of the lightening-like fast rotating wheel of life (i. e. This ever-changing body and other accessories of the Soul), owned by the *Jīva* (who is, in reality birthless). The wheel is propelled by Māyā (the beginningless deluding potency of the Lord). It (the wheel) has mind as its chief component and consists of fifteen spokes (viz. Ten sense organs and five vital breaths—*prāṇas*), three naves (viz. the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and eight fellies* (in the form of eight-fold *Prakṛti* consisting of five elements, the mind, the intellect and the ego).

1. VJ.—*gṛdhra*—covetous of everything, hence *jīva* who like vulture has two wings, viz. *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*.

* VJ. regards deva, asura, humans and other classes of beings as the fellies.

29* Let us bow to him Who has seated himself by the side of Jīva (as the Inner controller) or Who is seated on Garuḍa[1] ever ready to protect his devotees; Who is essentially pure bliss or knowledge[2], beyond the range of darkness or Prakṛti; Who is invisible, beyond the range of all *lokas*; Who is changeless and limitless in time and space; to whom wise men resort through (the chariot in the form of) the discipline of *Yoga*.

30. Let us pay obeisance to the Supreme Ruler Who treats all beings alike (without any partiality); Who has subdued his Māyā along with the (three) *guṇas*—the Māyā which nobody could cross and which has deluded the people so much (that identifying themselves with their bodies) they do not know their true self.

31.** Even we, gods and sages who are created by his favourite body consisting of pure *sattva*, are unable to comprehend his subtle essence, though it is manifest as Light within and as existence without. How (is it possible that) Asuras and others who are dominated by other attributes viz. *rajas* and *tamas* can do so ?

32. (Henceforth the *vairāja* form of the Lord is eulogised). May that Lord, the Supreme person, the veritable, absolute Brahman itself, be propitious unto us—The Lord who has created as his feet, this earth which supports the four-

* VJ : I seek refuge in the supreme Deity Who is represented by the syllable (OM); Who is beyond the darkness of ignorance and *prakṛti*. It is beyond the ken of the world, un-revealed and limitless (or comprised of innumerable syllables). Intelligent persons worship and meditate upon Him with great devotion. He is seated on His vehicle the *jīva*.

ananta-pāram (i) Being an embodiment of the Vedas He cannot be comprehended by words and their connotations (ii) He is all pervading yet cannot be seen anywhere by all. They contemplate Him as an *antar-yāmin* (inner controller)—SD. SD interprets *a-Loka* as 'The realm of A i.e. Viṣṇu, Hence Vaikuṇṭha.

1. *upa-suvarnam*—who occupies a region full of light like gold—VR.
2. *eka-varṇam*—
(i) Constituted of Pure Sattva—VR,JG.
(ii) Who is constituted of the only one syllable *OM*—VJ, VC.
(iii) Constituted of Pure Bliss—GD.

**Though out of His grace He created us both inside and outside with His *sattva* attribute, we, the gods and sages, are unable to comprehend—VJ.

fold creation of beings[1] and yet is completely self dependent, and the Master of infinitely great powers.[2]

33. May that absolute and perfect *Brahman* of immense spiritual powers be gracious unto us—The *Brahman* whose seminal fluid is water, of so much enormous power that it became the source of existence, subsistence and prosperity of the three worlds, as well as all guardian deities.

34. May that Lord of unlimited spiritual glory be propitiated unto us—The Lord whose mind (as declared by the Vedas) is Soma, Who is the food and hence the strength and life of celestials, and Who (due to the nourishing power of his ambrosial rays) is the ruler of the vegetable kingdom and the creator of all living beings (as they subsist on the vegetables and plants).

35 May that most glorious Lord bestow his grace unto us—the Lord whose mouth is the Fire; Who is the source (and hence the bestower) of wealth, (or who takes to gods their respective oblations offered in sacrifices), and Who is engendered for (the performance of) sacrificial rituals (prescribed in the Vedas), and Who abides in the stomach (as the gastric fire) digesting the food, and in the sea (as submarine fire) consuming its (watery) subsistence.

36. May that Lord of infinite glory be propitious unto us—The Lord whose eye is the sun-god; Who is the presiding deity of the path of gods (*devayāna*) leading ultimately to Liberation; Who is the very personification of the triad of Vedas (viz. *ṚK*, *Yajus* and *Sāman*); Who is regarded as the seat of Brahman (as Brahman is meditated upon in relation to the Sun); Who represents not merely the entrance to the path of Liberation but to immortality itself; Who (however as a symbol of Time) is death *incarnate* (as Time terminates everything.)

37. May the Lord of unlimited powers be graciously inclined towards us—The Lord from Whose breath was born *Vāyu* (the air) which is the vital air (*Prāṇa*), who animates the

1. *caturvidha-sargaḥ*—The four categories of beings are viviparous, oviparous, the sweat-born and the plant-world.

2. *mahā-vibhūtiḥ*—Having power over *Mahā-Lakṣmī*, the presiding deity of wealth. May all of us be affluent in every respect—GD.

mobile and immobile creation, and became their mental energy, physical power and potency of the sense-organs, and to whom, we, the presiding deities (of cognitive and conative senses) follow as the retinue goes after an emperor.

38. May that Deity of infinite glory confer favour upon us—The Deity from whose ears were evolved the cardinal points; from whose heart, the pores in the body, and from whose navel were created the (five) vital airs (*Prāṇa*), the senses and organs of the body (*Indriyas*), the mind and the other (five semi-vital airs[1] carrying on) the functions of the body and the sky which supports these all.

39. May the Lord of unlimited glory be favourably disposed to us—the Lord from Whose strength was born the great Indra, from Whose grace the (various) gods; from Whose wrath sprang up god Śiva, the Lord of mountains; from Whose intellect came forth god Brahmā; from the appertures in Whose bodies were created the Vedas and the sages, and from whose generative organ, the god Prajāpati.

40. May that most glorious Lord be propitious unto us —The Lord from Whose bosom came forth the goddess Śrī (the goddess of wealth and beauty); from Whose shadow, the manes (*Pitṛs*); from Whose breast, Dharma (the presiding Deity of righteousness) and from Whose back was born *Adharma* (the evil spirit of unrighteousness); from Whose head evolved the heaven (*svarga*), and from Whose sportive actions, the celestial damsels (*apsaras*).

41. May the Lord of supreme glory bestow his grace on us—The Lord from Whose mouth sprang up the Brāhmaṇas and Vedas of mystic significance; from Whose arms were born Kṣatriyas and the power (to govern); from Whose thighs came forth Vaiśyas and skill in business of agriculture and from Whose feet were born the Śūdras and the vocation of service (other than Vedic studies)[2]

42. May the Lord of infinite powers be gracious unto us—the Lord from Whose lower lip came forth avarice, from

1. These are *Nāga*, *Kūrma*, *Kṛkala*, *Devadatta* and *Dhanañjaya* (vide Supra 3.6.9).

2. Śr notes v.l. *urvor viśoṅghrer abhavaṁśca śūdrāḥ* 'The Vaiśya class was born from His thighs and the Śūdras from His feet.'

Whose upper lip affection; from Whose nose emanated splendour, from Whose touch, the desire to rear up and to tend animals; from Whose eye-brows sprang up Yama, the god of death; from Whose eye-lashes was born the Time-spirit (Kāla).

43. May that most glorious Lord be graciously disposed towards us—The Lord by Whose *yoga-māyā*, the *śāstras* declare are created the five gross elements, the Time (Life-Span), the destiny (effects of acts of past life), qualities[1] (or the modes of *Prakṛti* e.g. *Sattva*, *rajas*) and this phenomenal world all of which are too difficult to comprehend, and which should be renounced by the wise as mere *māyā*.

44. I bow to him Whose energy (in the form of *guṇas* like *Sattva* etc.) is quiescent; Whose mind is thoroughly full of his natural supreme bliss, and hence Who is not attached (even in his mind) to the products of the *guṇas* created by Māyā and Whose sportive activities are like the air (which moves everywhere but is attached to nothing anywhere).

45. You being such (as described above), be pleased to reveal to us your lotus-like smiling countenance in such a way as it will come within the range of our sense of perception, for we have completely surrendered ourselves to you and are eager to have a look at you.

46. For the glorious Lord assumes different forms from time to time, according to his will (or the will of his devotees), and accomplishes feats which are beyond our capacity, Oh Omnipresent God.

47. In the case of embodied beings whose minds are attached to pleasures, their acts require great trouble (for performance) but bear little or no fruit at all (in return). But that is not the case with us who dedicate all our actions to you (We require less trouble to perform the act, and get substantial fruit in return, and it is never futile).

48. Even the slightest resemblance of action, if dedicated to the Lord, never becomes futile (but brings substantial results); for the Lord loves and wishes well of such person (who has resigned himself to him and his actions, therefore, will not be futile).

1. VJ. *guṇāḥ* etc.: devotion etc., or colours. The *v.l. vāśeṣam*-The Nature, Jīva, time etc.—VJ.

49. Just as watering the root of trees proves nourishing to its trunk and branches, similarly the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu leads to the propitiation of all gods and of one's self also.

50. I bow to you, the infinite Lord whose nature and deeds are extremely difficult to comprehend; you are devoid of all attributes, and yet are the master of all qualities, and who at present are established in *sattva*.

CHAPTER SIX

(*Mount Mandara Transported for Churning the Ocean*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Oh king! Thus praised by the hosts of gods, the glorious Lord Hari, the supreme Ruler, manifested Himself to them with the effulgence of a thousand suns rising simultaneously.

2. By that very glaring effulgence, all gods got their eyes so much dazzled that they could not perceive the sky, the cardinal points, the earth and even themselves. How could they see the omnipresent Lord?

3. The glorious god Brahmā along with Śiva, beheld that immaculate Form, dark like emerald (blue like sapphire), with eyes reddish like the interior of a lotus.

4. It was clad in bright yellow silken garment (*Pītāmbara*) shining like burning gold, graceful and lovely in every limb, with beautiful countenance and attractive eyebrows.

5. It was adorned with a crown crested with highly precious gems and a pair of armlets (keyūras one on each arm); Its cheeks illumined by the bright splendour of the pendant ear-rings, added to the beauty of its lotus like countenance.

6. It was adorned with an ornamented girdle, bracelets, necklace and pair of anklets. It was wearing the deco-

rative *Kaustubha* gem, the goddess Lakṣmī, and a wreath of sylvan flowers (on its breast).

7. It was attended upon by its missiles like *Sudarśana* and others in their personal form. Brahmā, the foremost among the gods, along with god Śiva, and with hosts of celestials, lay prostrate before him on the ground, and eulogized the Supreme Person (as follows);

Brahmā said:

8.* I offer my obeisance again and again to you of whom birth, subsistence and destruction are beyond predication; who transcends the (three) *guṇas*; who is the ocean of (absolute) bliss attainable in the Final Beatitude; who is the subtlest of the subtle, yet whose glory is immeasurable and powers unlimited.

9. Oh Supreme Person! This form of yours is ever worthy to be adored by those who aspire after the (highest) bliss, through methods prescribed in the Vedas and *tantras* (like *pañcarātra*). Oh Creator and Protector of the universe! In this form of yours which pervades the universe, I see (simultaneously) all the three worlds as well as ourselves.

10. In you who are self-dependent, the universe abided in you at the beginning; in you, it exists in the middle and it will be absorbed in you (after its dissolution) in the end. Just as the earth persists (as the material cause) in the beginning, the middle and the end of a pot, similarly you are the beginning, the middle and the end of this universe.[1]

11. Through your Māyā—potency which absolutely depends on you, you have created the universe, and subse-

*VJ : Again and again I salute to you who are *Aja* (Birthless-*Viṣṇu*), the creation, subsistence and dissolution of the universe, the very personification of various attributes (e.g. *Ānanda*, *Vijñāna*), the ocean of bliss impossible to those who identify themselves with the physical body, and of limitless glory.

1. VJ differs : According to VJ. God is not the material cause but the supreme cause on which other causes depend. The particle *ca* in VJ's text indicates that if Brahman be the material cause even non-sentient material world would be sentient. VR. accepts God as the material cause of the universe, but God is unaffected by changes (*upādānatve'pi tasya nirvikāratvam*).

quently have entered into it (as its Inner Controller). The thoughtful people who are well-versed in *Śāstras* and who have (controlled and) concentrated their minds, perceive through their mind that you are not affected by *guṇas*, even though you abide in them (i.e. in the universe which is the product of *guṇas* in which you have entered).

12. It is a well-known fact that, by adopting proper means, men get fire from wood (by friction of wooden pieces —*araṇis*), nectar i.e. milk from the cows, food and water from the earth (by agriculture and digging) and livelihood by working (in a profession or vocation), similarly thoughtful people, through their intelligence perceive You in (the world which is) the product of *guṇas* and describe you accordingly.

13. Oh Lord! Having seen You graciously (and thus fulfilling) our desire for a long time, we feel extremely blissful as elephants distressed by forest-conflagration do, on reaching the waters of the *Gaṅgā*, Oh Lord with a lotus in your navel.

14. Such as You are (as described above), do fulfill our desire for which we, the guardians of the Worlds have approached Your feet. Oh Lord (the pervader of the universe from inside and outside)! You witness everything. What is there to be made known to you from outside by others ?

15. To You, I, Śiva, gods (and other beings), Dakṣa (and other Lords of creation)—We all are like sparks of fire emanating from fire (and appearing distinct from fire, though originally they are one). Separate as we are, what do we know of (the way to) our welfare? Oh Lord ! Be pleased to advise us what may be beneficial to Brāhmaṇas and gods.

Śrī Śuka said:

16. Being thus prayed (and extolled) by Brahmā and others, and with a full understanding of their hearts, the Lord, in a voice like the rumbling of clouds, addressed the gods who, controlling their senses perfectly, stood with folded palms.

17. Although the Lord alone was capable to accomplish the object of the gods, he, being desirous of indulging in sportful activities like the churning of the ocean and others, addressed them as follows:

The Lord said:

18. Hello ! Brahman, Śiva, gods and demigods ! Listen attentively to my speech, so that all of you will attain welfare and desired object.

19. You do go just now and conclude a peace-treaty with the Daityas and Dānavas who are favoured by time, till you find that growth (prosperous time) has now returned (till Fortune smiles on you).

20. When an object to be achieved is important, an alliance should be entered into, even with enemies. When once, you have accomplished your purpose, you may behave as a serpent does with a mouse.[1]

21. Without any delay, efforts should be made to produce the nectar, by drinking which a being in the jaws of death will become immortal.

22-23. Having thrown all kinds of plants, grasses, creepers and herbs in the sea of milk, and making mount Mandara as the churning rod and Vāsuki (the king of snakes) as the churning rope, you churn the ocean well assiduously with My help. The Daityas shall undergo the trouble of churning while you shall reap the fruit thereof.

24. Oh gods! You agree to whatever desire the Daityas express. All objects are not successfully achieved through anger (and confrontation), as through conciliatory methods.

25. You need not be afraid of the Kālakūṭa poison that will come out of the (churned) sea (for god Śiva will drink it). You should not evince any desire or covetousness (for the objects churned out) or express any anger if Daityas do so.

Śrī Śuka said:

26. After instructing the gods in this way, the glorious Supreme Person, the Ruler (of the universe) who acts according to his own free will, disappeared from their view, Oh king.

27. Having bowed down to the Venerable Lord (who

1. ŚR .—Just as a serpent caught in box by a snake-charmer formed friendship with a mouse outside (to make a hole into that box). When the serpent creeps out of that box, it eats up that mouse. Similarly you should behave now.

had disappeared), god Brahmā and Śiva returned to their respective regions, while gods approached Bali (the king of demons).

28. The praiseworthy king of Daityas who knew the opportune time when to wage war, and when to make peace, restrained his generals, who got excited at the sight of their enemies in that unprepared condition.

29. Then (the gods) approached Bali, the son of Virocana, seated (on a throne) and guarded by Asura generals, endowed with the highest royal splendour after the conquest of the three worlds.

30. The highly intelligent Indra consoled Bali with many soft words, and spoke to him everything as per briefings of the Supreme Man.

31. The (oral) proposal was acceptable to Bali and to other Asura rulers like Śambara, Ariṣṭanemi and other residents of Tripura who were present.

32. Then gods and Asuras reached an agreement, and after contracting a friendly alliance, they made great efforts for obtaining the nectar, Oh tormentor of enemies.

33. Then, being arrogantly proud (of their physical strength), they (gods and demons) forcibly pulled out the mount Mandara. Shouting lustily, they with their *Parigha*-like long and powerful arms, proceeded to take it to the sea.

34. Being thoroughly exhausted by carrying the heavy burden, Indra, Bali and other gods and demons became unable to take it any further and helplessly left it on the way.

35. While the mountain of gold was falling there, it crushed to death under its weight many gods and demons.

36. Knowing that they (gods and demons) had got their arms, thighs and necks broken and were dispirited and nervous, the Eagle-bannered Lord manifested himself there.

37. Having seen the gods and Dānavas (demons) have been crushed by the falling of the mountain, he, by his mere glance, restored gods to life as if they were unhurt.

38. Sportively, with one hand, he placed the mountain on Garuḍa, and mounting it (Garuḍa), he went to the sea surrounded by the hosts of gods and demons.

39. Having taken down the mountain from his shoul-

ders and placing it near the water (of the sea) Garuḍa, the best and foremost among birds, being discharged by Lord Hari, went his way.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Churning of the Sea for Nectar

Śrī Śuka said

1-2. They (gods and demons) invited Vāsuki, the king of serpents, agreeing to give him his due share in the proceeds (lit. fruit viz. nectar arising out of that churning). They bound him round the mountain (*Mandara*) like a churning cord. Joyfully yet with a firm determination, they began (to churn the ocean) for the nectar. At first, Lord Hari took hold of the head-side (of the serpent) and gods followed him.

3-4. The lords of the demons did not approve of this act of the Supreme Person. We, who have mastered the Vedic lore and *śāstric* studies and are well-known for our noble birth and deeds, will not hold the tail, that dirty, inauspicious limb of the serpent. (Protesting thus) they stood aloof in silence Seeing that, the Supreme Person, smilingly left off the fore part (of Vāsuki), and took hold of his tail along with the gods.

5. Having thus defined their positions, the sons of Kāśyapa (both gods and demons), began to churn the sea of milk with utmost exertion, for the sake of nectar (*amṛta*).

6. Oh delight (descendant) of Pāṇḍu ! While the sea was being churned, the mountain being unsupported (from below), sank down into the water, due to its own weight, despite the efforts of the mighty ones (gods and demons) to hold it up.

7. Finding their manly efforts frustrated by the much more powerful Providence, they became extremely dejected at heart, and their countenances grew pale.

8. Noticing the set-back caused by the Lord of obstacles,

The Lord of infinite prowess and unfailing determination, assumed the wonderful form of a gigantic tortoise and diving deep into the water bore up the mountain (on its back).

9. Beholding the great mountain being so raised up, the gods and demons proceeded to churn up the sea. The Lord bore the mountain on its back which was, like another big continent, eight hundred thousand *Yojanas* in extent.

10. Supporting on his back the revolving mountain (which was set in motion and was) shaking by the velocity of the powerful arms of the chiefs of gods and demons, (the Lord, incarnated as) the First Tortoise of immeasurable power, regarded the circular motion of the mountain as pleasant scratching of his back, Oh dear King !

11. (Finding the need for still more vigorous efforts) with a view to invigorate their strength and energy, Lord Viṣṇu entered into the Asuras in his demonic form (i. e. his *rājasic* nature); He stimulated the power and energy of the hosts of gods by entering into them in his godly form (i. e. his *sāttvic* nature and into Vāsuki in the form of suspended consciousness (his *tāmasic* form).

12. The Lord of one thousand arms stood like another king of mountains, and stabilised the big mount Mandara by placing one hand over it. The gods headed by Brahmā, Lord Śiva and Indra in the heaven eulogised him and showered him with flowers.

13. Strengthened by the Supreme Lord as pressing the churning rod from above, supporting it from below in the form of a tortoise, entering into the bodies of gods and demons, the mountain (churning rod), and the serpent (the churning cord) the gods and demons lustily and joyously churned the ocean with the great mountain so violently, that all the crocodiles (and other acquatic animals) were greatly agitated.

14. The demons headed by Pauloma, Kāleya, Bali, Ilvala, and others whose splendour and energy was marred with the fire and smoke gushing forth from the thousand fearful eyes and nostrils of that big serpent, became like the *Sarala* trees consumed by forest conflagration.

15. Over the celestials whose splendour was dimmed by the flaming breaths of Vāsuki and whose clothes, excellent

garlands, coats and faces became smoky in colour, the clouds, under the control and (direct command) of the Lord copiously poured showers, and (cool) breezes, impregnated with the waves of the sea, began to blow.

16. When no nectar could come out from the sea, though it was vigorously churned that way (as described above), by the leaders of the hosts of gods and demons, the Unconquerable Lord began to churn it himself.

17. When the Lord, dark blue like clouds, wearing brightly shining garment of golden hue, adorned with a pair of ear-rings, flashing like lightning, with glossy wavy locks of hair on the head, wearing *vanamālā* (a garden of sylvan flowers), with eyes reddish like red lotus, churned the ocean, supporting the mount Mandara from below, and holding in his triumphant arms vouchsafing protection to the worlds, the serpent, he shone like another rival mountain.

18. From the ocean that was being churned and (as a consequence of which) teeming shoals of fishes, crocodiles, sea serpents, and tortoises and whales, sea elephant, alligators and whale-eater *timiṅgalas* got agitated, there issued forth the most deadly poison called *Halāhala*.

19. As that effervescent, irresistible unbearable poison of deadly force spread in each and every direction, above and below, creatures along with their leaders became terribly afraid, and for want of protection flew to Lord Sadāśiva for protection.

20. Beholding that foremost of gods seated along with his divine Consort on the mountain (Kailāsa) for the creation (or prosperity) of the three worlds, and practising penance, so agreeable to sages, for their final Liberation, and thus setting up an ideal before them, they (the celestial patriarchs) paid obeisance to him and offered their prayer.

The Lords of Created Beings said :

21. Oh God of gods ! Oh Supreme God ! Oh Creator, the very soul of beings ! Be pleased to save us who have sought shelter in you, from the poison that is burning the three worlds.

22. You alone are the Almighty Ruler capable of causing bondage and emancipation of the whole worlds, the wise

adore you as such, and as the father (or preceptor) who removes the afflictions of those who seek refuge in you.

23. Oh all pervading Lord ! When you, through your own Potency consisting of three *guṇas*, undertake to create, preserve and destroy the universe, Oh self-seeing perfect Lord, you assume (severally) the appellations Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

24. You are that Supreme mysterious Brahman, the creator of beings, of the higher (gods) and the lower order (sub-human beings). You are the supreme soul who appear as the universe by means of your various powers (such as *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*). Hence you are the Controller and Master of the Universe.

25. You are the source of the Word (*Vedas*) and (hence you stand self-revealed); you are the prime cause of the universe (viz. the principle *mahat*), the soul (the cosmic ego or *ahaṁkāra*); the three *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) which bring forth the Vital airs (*prāṇas*), cognitive and conative sense-organs (*indriyas*) and the material object (*dravya*) and the essential nature (*Sva-bhāva*) of everything, you are the Time spirit (causing commotion and imbalance of *guṇas*), the will to create (*kratu*), the Truth, the (cosmic) Order, the righteousness. The *śāstras* declare that *Pradhāna* constituting of the three *guṇas* is based on (and supported by) you, (or the Praṇava consisting of three syllables A U M reveals you) *

**This verse is variously interpreted* :—

(i) VR : They say that You are the authority of *śāstras*, the cause of the world, the Supreme Self Who is of the nature of vital breath (*prāṇas*), senses, the five elements (*bhūtas*) whose body is Time, the Brahman, The Inner Controller of all, *dharma* (religiousness or to be adored with piety) and the three-syllabled (AUM) *praṇava* is regarded as representing You.

(ii) VJ : You are the root-cause of understanding; You are the promoter of life (senses etc), Your Will is the Truth itself; You are of the nature of existence (*sat*) consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*ānanda*); You are the *dharma* as You preserve the (social) order; You are designated by the letter OM (as stated by *upaniṣads*).

(iii) SD : *Kratu—Pravṛtti dharma*—leading to worldly life.

Satya & ṛta—Nivṛtti dharma—leading to renunciation of worldly life.

(iv) GD: *satya—factual statement*—Truth.

ṛta—sweet speech.

dharma—sacrifices and other rituals.

26. Oh Creator of the universe ! Fire which represents, gods in its person (as the distributor of sacrificial offerings to gods) is your mouth; the wise know that the earth is your lotus-like feet; Time is the motion, the cardinal points, the ears, and Varuṇa (the Lord of waters) the palate, of you who are the soul (the Inner controller) of all gods.

27. The sky represents your navel; the wind, your breath, the sun, your eyes, water, (your semen; the support of all *jīvas* (individual souls) elevated (like that of god Brahmā) and ordinary (like those of sub-human beings), is your ego; *Soma* or the Moon-god, your mind, and the heavens, your head.

28. The seas symbolize your abdomen, the mountains your bones ; all plants and herbs your hair; the Vedic metres seven humours in your body; the *dharma* as enunciated in the Vedas your heart, Oh embodiment of the three Vedas.

29. Oh Lord ! the five upanisads[1] (the sacred hymns or *mantras* known as *Tatpuruṣa*, *Aghora*, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadeva*, and *Īśāna*) from which the collection of thirty eight *mantras* evolve, denote your (five) faces; that self-effulgence constituting the supreme principle which is designated as *Śiva* is your (real) absolute state.

1 : The text of the five *mantras* or *upaniṣads* are as follows :

(i) *Tat puruṣāya vidmahe, Mahādevāya dhīmahī /*
tanno Rudraḥ pracodayāt //

(ii) *Aghorebhyo'tha ghorebhyo ghora-ghora-tarebhyaḥ /*
sarvatas sarva-sarvebhyo namas te astu Rudra-rūpebhyaḥ /

(iii) *sadyo-jātaṁ prapadyāṁ sadyo jātāya vai namaḥ /*
bhave bhavenāti-bhave bhajasva māṁ bhavod-bhavāya namaḥ /

(iv) *Vāmadevāya namo, jyeṣṭhāya namo, Rudrāya namaḥ, Kālāya namaḥ, kala-vikaraṇāya namo bala-vikaraṇāya namo, bala-pramathanāya namas sarva-bhūta-damanāya namo, manonmanāya namaḥ //*

(v) *Īśānas sarva-vidyānām Īśvaras sarva-bhūtānāṁ, Brahmā'dhipatir Brahmaṇo' dhipatir Brahmā Śivo me astu sadāśivam //*

VD. has given the details how these five *mantras* or *upaniṣads* are broken up into thirty-eight *mantras*.

For exemple, from the 1st *upaniṣad Tatpuruṣāya* evolve the following *mantras* :—

(1) *Tat-puruṣāya vidmahe śāntyai /*

(2) *Mahādevāya dhīmahi Vidyāyai /*

(3) *tanno Rudraḥ Pratiṣṭhāyai /*

(4) *Pracodayāt dhṛtyai /*

30. Your shadow is seen in the waves of unrighteousness (such as hypocrisy, covetousness (by which destruction is caused; your (three) eyes are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (which bring about the creation of the universe); Oh Lord, the eternal Veda mainly composed in meters (like Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh) stand for your glance; for you are the omniscient[1] propounder of the *śāstric* lore.

31. Oh Lord of mountains! Your supreme effulgence where the modes of *Prakṛti* like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* have no place, and which is nothing but the supreme Brahman transcending all distinctions and differentiations, is absolutely inacessible to all the guardian deities of various spheres and to Brahmā, Viṣṇu[2] and Indra.

32. That you destroyed Kāma (the god of Love), the sacrifice (of Dakṣa), Tripuras—the three cities (constructed by Maya) subdued the god of death, consumed the (Halāhala) poison (which is as good as consumed as you are certain to drink it up just now) and killed innumerable trouble-makers of living beings, is not so much praiseworthy, on your part, as your unawareness of the razing down of this universe—your own creation by the sparks emanating from the fire in your own (third) eye (you remaining absorbed in deep meditation)[3]

33. Shameless are they who talk nonsense that you are always accompanied by (your consort) Umā of whom you are (excessively) enamoured, though (actually) the pair of your feet are contemplated in their hearts by the world's preceptors who are absorbed in the spiritual bliss of the soul. (They are certainly brazen-faced) who (glibly) prate that you are a ferocious and murderous denizen of the funeral-place when you are a performer of austere penance (as an ideal to the

1. for *saṅkhyātmanaḥ*—VJ reads *sākṣāt Manuḥ* 'Manu' himself Who enunciated the *śāstras* represents Your glance, from which originated the divine sage, by your free will.

2. Vaikuṇṭha :—VR explains that here the Supreme Soul is eulogised. As he abides in Rudra, He i.e. the Supreme Soul is rightly regarded as inaccessible to Vaikuṇṭha or upendra.

3. VJ .—states that the praise of Hara is really that of Hari, as mentioned in 'Hari. 'the soul of all is pleased hereby' *sarvātmā prīyate Hariḥ*).

sages) ! Never can such (people lost to shame) understand your sportive ways.

34. Even god Brahmā and others are incapable of accurately comprehending your essential nature, much less are they able to praise you who are all-pervading and transcendental to *Prakṛti* (The primordial nature) lying beyond the causal relation. How is it possible for us (the recentmost) creation of the creations (like Marīci and others) of Brahmā to extol you ? The prayer offered by us (to the best of our ability) is limited to our (meagre) capacity[1].

35. Oh Supreme Lord ! What we behold is only your (apparent) visible form, but not the trancendental one. (We however, consider ourselves blessed even with this). Though your activities are unmanifest, this manifestation of yours is meant for the weal (and protection) of the world.

Śrī Śuka said :

36. Observing the calamity of those (gods other beings) and being overwhelmed with compassion for them, the Deity, the friend of all beings, spoke thus unto his beloved consort Satī (i.e. Umā) (lest his beloved Umā should prohibit him from drinking the *Halāhala* poison).

Lord Śiva said :

37. "Oh ! What a pity ! Behold, Oh Bhavānī ! What calamity has befallen these creatures from the poison *Kālakūṭa*, produced from the churning of the sea of milk.

38. Certainly, it behoves me now to offer protection to these who are anxious to save their lives; for the protection of the afflicted is the sole concern (duty) of those who are powerful.

39-40. Saintly persons protect (the lives of) beings by sacrificing their own lives which they regard as transient. Oh auspicious lady ! Lord Hari, the soul of all (creatures), is pleased with the man who extends mercy to created beings who, being deluded by the illusive potency of the Supreme Self become the enemies of each other. When the glorious

1. Our praise is an expression of our earnest devotion. VJ.

Lord Hari is pleased, I feel delighted along with the mobile and immobile creation. I, therefore, swallow up (the whole of) this poison. May blessings (and happy life) proceed from me to all the creatures."

Śrī Śuka said :

41. Having thus persuaded his consort, Pārvatī, the glorious Lord Śiva, who confers Bliss upon (or protects) the universe, proceeded to swallow up the poison; She, too, being aware of his prowess, expressed her approbation.

42. The liquid-poison (the concentrated impurities of the churned sea) showed its power even in his case inasmuch as, it reduced his throat blue, though it became an ornament of that benevolent Deity.

43. Generally righteous persons become afflicted at the torments and troubles of other people; for that (mitigation of those troubles) constitutes the highest type of worship of the Supreme Person, the Soul of the Universe.

44. Observing the wonderful feat (of swallowing up of the deadly poison) of Lord Śiva, the God of gods who fulfills the desires of his devotees, all creatures, Dakṣa's daughter (his consort Satī), god Brahmā and Viṣṇu eulogised him.

45. What (negligible) little poison leaked down from his palms while drinking, was conserved by scorpions, serpents, poisonous herbs and plants, cobras and other biting animals like dogs, jackals etc.).

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Lord's Manifestation as Mohinī (The Enchantress)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When the (Kālakūṭa) poison was drunk up by god Śiva (whose emblem is the bull), these celestials and demons felt (relieved and) delighted, and began to churn the sea with

(redoubled) force. Out of that churning emerged *Surabhi* (the wish-yielding cow).

2. The sages, the expounders of the *Vedas* (who devote themselves to sacrifices) accepted it (*Surabhi* which supplied materials like milk, ghee, useful for sacrifices) for (obtaining) sacred oblations in sacrificial performances which constitutes the path of gods (leading to the region of Brahman).

3. After this came out a horse named *Uccaiḥśravas* which was radiantly white like the moon. Bali expressed his desire for it (and took possession of it) but not Indra, as per instructions given by the Lord.

4. Next sprang forth the majestic (moon-white) elephant called Airāvata which, by its four tusks (huge like peaks of mountains) eclipsed the splendour and beauty of the white (snowy) mountain, Kailāsa, (the abode) of the glorious god Śiva.

5. Out of the (churned) ocean, came out a jewel called *Kaustubha*, a precious stone of ruby type. Hari expressed his desire to have that jewel as an adornment for his chest.

6. Thereafter, arose the (celestial tree) *Pārijāta* the ornament of the heavenly region,—a tree capable of conferring eternally all the objects desired by the supplicants just as your honour (Parīkṣit) does on the earth.

7. Next to that came out the *Apsaras* (celestial nymphs) adorned with gold necklaces (and other ornaments), clad in excellent raiments, who delight the denizens of heaven with their charming gait, sportive movements and bewitching glances.

8. And thereafter was manifested goddess Lakṣmī, the very embodiment of Affluence (Śrī), the delight of Lord Hari (Ramā), who is (absolutely) devoted to the glorious Lord. She illumined with her splendour all the quarters (making people residing therein desirous to have affluence), even as the flash of lightening does against the crystalline reflector like mountain Sudāmā.

9. With their minds agitated by the excellence of her glorious beauty, graceful mobility, youthful age and brilliant complexion, all of them including gods, demons and human

beings, cherished a desire for her (in the form of affluence as they know her to be the mother of the three worlds).

10. The great Indra offered her a highly wonderful seat, while principal rivers, in their personal form, brought sacred waters in gold pitchers (for her ablutions).

11. The earth supplied all the herbs and plants required for her ablutions: cows, the five sacred articles (such as milk, curd, ghee constituting the *pañcagavya*) and the spring, all kinds of fruits and flowers produced in the vernal months of *Caitra* and *Vaiśākha*.

12. (With these articles) the seers laid down the procedure of Śāstric rites for her ablutions; while the Gandharvas began to sing auspicious song (in mellifluous notes), and celestial damsels well-versed in dancing, danced and sang.

13. The (presiding deities of) clouds poured forth the sounds of musical instruments like *mṛdaṅga*, *paṇava*, *muraja*, *ānaka* and *gomukha* (various kinds of drums, kettle drums etc.) and produced notes of conchs, flutes, string instruments like *vīṇā* in a loud fan-fare.

14. Thereafter, while Vedic hymns were being chanted by Brāhmaṇas, elephants supporting the four quarters, bathed with gold pots filled with sacred waters, the virtuous (sacred) goddess Śrī who was holding a lotus in her hand.

15. (When her bath was over) the ocean presented her two pieces of yellow silk raiments (one for the lower part of the body and one for the upper). Varuṇa offered her the garland Vaijayantī—by sucking honey from which the black-bees got intoxicated.

16. Viśvakarmā, the progenitor, presented her with various wonderful ornaments; Sarasvatī, a necklace of pearls; and Brahmā, a lotus and serpents, a pair of ear-rings.

17. Thereafter, when the auspicious *mantras* for averting evils were chanted and the benedictions were given (by Brāhmaṇas)[1], the goddess Śrī took in her hand a garland of (blue) lotuses with a swarm of black bees loudly humming about it. Her exceedingly beautiful countenance beaming with

1. *Kṛta-svastyayana*—The Comm. note the pun on *Svastyayana* : Śrī who has her permanent abode (*ayana*) on the auspicious bosom of Lord Viṣṇu (*Svasti*).

a bashful smile and with the dangling of ear-rings pressed against her lovely cheeks, she set out (in search of her Lord).

18. With a pair of symmetrical, big breasts (closely touching each other) pasted with sandal and saffron, and a beautifully slender waist, she shone like a moving creeper of gold while she moved through the big assembly, making sweet jingling sound of her anklets.

19. She (The goddess Śrī) the embodiment of Affluence was looking out for a resort (viz. a husband) absolutely faultless, eternal and endowed with everlasting excellences, but she could not get one among the *gandharvas*, *yakṣas*, demons, *siddhas*, *cāraṇas*, celestials and others (in that assembly).

20. (The goddess Lakṣmī[1] in the form of Affluence says to herself.)

"Verily a person possessing asceticism has no control over his anger (e.g. the sage Durvāsas); (similarly) someone is endowed with wisdom but is not above attachment (e.g. Bṛhaspati or Śukra—the preceptors of gods and demons); some possess greatness but have no control over libidinousness (e.g. god Brahmā or Soma); how can a person (like Indra) who depends for his protection on others (or who is deprived of his position by others i.e. enemies) can be a ruler?

21. Righteousness is found in some but they lack compassion for other beings (e.g. Paraśurāma); some others have liberality but that is not conducive to Final Liberation (e.g. King Śibi); some are endowed with virility and prowess, which are subject to the ravages of Time; while the other who is (like Sage Sanaka completely free from attachment to *guṇas*, will have no place for (i.e. will have nothing to do with) the other person (even his wife, as he is always absorbed in meditation).

22. In some person there is a long life but they are not of amiable nature (liked by women, as, like Mārkaṇḍeya, they are always self-controlled); even that virtue is found in some but the duration of their life is unknown; in some (e.g. god Śiva) there is both (longevity and amiability) but even

1. VD. explains that a great goddess like Lakṣmī possessed the knowledge of the past, present and the future. Hence she rejects persons though not present in the assembly.

he is inauspicious (as he stays in funeral grounds). And he who is exceedingly auspicious (as well as long living and lovable) but he (being self-satisfied) does not care for me".

23. Coming to this conclusion (after deliberation), she elected as her spouse, Lord Viṣṇu (Mukunda) who was most worthy due to his everlasting excellences, absolute independence and desirelcssness, who is transcendental to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* and was sought by all spiritual powers and (hence) was coveted by her even though he is disinterested in all.[1]

24. She placed on his shoulders (round his neck) the beautiful garland of blooming lotuses, resounding with the hum of intoxicated black bees. She stood by him silently waiting (for his grace). She indicated through her eyes blooming with a bashful smile that she attained to his bosom, her permanent resting place.

25. Lord Hari, the Father of the Three worlds offered his bosom as the permanent abode to Śrī (the celebrated consort and beloved of Hari), the mother of the three worlds who was the very embodiment of affluence and fortune or the source of all prosperity and riches. Being thus established (permanently and cosily), she promoted the welfare of all her creatures, the three worlds along with their rulers, by her compassionate and benign glances.

26. There was a loud chorus of the music and melodious notes issuing from the singing and dancing of the Gandharvas (lit. the followers of celestials) along with their wives (celestial damsels) and of the musical instruments such as conchs, trumpets, and drums (which were being played in its accompaniment).

27. Showering flowers on him, all progenitors of the worlds headed by Brahmā, Rudra, and Aṅgiras began to chant the glories of the All-pervading Lord in sacred hymns descriptive of his excellences and of appropriate import.

28. Being looked upon (with Grace) by Śrī, the gods,

1. ŚR. adds : Lakṣmī thought that though Viṣṇu is not interested in others due to His immersion in eternal spiritual bliss, He would not neglect her after marriage, as He entertains the Siddhis. She would consider herself blessed in His service. There is no propriety in marrying ordinary persons. —

progenitors of the worlds along with their creation, became endowed with virtuous nature and other excellences, and attained the supreme-most felicity.

29. When the Daityas and Dānavas were disregarded by the goddess Lakṣmī, they became dispirited, voluptuous, indolent and devoid of the sense of shame, Oh king.

30. Thereupon, arose the presiding deity of wine, Vāruṇī by name, in the form of a girl with lotus-eyes. The Asuras verily took hold of her, by the consent of Lord Hari.

31. As the sea was being churned by the sons of sage Kāśyapa(viz. gods and demons) with a desire to get the nectar there appeared a highly wonderful personage.

32. His (pair of) arms were long and muscular (stout); his neck was adorned with three lines as on a conch; his eyes were reddish; complexion bluish (like a cloud); youthful in age; wearing a wreath and adorned with all ornaments.

33. Clad in yellow garment, the broad-chested person was adorned with ear-rings of highly polished jewels; his hair were soft, glossy and curly even to their ends; that charming person walked with a lion-like gait.

34. Adorned with bracelets and bearing (in his hands) a jar full of nectar, he was indeed a direct manifestation of a minute portion of a ray of the most glorious Lord Viṣṇu.

35-37 He was the well-known Dhanvantari, the Father (or revealer) of the Science of Medicine (lit. Science of life) who is a recipient of a special share in sacrificial offerings. Beholding him and the jar brimming with nectar (in his hands), all the demons, being covetous of appropriating all the products (of the churned ocean) to themselves, forcibly snatched away the jar (from him). As the jar containing nectar was thus being forcibly taken away by the Asuras, the gods, being dejected at heart sought refuge with lord Hari. Observing their pitiable condition described above, the glorious Lord who confers the desired objects to his servants (votaries), consoled them (thus): "Do not feel dejected. Both by sowing dissensions among the Asuras and by assuming the form of Mohinī (a charming damsel) through my deluding Yogic power, I shall accomplish your object"

38. With their hearts burning with the desire of grab-

bing the nectar, there arose a quarrel among them, each clamorously saying, "I must get it first", "my priority first", "Not you", "Not you".

39. "Gods too, who contributed their labour (efforts) to achieve this (production of nectar) deserve their due share in this (nectar) just as in a *Satra-yāga* all the performers of the sacrifice participate equally in the merit accruing from it). This is the eternal Law."

40. Oh king ! In this way the weaker demons who got jealous of the stronger ones who usurped the jar (of nectar) constantly protested to them.

41 In the meanwhile, the Supreme Ruler Viṣṇu who knows all expedients, assumed an extremely wonderful form of a young damsel (charming) beyond the power of words.

42. The form (of the damsel) was attractive to the eyes. It was blue like a lotus, in complexion, beautiful in every limb. Its ears were symmetrical and adorned with ear-rings. Its countenance had beautiful cheeks and a shapely nose.

43. Its waist was slender due to the heavy breasts developed by blooming youth. Its eyes looked frightened (as if) by the humming of the black-bees attracted by the fragrance of its mouth.

44. It wore on its profuse mass (locks) of hair a wreath of blooming *Mallikā* (a kind of jasmine) flowers. Its shapely neck was beautified by a necklace and her beautiful arms were decked with armlets.

45. It appeared enchanting due to her girdle enhancing the beauty of islet-like big hips covered with shining (spotless) cloth. A pair of anklets making a jingling sound while walking decorated its feet.

46. By its bashful smiles, dancing eye-brows and amorous glances, it constantly provoked passion in the hearts of the Daitya generals.[1]

1. VJ's text continues this chapter to the end of the next one. Thus ŚR's 9th chapter corresponds to VJ's 8th chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

Distribution of Nectar by Mohinī

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. The Asuras who renounced the spirit of mutual friendship, reproached each other (for the nectar). Adopting the ways of robbers (with a determination to secure the nectar) they were snatching the jar of nectar from each other when they happened to behold the approaching damsel (the Mohinī-form of Viṣṇu).

2. "Oh what a graceful form! What exquisite splendour ! What a charming youthfulness !" With such passion enkindled in their hearts, they ran up to her and began to enquire.

3. "Who are you Oh damsel, with eyes like lotus-petals? Whence have you come ? What do you intend to do (What is the object of your visit)? Tell us whose daughter you are. You are as it were churning (agitating) our minds, Oh lady with shapely thighs !

4. Not that we do not know (i. e. we do know definitely) that you are not touched by the celestials, Daityas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Cāraṇas or (even by) guardians of the worlds. How then (could it be) by human beings ?

5. Oh lady with beautiful brows ! Indeed ! you must have been certainly deputed by the merciful Lord of the universe to give delight to the senses and minds of all embodied beings. Is it not so ? or have you come of your own accord ?

6. Oh proud lady with a beautiful waist ! (Deputed by the Lord as you are) ! As such it behoves you to bring about amity and happiness among us who, though kins, have turned out to be enemies by jealously contending to obtain one common object.

7. As the sons of the sage Kaśyapa, we are all brothers and have displayed our prowess. Be pleased to distribute the prize (the nectar) equitably, so that there will be no ground for a quarrel.

8. When approached with this request by the Daityas, Lord Hari who assumed the form of that damsel by his delu-

ding Potency (*Māyā*), just laughed, and addressed them as follows, looking at them (all the while) with captivating side-long glances.

The Lord said :

9. How is it that you, the sons of the (great) sage Kaśyapa,[1] associate yourselves with a wanton woman like me? Certainly, no wise man reposes trust in women.

10. Oh enemies of celestials ! The wise people say that the friendship of wolves and especially of way-ward women who are always on the look-out for ever-new victims (and men), is momentary (and unreliable).

Śrī Śuka said :

11. By such of her jocular and enticing remarks, the Asuras (were tempted to feel) reassured in their minds. They gave out an incomprehensible yet significant laugh, and handed over the jar of nectar to her.

12. Thereupon, taking the charge of the jar of nectar, Hari spoke in a tone brightened up with a gentle smile: "If you (unanimously and whole-heartedly) are ready to accept whatever I do, whether right or wrong, in any way (I please), (then and then only) I shall (undertake to) distribute the nectar among you".

13. On hearing her speech, the leaders of the Asuras, incapable of comprehending the depth and significance of her words, agreed to her condition saying "Be it so".

14. Thereupon having observed a fast[2] (as per Mohinī's instruction) they took their bath. After offering oblations to the fire, and having distributed (food etc.) to cows,

1. VD. dissolves: *Kaśyapa-dāyāda*—into Kaśya-pa-dāya-ada—who are in the habit of and deserving to be served with wine. "Why do you want nectar ?" VC. "You, sons of a great sage like Kaśyapa ! The father a great sage and the sons hunt after wanton women !" This is the sarcastic joke.

2. *Upoṣya*—VC. states that they had already observed a fast for the auspicious act of drinking nectar. But a quarrel broke out among themselves for settling which Mohinī became the mediator. After entrusting the jar of nectar to her, they took their bath.

Brāhmaṇas and other beings, they got performed the rite of *Svastyayana* (recitation of benedictory verses and offer of blessings) by Brāhmaṇas.

15. Wearing brand new clothes according to their (individual) choice, and gorgeously adorning their person with ornaments, all of them entered upon (and squatted) on (the seats of) *Kuśa* grass the ends which pointed to the east.

16-17. When the gods and demons (sons of *Diti*) were sitting with their faces to the east in that hall fragrant with incense, decorated with wreaths of flowers and illuminated with lamps, there entered, with the jar of nectar in hands, she (Mohinī) with beautiful, round, symmetrical thighs, of gait slow due (to the weight of) her bulky hips covered with brilliant silk raiment, eyes swimming as if through inebriation, of pitcher-like big breasts, warbling (as it were) with the jingling of her gold anklets, Oh King.

18. Ogling Her, the veritable supreme Deity, as a compeer to goddess Śrī[1] (or Lakṣmī in beauty), with a winning countenance, having beautiful ears adorned with gold ear-rings, shapely nose and charming cheeks, the gods and demons were completely enchanted by her glances accompanied with captivating smiles while her brassiere (the cloth cover of her breasts) slipped (exposing her breasts).

19. Considering that it is unfair to offer nectar to demons who like serpents are wicked by nature, Lord Viṣṇu did not distribute it to Asuras.

20. Arranging them both in separate rows, the Lord of the world made them sit in their respective rows.

21. Taking the Jar of nectar and beguiling the demons by charming movements of brows, bashful smiles, play with garment and ornaments, sweet flattering words, he made gods who were sitting at a distance, to drink the nectar which prevents old age and death.

22. Oh King ! The Asuras abided by the pledge given

1. Śrī-Sakhim—GS. observes that though Viṣṇu was a male companion of Śrī, he acted like a female friend to serve the interests of his devotees.

by them. Out of covetous lust for her and feeling it below their dignity to quarrel with a lady, they kept quiet.

23. They cherished unbounded attachment and lustful longing for her and were too nervous to affect it adversely. Being restrained by the high reverence shown to them by her ("Let the niggardly gods drink first. Sensible people like you should wait a bit") they uttered nothing unpleasant.

24. Disguising himself in the garb of celestials, Rāhu entered (stealthily) in the row of gods (between the sun and the moon) and drank the nectar but was indicated (exposed with gestures) by the sun and the moon (who feared him as more powerful than they).

25. Just while he (Rāhu) was drinking, Hari (swiftly) severed his head with his discus of razor-like sharpness so his headless trunk to which nectar did not touch, fell down dead.

26. His head (however) attained immortality upon which the Birthless Lord conferred planet-hood But cherishing (this old) enmity. he assails the sun and the moon on the new-moon-day and the full-moon-day (respectively whenever he gets an opportunity).

27. When gods had almost consumed the nectar, the glorious Lord Hari, the creator and protector of the world (renouncing his female form) reassumed his own form, while the Asura chiefs kept looking on (agape).

28. In this way, even though (the factors such as) time, place, instrument (apparatus), activity and the objective of the hosts of gods and demons were the same, there was divergence in the fruit (reaped). Out of them, gods easily obtained the fruit viz. the nectar, due to their resort to the dust of the lotus-feet of the Lord, while the Daityas did not.

29. Whatever is done by men with their life, wealth, senses, mind and words for their own person, progeny etc., becomes futile as a consequence of entertaining the idea of difference and distinction. But whatever is done by employing the same set of means dedicating them to the Lord without cherishing the sense of difference, is crowned with success like watering the roots of a tree (reaches to all its branches, leaves etc.). —

CHAPTER TEN

A Battle between Gods and Asuras

Śrī Śuka continued:

1. In this way, Oh King, though Dānavas and the Daityas were careful and put in their best of efforts (in churning the ocean), they did not obtain the nectar because they had turned away their face from Lord Vāsudeva.

2. Having accomplished the production of ambrosia and having made his votaries, the gods, to drink of it, the Lord rode on the back of Garuḍa and flew away while all beings were simply looking on (agape).

3. Seeing the best luck (in succeeding to drink the nectar) of their enemies and being unable to tolerate it (out of jealousy), the sons of Diti (*Daityas*) attacked gods with their weapons uplifted.

4. With their power increased by drinking of nectar and depending on the feet of Lord Nārāyaṇa as their asylum, all the gods retaliated unanimously with their weapons.

5. There, on the shore (of the Milky Sea) was fought the fiercest and the most bloody battle called (after the belligerents as) the *Devāsura* battle (the report or sight of) which made the hair stand on end, Oh King!

6. There (on the sea-shore) the enemies with their minds full of wrath clashed (against each other) on the battle field and struck one another with swords, arrows and various other weapons.

7. Terrific was the noise caused by the blasting of conchs and trumpets, beating of tabors, drums and *Ḍamarus* and of the trumpeting elephants, neighing horses, rattling chariots and shouting soldiers.

8. In that battle, warriors in chariots clashed with car-warriors, foot-soldiers with foot-soldiers, horses with horses and elephants with elephants.

9. Some soldiers fought riding camels, some on elephants while others on donkeys, some on white-faced bears, while others on tigers and monkeys.

10. Some fought (while sitting) on the back of Kites,

vultures, cranes, on hawks and *bhāsas* (a kind of bird), whales (*Timiṅgalas*) and *Śarabhas* (eightfooted animal capable of killing a lion), bisons, rhinoceros, bulls, buffalos and *Aruṇas*.

11. Some fought (riding) on the backs of jackals, rats, chameleons, hares and men; some others on goats and sheep, deer and swans, while others on hogs.

12. Some fought riding birds of land and of water and others on animals of deformed shape. Warriors on both the sides penetrated more deeply and further still.

13-15. Like two oceans swarming with sea-monsters shone the two (warring) armies of Deva and Dānava worriors with their ranks of fighters distinguished by their flags of different colours, by their spotlessly white umbrellas with highly precious handles studded with diamonds, diamond handled fans made of feathers of peacock tails and *chowries*; with their upper garments and turbans waved up by winds and with their burnished armours and ornaments glittering brightly and their sharp weapons sparkling in the rays of the sun.

16-17. In this battle the commander-in-chief of the Asura force was Bali, the son of Virocana whose aerial car was called Vaihāyasa. It was manufactured by Maya and was capable of flying to any place at the occupant's will. It was equipped with all war-materials and weapons. Oh King, it was full of wonder that it surpassed all imagination and description (or could not be accurately located due to its unpredictable and quick movements); sometimes it was visible and sometimes invisible.

18. Surrounded by the commanders of Asura forces, Bali occupied that foremost aerial car. With *chowries* being waved on either side and with a white umbrella, he shone like a rising moon.

19-22 On all sides around him, in their respective aerial cars, attended various squadron-leaders of Asuras such as Namuci, Śambara, Bāṇa, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Dvi-mūrdha (A two-headed demon), Kālanābha, Praheti, Heti, Ilvala, Śakuni, Bhūta-santāpa (the tormentor of all beings), Vajra-daṁṣṭra, Virocana, Hayagrīva, Śaṅku-Śiras, Kapila, Megha-dundubhi, Tāraka, Cakra-dṛk, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Jambha, Utkala, Ariṣṭa, Ariṣṭanemi, Maya, the Lord of the three flying

cities and other demon (tribes) such as Pauloma, Kāleya, Nivāta-Kavaca and others.

23. Without receiving any share in the *soma* or nectar, they had only to undergo hardships and exertions (for churning out the nectar). All of them had mostly vanquished the gods, just at the beginning of the battle.

24. Roaring loudly like lions, they blasted their loud-sounding conchs. Perceiving his foes so proud (and confident of their strength), Indra, the killer of the demon Bala, became extremely enraged.

25. The king of heaven (Indra) who rode Airāvata, the elephant supporting the eastern direction, shone like the sun (the Lord of the day) rising on the eastern mountains with cascades (of water) gushing down.

26. Around Indra stood gods in their respective vehicles, with flags and wielding various weapons. There were the guardians of the world like Vāyu (the Wind-god), Agni (the fire-god), Varuṇa (the Lord of waters) and others along with their followers.

27. Assaulting each other violently and reviling one another in biting terms, cutting to the quick, they rushed forward challenging each other and engaged in duels.

28. Bali fought with Indra, Guha conflicted with Kārttikeya; Varuṇa contended with Heti, and the Sun-god with Praheti, Oh King.

29. Yama on his part combated with Kāla-nābha, Viśvakarmā verily gave battle with Maya; Śambara battled with Tvaṣṭṛ and Virocana with Savitṛ.

30. Namuci took up arms against Aparājita, the pair of Aśvinī-Kumāras against Vṛṣaparvā, the Sun-god alone against the hundred sons of Bali of whom Bāṇa was the eldest.

31. *Soma* (the Moon-god) gave battle with Rāhu; Anil (the wind-god) with Puloman; the mighty goddess Bhadrakālī with Niśumbha and Śumbha.

32. Vṛṣākapi combated with Jambha, Vibhāvasu with the demon Mahiṣa, Ilvala along with Vātāpi with the sons of god Brahmā (such as Marīci and others), Oh Vanquisher of enemies.

33. Durmarṣa fought with Kāmadeva (the god of Love),

Utkala with (seven) Mother-goddesses; Bṛhaspati fought with Śukra, and Śanaiścara (the presiding deity of the planet Saturn) with Naraka.

34. Maruts contended with Nivāta-Kavaca demons, the Vasu-gods with the Kāleya-tribe of Daityas, (gods called) Viśve-devas with the sons of Puloman and the (eleven) Rudra-gods with Krodhavaśa serpents.

35. In this way, in the battle wherein Asuras (demons) as well a leaders of gods were fighting in duels and collectively in as body, approached one another and with the desire of gaining victory, violently struck one another with sharp arrows, swords and iron clubs and javelins.

36. They chopped off the heads of each other with (weapons called) *bhuśuṇḍi* (a fire-arm), discuses, maces, lances, battle axes, *Śaktis*, *Ulmukas* (fire-brands) *prāsas* (a barbed missile) *Bhallakas*, (long swords), *parighas* (iron bars), *mudgaras* (hammer-shaped weapons), and *bhindipālas* (small javelins).

37. Elephants and horses (along with their riders), warriors riding chariots and foot-soldiers, riders of various animals and conveyances were cut down to pieces, their arms, thighs, necks and legs were hacked and hewn; their flags, bows, coats of armour and ornaments were torn and tattered.

38. Heavy dust that was raised by trampling and pounding under feet the battle-ground, and the dashing of the wheels of the chariot against it, enveloped the quarters, the sky, and the sun, but settled down to the ground by profuse flood of spouts of blood (of the wounded warriors—the spouts of blood reaching up to heaven drenching the clouds of dust).

39. That battle-field appeared bright as it was thickly strewn with heads from which the diadems and ear-rings were forcibly shaken off (and fallen), with eyes blood-shot with wrath. and tightly closed lips bitten with anger, long and stout arms decorated with ornaments and still clasping the weapons and thighs shapely like elephant's trunk.

40. The headless trunks of the warriors sprang to their feet and (as if) perceiving through the eyes of their fallen heads, rushed on the battle-field onwards the opposing warriors with their-arms uplifted in their powerful arms.

41. Bali discharged at Indra ten arrows, three at the elephant Airāvata, four (one arrow each) at the four guards of Airāvata, and one at the conductor of the elephant.

42. Just with a smile, the prompt and valorous Indra cut them in the transit with equal number of sharp Bhalla arrows, even before they could reach him.

43. Observing his excellent skill (in archery) Bali, being intolerant, took in his hand a *Śakti* (a dart-like missile) dazzling like a big meteor. But Indra cut it while it was in the hands of Bali.

44. Then in a serial order Bali took up a *Śūla* (a spear), a *prāsa* (a barbed missile), a *tomara* (an iron club) and *ṛṣṭi* (a double-edged sword). But whatever weapon Bali took, the mighty Indra cut it all.

45. The Asura (Bali) then disappeared and created his demonic illusion. Oh King ! there appeared a mountain over the head of the celestial army.

46. From the mountain fell down the trees burning with forest-conflagration, and rocks with chisel-pointed ends descended therefrom crushing the hostile forces to powder.

47. From that mountain rushed forth large serpents, cobras, scorpions, lions and tigers and boars crushing down big elephants.

48. Loudly shouting 'cut down', 'Break asunder' hundreds of naked female Rākṣasīs (ogresses), armed with pikes, appeared along with multitudes of Rākṣasas. Oh King.

49. Large roaring clouds with deep, terrific thunder and blown by stormy wind, rained live coals of fire.

50. A wide spread formidable fire driven by powerful gales and most terrible like the *fire* at the end of the universe, was created (with his black magic) by the demon (Bali) and it began to burn the army of gods.

51. Then there appeared all around them an ocean transgressing all its limits and looked terrible on account of the waves and whirlpools tossed by strong gales.

52. While such terrific illusions were being conjured up by Daityas, powerful in black magic, and dangerous because of their invisible movements, the celestial soldiers stood appalled and despondent.

53. Oh King ! Indra and other gods did not know how to counteract this illusion when the glorious Lord, the creator of the universe was contemplated and he manifested himself.

54. With his feet tender as young leaves, placed across the shoulders of *Garuḍa* (of beautiful wings), he appeared clad in yellow silken garments, with his eyes like a pair of budding lotuses. He wielded eight weapons in his hands. He wore the resplendent Śrī (*Śrī-vatsa* mark) on his bosom, and the *Kaustubha* gems round his neck, an invaluable crown and a pair of priceless ear-rings as well.

55. Hardly did he enter the battle-fields the illusion conjured up by the (black magic) tricks of the Asuras disappeared by the greatness of the destroyer of all types of *māyās* just as a dream breaks up on the return of wakefulness, the very recollection (remembrance) of Hari, put an end to difficulties.

56. Perceiving that Hari arrived on the battle-field on his Garuḍa, Kālanemi who was riding a lion, whirled his javelin aloft and hurled it at him. Playfully seizing it as it was about to fall on the head of Garuḍa, he killed the enemy (Kālanemi) along with his animal with that very weapon.

57. Assaulting the Lord by whose discus the over-powerful Mālī and Sumālī fell down with their head severed on the battle-field. Mālyavān (another Asura General) was about to strike Garuḍa on the head with his heavy mace when Hari, the Supreme-most person, lopped off the head of the enemy who was roaring loudly.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

End of the Battle Between Gods and Asuras at Nārada's Mediation

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Then, having recovered their minds (and *morale* from the impact of demonic illusions) through the great divine grace of the Supreme Person, Indra, Vāyu and other gods

severely hit back each one of the demons who massively assailed them before, in that very battle.

2. When the glorious Indra, being enraged at Bali, the son of Virocana, raised up his Vajra (thunderbolt), all creatures cried out, "Alas ! Ha Ha" (lest it should kill Bali).

3. Despising contemptuously the noble-minded, well-equipped Bali who was moving (fearlessly) in the great battle facing Indra, Indra—the wielder of Vajra, spoke to him as follows :

4. "Just as a roguish conjuror makes gullible persons as if blind-folded by his conjuring tricks (and incantations) and robs them of their money, you desire to conquer us, the masters of such Māyās (black magic and illusory tricks) with your Māyā, Oh fool.

5. Those who by their illusive powers (or by unfaithful cunning observances of vows) wish to ascend to the celestial world or desire to transcend it to go to still higher regions (viz. Liberation), I shall oust such ignorant rogues from the post occupied by them previously and definitely throw them downward still (with no hopes of rising up).

6. Oh dull-witted fellow ! I, that very Indra, shall, with my *Vajra* (thunderbolt) of hundred joints, remove the head of yours, so adept in black magic and evil spells. Show your valorous prowess with the help of your clansmen".

Bali responded

7. "To those whose previous acts became fruitful through the impelling of Time (Destiny) who participate in the battle, fame, victory, defeat and death come all in due course.

8. Therefore wise, thoughtful people realize that all the above (victory, defeat etc.) are controlled by Time and they neither get elated with joy or downcast with grief. You all are, however, ignorant about this (truth).

9. Inasmuch as you regard yourself as the agent of this (victory, defeat etc.), you deserve to be pitied by good people (for your foolishness) and as such, we do not accept your words (howsoever cutting to the quick (they be)".

Śrī Śuka said:

10. Having thus retorted to the Lord of gods, the valorous Bali, the vanquisher of warriors, struck again with Nārāca arrows drawn to the ear, Indra who was in retaliation previously hit back with reproachful words.

11. The god Indra who was thus reproached by the enemy who expressed (nothing but) the truth, did not however tolerate the retort like an elephant pricked with a goad.

12. Indra, the conqueror of enemies, discharged at him, his unfailing weapon *Vajra* (thunderbolt). And down fell Bali on the ground, along with his (aerial) car like a mountain with its wings severed.[1]

13. Seeing his friend fallen down, Jambha, the friend and well-wisher of Bali, attacked Indra with a view to carry out his duty as a friend, even though his friend was fallen.

14. Riding his lion, the extremely powerful Jambha approached Indra and raising his mace (*gadā*) impetuously struck him on the neck and the elephant as well.

15. Stunned and tormented by the stroke of the mace, the elephant was deeply distressed and touching the ground with its knees, it fell into a swoon.

16. Thereupon, a chariot yoked with a thousand horses was brought by Mātali. The Lord of gods left the elephant and got into the chariot.

17. Expressing his appreciation at the (prompt) services rendered by the Charioteer (Mātali) smiling, Jambha, the most prominent Dānava, struck him with a burning javelin.

18. Screwing up all his fortitude, Mātali bore up the extremely unbearable pain of the dart. Greatly enraged at it, Indra sundered off the head of Jambha with his *Vajra* (thunderbolt).

19. Having heard from Sage Nārada, the report of Jambha being killed (in the battle), his kinsmen Namuci, Bala, Pāka rushed to the battle field in great haste.

1. In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa *Sundara* 1. 124-33 we are told that in the *Kṛta* age mountains had wings which Indra clipped. Only Maināka was saved by Vāyu in repayment of which obligation he allowed Hanumān to rest during his jump to Laṅkā and told him of the clipping.

20. Cutting Indra to the quick by biting, harsh words, they covered him with volleys of arrows as clouds would do to a mountain, with a down-pour of rain.

21. In that battle, the light-handed Bala struck simultaneously all the thousand horses of Indra with as many arrows.

22. It was certainly an achievement of a marvellous feat in the battle, when Pāka simultaneously fitted and discharged two hundred arrows and struck Mātali with a hundred and all the parts of the chariot with a hundred shafts.

23. With fifteen big arrows furnished with golden hilts, Namuci shot Indra and roared in the battle like a thundering rain-charged cloud.

24. Like clouds obscuring the sun in the rainy season, the Asuras screened off on all sides Indra, along with his chariot and charioteer, with net-works of arrows.

25. Not being able to behold Indra and (considering themselves as) being leaderless and vanquished by the inimical forces, the hosts of celestials and their followers became bewildered and shrieked out like merchants in a ship wrecked on the high seas.

26. Thereupon issued out Indra along with his chariot, horses, flag and charioteer from the cage of arrows. Indra appeared brilliant like the sun illuminating the cardinal points, the sky and the earth, with his effulgence, at the close of the night.

27. Observing his army overpowered by enemies in the battle, the god, the wielder of *Vajra* (thunderbolt) vehemently lifted up his thunderbolt (determined) to strike down the enemy.

28. With that very eight-edged weapon he (simultaneously) sundered the heads of Bala and Pāka, striking terror into the hearts of the kinsmen who stood (simply) looking on, Oh King (Parīkṣit).

29. On perceving their death and being overwhelmed with grief, revenge and rage, Namuci, determined to kill Indra, put forth a mighty exertion.

30. Catching hold of a javelin made of iron, furnished with gold, he attacked Indra in rage, threatening loudly,

"Now you are killed". He hurled it at the King of gods and roared like a lion.

31. Even as it was dashing with terrific speed through the sky, Indra shattered it into thousand pieces with his arrows. The lord of the celestials, out of rage, struck him with his *Vajra* (thunderbolt) on the neck with a view to chop off his head.

32. The thunderbolt that was discharged with great vehemence did not pierce his skin. It was certainly the most wonderful that the *Vajra* (the thunderbolt) that killed the extremely powerful Vṛtra, was baffled by the skin of Namuci's neck.

33. Indra apprehended fear from the enemy from whom even Vajra (thunderbolt) was baffled. What has happened through the Destiny, has deluded the whole of the world.

34. It is by this thunderbolt that, in days of yore, I carried out the severance of wings of mountains which taking to their wings at will, settled anywhere on the earth, causing destruction to people, by their weight.

35. It was by this *Vajra* that Vṛtra, the very embodiment of the power of the austere penance of Tvaṣṭṛ, was split asunder, and also other mighty (persons) whose skin could not be scratched by all other missiles.

36. Such *Vajra*, when hurled by me at an insignificant Asura, became baffled and ineffective. Useless has become the spiritual energy of the Brāhmaṇa (with which it was invested). It has become (nothing but) a stick which I won't handle any more".

37. To Indra who was thus pondering in dejection, a voice from heaven said, "This demon should not be killed by weapons wet or dry.

38. He has been conferred a boon by me that he would not meet death from wet or dry things. Hence, you have to think out some other expedient (for killing) the enemy".

39. Hearing the heavenly voice, Indra composed his mind and contemplated. It occurred to him (lit. he saw) that foam (of the sea) was the (real) expedient which comprises both the conditions (of being wet *and* dry).

40. With the foam which was neither dry nor wet (but

was both simultaneously) he chopped off the head of Namuci.[1] Hosts of sages sang his eulogies and showered the Lord of gods with flowers.

41. The chief of Gandharvas, Viśvāvasu and Parāvasu gave musical concert. Gods beat big drums and celestial nymphs danced with joy.

42. Other gods like Vāyu, Agni, Varuṇa and others destroyed their opponents with volleys of missiles, just as lions would kill the deer.

43. The divine sage Nārada who was deputed to celestials by god Brahmā, on perceiving the slaughter of Dānavas, prevented them (from that genocide, with the following words):

Nārada said:

44. "Supported as you were by the arms of Lord Nārāyaṇa, nectar was secured by you. You are also favoured by goddess Śrī (the consort of Nārāyaṇa). Hence you now cease from fighting."

Śrī Śuka said:

45. Paying due respect to the words of the sage Nārada, they controlled the impetuosity of their rage. All of them returned to heaven, all the while being praised by their attendants.

46. The survivors of the battle carried the still unconscious Bali to the western mountain (of the setting sun) as per Nārada's advice.

47. Śukrācārya (the preceptor of Daityas) restored to life (all the Daityas) whose limbs were intact, and necks in existence (unbroken), by means of his secret science of restoring life (*saṁjīvani vidyā*).

48. Bali regained his consciousness and other faculties at the touch of Śukra's hand. Being endowed with the reality about the nature of the world, Bali suffered no depression, even though he was defeated.

1. *apāṁ phenena Namuceḥ Śira Indrodavartayaḥ* RV 8.14.13, AV. 19.3.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Lord Śiva Fascinated by Mohinī

The son of Bādarāyaṇa (Śrī Śuka) said :

1-2. When god Śiva (the bull-bannered god) heard that Lord Hari infatuated the Dānavas in a female form and made the hosts of gods to drink the nectar, he ascended his bull along with goddess Pārvatī, and surrounded by all the hosts of goblins, paid a visit to the region where god Viṣṇu (the killer of Madhu) was residing, with a view to see him.

3. God Śiva (the source of the world) who along with his consort Umā (Pārvatī) was reverentially received by the Lord (Viṣṇu) and was seated comfortably, returned his respects with compliments and spoke smilingly.

Śrī Mahādeva said:

4. "Oh God of gods! Pervader of the universe ! The Lord of the Universe of which you are the embodiment ![1] You are the soul, the source[2] and the controller of all things.

5.* Your honourable self is that *Brahman* which is the Reality and pure consciousness—the *Brahman* wherefrom proceed the beginning (the emergence), the end (the destruction), the middle (the sustenance) of this universe, but who, due to his being unchangeable is not affected by these (changes) ; who constitutes this, the external thing (or the object to be enjoyed) as well as 'I', the other (the enjoyer of that object).

6. Meditative sages desirous of (attaining) the final beatitude do not seek any other blessings. They renounce attachment to both (this and the other world) and adore your lotus-feet.

7.** You are that perfect Brahman, immortal, attribute-

1. *Jagan maya*—Whose body is constituted of the sentients and non-sentients in the universe—VR.

2. *hetu*—The efficient cause and not extraneous ones like *adṛṣṭa*—VJ.

* Deleted by VJ.

** Acc. to VR. Brahman being the material cause is not different from everything else.

less and hence untouched by misery; absolutely and essentially blissful but not subject to modifications. Though one without a second, you are distinct from everything else. You are the cause of the origin, maintenance and dissolution of the universe, and the controller of all *jīvas*. Though sought after by them, you expect nothing from them.

8. You alone are one, both gross and subtle, the cause and the effect. Just as there is no difference in the sub-effect called gold whether moulded (into an ornament) or (kept) unmodified (in its original form)[1] it is through ignorance that difference is superimposed on you, by people. The attribution of difference is due to *guṇas* or modifications, and you are absolutely free from them.

9.* Some (viz. the followers of the Vedānta) regard you to be the *Brahman*; while others (i.e. Mīmāṁsakas) consider you to be *Dharma*. Some (i.e. Sāṁkhyas) think you to be the Supreme Controller transcendental to both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. Others (the followers of the *Pāñcarātra* school) regard you as one endowed with nine powers,[2] while some others (followers of Yoga) know you to be the Supreme Person (*Mahā-puruṣa*), (while) you are changeless and self-dependent absolute.

10. Neither I nor god Brahmā (whose duration of life is of two *parārdha* years), nor sages of whom Marīci is the chief, though created from the *Sattva* quality, can comprehend the (real nature of the) universe created by you (much less your real nature). Oh Lord, how can demons and human beings and others whose minds are deluded by Māyā and who

1. VR. regards this view as that of Vaiśeṣikas who, through ignorance, believe that this universe exists independent of Brahman.

VJ. takes *vihata* as a v.l. for *vihita* and states 'inasmuch as difference is overlaid on you through ignorance, it is *ipso facto* destroyed i.e. null and void'.

* VJ thinks that the theories about God mentioned here are held by the followers of Vedānta and of Smṛtis, Purāṇas, Pañcarātra and by Ekāntins who regard God as *Mahāpuruṣa* who is changeless and absolute.

2. ŚR. enumerates the powers of the Lord as follows :
Vimalā, ut-karṣiṇī, Jñāna, Kriyā, Yoga, Prahvī, Satyā, Īśānā, Anugrahā

are of inauspicious *rājasic* and *tāmasic* origins,[1] or whose behaviour is wicked due to the influence of *rajas* aud *tamas*, can understand(You or Your creation comprehensively).

11. You are essentially knowledge itself. As such you know everything—(such as) all of your own work, the creation, continuance and destruction of the universe, the activities of beings, their bondage and emancipation from the mundane existence. Just as, Vāyu (the air) enters everything mobile and immobile as well as the sky, you, being the soul of everything and the very knowledge itself, pervade everything.

12. Your incarnations, while indulging in sportive activities with *guṇas*, have been witnessed by me. As such, I desire to behold that form of a young damsel assumed by you.

13. As we have a great curiosity, we have eagerly come to see that (female) form whereby Daityas were fascinated and gods were enabled to drink nectar.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. Being thus entreated by god Śiva, the wielder of the trident, Lord Viṣṇu gave out a hearty laugh, and replied in words pregnant with deep meaning.

The Lord replied :

15. When the jar of nectar passed (into the possession of the Daityas), the female form was assumed by me for exciting the curiosity of Daityas (and thus beguiling them) with a view to accomplish the interests of gods.

16. Oh ! The best of gods ! As you are curious to see it, I shall presently reveal to you that form which excites amorous passions and which is highly appreciated by passionate persons.

Śrī Śuka said :

17. While speaking thus, the venerable Lord immediately vanished at that very spot, while god Śiva, the Source of the Universe, along with his spouse Umā, waited there wistfully casting his glances in all directions.

18. Thereupon in a garden among trees blossoming with variegated flowers and reddish foliage, he saw a lovely

1. *Ābhadraṁ rājasaṁ ca tāmasaṁ ca vṛttam utpattir yeṣāṁ te*. ŚR.

damsel with a girdle round her waist clothed with a brilliant silken raiment, engaged in playing with a ball.

19. At every step she appeared as if getting broken in her waist, by the heavy weight of her big breasts, shaken by her movements of bending and rising along with the movements of the bounding ball, as well as with the weight of her precious solid pearl necklaces, and was taking her foliage-like tender feet here and there (from place to place).

20. Due to the quick (impredictabte) movements of the ball in different directions, the pupils of her longish unsteady eyes appeared agitated. Her countenance appeared all the more beautiful with her cheeks shining with the resplendent pair of ear-rings and with her dark glossy tresses.

21. With her beautiful left hand she was tightening her loosened silken raiment and her dishevelling braids of hair and was hitting the ball with the other hand, she appeared as if enchanting the world with her own deluding powers.

22. Beholding her playing with the ball, the god lost his balance of mind by her side glances, accompanied with a covert smile caused by some slight bashfulness, while sporting with the ball. His mind became agitated by the exchange of mutual gazing of the woman. He became oblivious of himself, of his consort Umā and of his own attendants.

23. When the ball slipped from her hand and went to a long distance and she ran after it while the wind blew away her fine silken garment along with the girdle. And indeed (even) god Śiva stood gazing.

24. Beholding that exquisitely charming damsel with such winsome side glances and enchanting the heart, god Śiva fixed his heart on her indeed, when she showed to be enamoured of him through her ogling.

25. Being deprived of his wisdom, sense of decency and discernment, by her, and overcome with erotic passions evoked by her, he lost his sense of shame and approached her even while (his divine consort) Pārvatī stood gazing.

26. Seeing him approaching, she, being stripped of clothes, became extremely abashed. She concealed herself behind the tree laughing but did not linger (anywhere).

27. The divine Śiva whose senses (control of mind)

were robbed away[1] (by the damsel) and was overpowered by passions, pursued her as the leader of elephant would follow a she-elephant.

28. Running after her with great speed, and seizing her by the locks of her hair, he dragged her near him and hugged her in his arms, despite her unwillingness.

29. Being closely embraced by god Śiva, like unto a she-elephant by an elephant, she wriggled to and fro (within his arms) and got her hair dishevelled.

30. Having extricated herself from the arms of the great god, she ran away fast, despite her big hips, as she was the Māyā (deluding potency) created by the Lord, Oh dear king.

31. Being completely overwhelmed with passion, like that by his enemy, the above-described Rudra followed the footsteps of the damsel, created by Lord Viṣṇu of miraculous exploits.

32. While running after her, the semen of Śiva of unfailing procreative capacity, went on escaping like that of a big bull-leader of a herd pursuing a fecundable cow or as that of a rutting leader-elephant running after a fertilizable she-elephant.

33. Oh ruler of the earth! The various places on earth where the seed of that great-souled god fell, became the areas of silver and gold ores.

34.* Thus in the course of his pursuit (of the damsel), god Śiva was found (pursuing her) on the banks of the rivers and lakes on the mountains, in forests and gardens and wherever sages lived.

35. When his semen was completely escaped, he realized that he had been befooled by the Māyā of God Viṣṇu and he recovered himself completely from that delusion, Oh great king.

36. They say that god Śiva who thus fully realized the greatness of Lord Viṣṇu, his own soul, and the soul of the

1. VJ.'s v.l. *pramathitendriyaḥ*—whose senses were extremely provoked.

* GS. remarks that hereby Lord Viṣṇu demonstrated to the sages how even god Śiva had fallen from his yogic status, and thus indirectly emphasized that they should keep themselves aloof from women.

Universe, did not regard it (his being deluded) as in any way wonderful in the case of the Lord of incomprehensible prowess.

37. Perceiving that Śiva is unaffected by remorse and the sense of shame, Lord Viṣṇu (the slayer of demon Madhu) was highly pleased, and assuming his male form, he addressed him thus.

The Lord said :

38. I am glad that even though you have been deluded by my (irresistible) Māyā (deluding potency) in the form of a damsel, Oh dear one ! you, of your own accord, have recovered your normal state of passionlessness or ego-lessness born of devotion (which is impossible in the case of any other god. Hence I address you as) the greatest god.

39. What man, with the exception of you, whence once caught in the snare of delusion, can overcome My Māyā which brings forth various objects (of enjoyment) and becomes extremely difficult to get over, by persons lacking in self-control.

40. This Māyā consisting of attributes (viz. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) functions under my control (who am the Time-spirit,) for the purpose (of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe), by means of the parts (such as *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*). She shall not henceforth overpower you.

Śrī Śuka said :

41. In this way, he (god Śiva) who was honoured by an embrace by Lord Viṣṇu bearing the Śrīvatsa mark on the bosom, took his leave of him, (respectfully) circumambulated him and returned to his own abode along with his retinue.

42. Later on, while being eulogized by great sages, the glorious god Śiva (the source of the Universe) lovingly spoke to his spouse Pārvatī about the Māyā which was a part of the Soul (of the Universe, viz.) Lord Viṣṇu, Oh scion of Bharata.

43. "Have you observed the deluding potency of the Unborn Supreme Person, the transcendental Deity whereby

I, prominent one of his digits (rays), became helpless and succumbed to delusion ? What to speak of others who are not the masters of their own selves ?

44. He is that same Eternal Ancient Person, unaffected by Time, and incomprehensible to the Vedas,—The Person about whom you enquired of me at the end of my deep *yogic* meditation which lasted one thousand years."

Śrī Śuka said :

45. Oh Child ! In this way has been related to you the exploit of Lord Viṣṇu, the wielder of Śārṅga bow by whom the great mount (Mandara) was supported on his back while the ocean was being churned (for getting the nectar).

46. Never and in no way shall fail the exertions of a person who constantly chants or listens to the account of this (glorious deed of Hari), or the chanting of the glorious attributes of the Lord of excellent renown relieves one of all the troubles of *saṁsāra*.

47. I bow unto the feet of the Lord who though beyond the reach of the evil ones, is accessible through devotion; who, deluding the enemies of gods by assuming the disguise of a young damsel, made the foremost of gods who resorted to him to drink the nectar churned out of the (milky) sea, and who fulfils all the desires of those who approach him (for asylum).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Description of the Future Manvantaras

Śrī Śuka resumed:

1. The present, seventh Manu is known as Śrāddhadeva. He is the son of Vivasvān. Now hear from me the names of his sons.

2. They are Ikṣvāku, Nabhaga, Dhṛṣṭa, Śaryāti, Nariṣyanta, Nābhāga and the seventh is called Diṣṭa.

3. Karuṣa, Paruṣa and the tenth is known as Vasumān—these are the ten sons of Vaivasvata Manu, Oh tormentor of the enemies.

4. The (twelve) Ādityas, the (eight) Vasus, the (eleven) Rudras, the (ten) Viśvedevas, the (forty-nine) Maruts (wind-god), two Aśvinī-kumāras, the (three) Ṛbhus are (the seven grades of) gods and their Indra (ruling god) is Purandara, Oh King.

5. Kaśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadvāja—These seven are regarded as the seven (principal) sages.

6. Even in this Manvantara, there was the incarnation of the Lord, born of Kaśyapa and Aditi. Lord Viṣṇu, assuming the form of a dwarf, was born as the youngest son of Aditi.

7. The (first) seven Manvantaras have been described to you briefly by me. Now I shall narrate to you the future ones, associated with the powers (incarnations) of Viṣṇu.

8. Vivasvān had two wives, both being the daughters of Viśvakarman. They were Sandhyā and Chāyā about whom I have spoken to you, Oh king of kings.[1]

9. Some say that he had a third wife called Vaḍavā.[2] Out of the three wives, the children of Saṁjñā were three—Yama, Yamī and Śrāddhadeva. Now listen to the names of Chāyā's children—

10. Sāvarṇi, the daughter Tapatī who became the wife of Saṁvaraṇa and the third son Śanaiścara (the presiding deity of the planet Saturn). The two Aśvinīkumāras were the sons of Vaḍavā.

11. When the eighth Manvantara will set in, Sāvarṇi will be the Manu. Nirmoka, Virajaska and others are the sons of Sāvarṇi, Oh King.

12. Then (in the 8th Manvantara), Sutapas, Virajas and Amṛta-prabhas are going to be the gods. Their ruling god (Indra) will be Bali, the son of Virocana.

13. Having donated the whole of this earth to Viṣṇu who begged for only three paces of land (in this Manvantara), he will relinquish his eminent position of Indra (attained by

1. *Vide Supra* 6.6. 40-41.

2. But according to the Bh. P. *Supra* 6.6.40 Saṁjñā assumed the form of Veḍavā and gave birth to Aśvinī kumāras.

him through Viṣṇu's grace in the next *Manvantara*), and will attain to final beatitude.

14. That same Bali who was bound down by the Lord who, when pleased, installed him in the Nether world Sutala which is superior to the *Svarga* in splendour—still rules there like the king of the heavenly regions.

15-16. Gālava, the glorious (Paraśu-) Rāma, Aśvatthāman, the son of Droṇa, Kṛpa, Ṛṣyaśṛṅga and our father the venerable Bādarāyaṇa—these will be the seven sages. Even now they continue to occupy their own hermitages through their *yogic* powers.

17. The Lord will incarnate with the name Sārvabhauma, from Devaguhya and Sarasvatī (as his parents). The powerful Lord will wrest Indrahood from Purandara and confer it on Bali.

18. The ninth Manu will be Dakṣa-Sāvarṇi who will be born of Varuṇa. Bhūtaketu, Dīptiketu and others[1] will be his sons, Oh King.

19. Pāras and Marīcigarbhas and others (viz. Sudharmans)[2] will be (the three categories of) gods then. It is traditionally reported that Adbhuta will be the Indra. Then there will be the seven sages of whom Dyutimat[3] is prominent.

20. A ray of the Lord will incarnate under the name Ṛṣabha from Āyuṣmat and Ambudharā (as his father and mother). Adbhuta, the Indra, will enjoy the three worlds conquered (for him) by Ṛṣabha.

21. The tenth Manu will be Brahma-sāvarṇi, the great son of Upaśloka. His sons are Bhūriṣeṇa and others while Haviṣmat and others will be prominent Brāhmaṇa (sages).

22. Haviṣmān, Sukṛti, Satya, Jaya, Mūrti will be (some of) the Brāhmaṇa (sages) then. Suvāsana and Viruddha are the gods, and Śambhu is the Lord of gods.

1. VP. 3.2.22 adds Dhṛtaketu, Nirāmaya, Pañca-hasta and Pṛthuśrava to this list.

2. VP. 3.2.20-21 adds this third category and each category will consist of 12 gods.

3. The VP. 3.2.22 gives the complete list as follows :
Dyutimat, Savana, Bhavya, Vasu, Medhātithi, Jyotiṣmān and Satya.

23. The Lord, with a part of his Self, will be born in the house of Viśvasṛj (Prajāpati) through Viṣūci, and be known as Viśvaksena. He will make friends (render help to Śambhu (the then Indra).

24. The self-controlled Dharma-sāvarṇi will be the eleventh Manu who will have ten sons as Satyadharma and others.

25. The (categories of) gods will be Vihaṅgamas, Kāmagamas and Nirvāṇarucis. Their ruler Indra will be Vaidhṛta, while Aruṇa and others[1] will be the (seven) sages.

26. The ray (part) of Hari known as Dharmasetu, the son of Āryaka through Vaidhṛta, will sustain and protect the three worlds.

27. Oh King, the twelfth Manu will be Rudra-sāvarṇi and his sons will be Devavān, Upadeva, Devaśreṣṭha and others.

28. Then Ṛtadhāman will be the Indra and the (groups of) gods will be Harita and others.[2] And the (seven) sages will be Tapo-mūrti, Tapasvin, Āgnīdhraka and others.[3]

29. A part of Hari, by name Svadhāman, the mighty son of Satya-sahas and Sūnṛtā will protect this period of Manu.

30. The thirteenth Manu will be the self-controlled Devasāvarṇi and the sons of Devasāvarṇi are Citrasena, Vicitra and others.

31. The (classes of) gods will be designated as Sukarma and Sutrāma[4] and Divaspati. Then Nirmoka, Tattvadarśin and others will be the (seven sages[5]).

32. The ray of Lord Hari, the master of *yoga*, will be

1. GS quotes from the *Harivaṁsa* the following sages implied in *ādi* : Haviṣmān, Vapuṣmān, Aruṇa, Anagha, Urudhi, Niścara and Agnitejas.

2. VP. 3.2.33 enumerates Harita, Rohita, Sumanas, Sukarman and Surāpa as the five groups (*gaṇas*) of gods.

3. The list in VP. 3.2.34 includes Tapasvin, Sutapas, Tapomūrti, Taporati, Tapo-dhṛti, Tapo-dyuti and Tapo-dhana.

4. VP. 3.2.37-39 adds Sudharman as the third class and each class consists of 33 gods.

5. The list in VP (above) differs. It consists of Nirmoha, Tattvadarśin, Niṣprakampya, Nirutsuka, Dhṛtimān, Avyaya and Sutapas.

born as the son of Devahotra through Bṛhatī and will procure the kingdom of three worlds to the Indra, Divaspati.

33. They say that Indra-sāvarṇi will come as the fourteenth Manu, and the sons born of him will be Uru, Gambhīrabuddhi and others.

34. The (categories of) gods will be Pavitra, Cākṣuṣa and others[1], while Śuci will be the Indra. Agnibāhu, Śuci, Śuddha, Māgadha and others will be the (seven sages).[2]

35. Then Hari will incarnate as the son Satrāyaṇa and Vitānā, and will be called Bṛhadbhānu. He will continue the course of sacrificial rituals, Oh great King.

36. These fourteen Manu periods relating to the past, present and future have been described to you, Oh king. It is by these (Manu periods) that the Kalpa comprising one thousand yugas, is measured.

37*. A person who narrates or listens to the narration of the story of the fourteen Manus will find Viṣṇu gracious unto him.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Duties of Manus and Their Functionaries

The King (*Parikṣit*) *asked* :

1. Be pleased to explain to me, Oh worshipful sage, how and by whom are these Manus and others employed for the execution of what (particular) function during the Manvantaras.

The sage (*Śuka*) *replied* :

2. Oh King ! Manus, sons of Manus, Sages, Indras,

1. VP. adds Kaniṣṭha, Bhrājata and Vācāvṛddha as three categories. (i.e. in all five)—Ibid 3.2.41.

2. VP. adds Agnīdhra, Yukta and Jita and completes the list of seven sages.—Ibid 3.2.42.

* A probable interpolation recorded in the Bombay edition (e.g. D.S. Yande's edition of the Bh. P.).

gods—all these (five categories of functionaries) are under the control of the Supreme Person.

3. Directed by the aforesaid forms of the Supreme Person such as the incarnation called Yajña and others, Manu and other functionaries carry on the work of the world.

4. At the end of the quartet of *yugas* (i. e. at the beginning of the new *Kṛta-yuga*), the sages, by dint of their asceticism and penance, saw the corpus of the *Vedic* texts 'swallowed up' by Time, through the help of which the Eternal Law (Religion) becomes known.

5. Then Manus are instructed by Hari in the path of righteousness, characterised by four feet (viz. penance, bodily and mental purity, compassion and truth). Remaining controlled in mind, they propagate the path of righteousness all over the world during their period, Oh King.

6. The protectors of the subjects (viz. the sons of Manu) themselves and through their descendants protect the path of righteousness (*dharma*)—and the earth—to the end of that Manvantara, while gods along with others who are eligible for sacrificial shares, enjoy their shares in the sacrificial oblations.

7. Enjoying the excellent affluence and fortune of the three worlds conferred upon him (out of grace) by the Supreme Lord, Indra protects the three worlds and sends down at will showers of rain.

8. Assuming in every *Yuga*, the form of Siddhas (like Sanaka) the sages (like Yājñavalkya) and masters of Yoga (like Datta), Hari teaches the paths of knowledge (*Jñāna*), action (*Karman*) and *Yoga* (respectively).

9. He carried out the work of creation by assuming the form of *Prajāpatis* (Progenitors of the world like Marīci). He kills robbers etc. by appearing as an independent monarch. And possessing different characteristics, in the form of Time, he destroys all.

10. The Lord is never perceived, though praised highly by the people who are deluded by the Māyā (consisting) of various names and forms. Nor is he realized by various systems of philosophy.

11. The measures of the minor *Kalpas* (forming one

day of Brahmā) which are the subdivisions of the great *Kalpa* (the lifetime of Brahmā) have been described to you. Those well-versed in ancient lore state that this *Kalpa* consists of fourteen *Manvantaras*.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Bali's Conquest of the Svarga (Celestial Region)

The King Parīkṣit said:

1. For what purpose did Lord Hari, though himself the Supreme Ruler, beg like a miserable fellow, three paces of land from Bali ? Why did he bind him down even though he got his object sought for ?

2. This we desire to know thoroughly as it is highly surprising to us that the Lord of sacrifices, (though) Perfect (in all respects within himself), begged like a destitute and (subsequently) bound down (with fetters) the innocent (donor).

Śrī Śuka said:

3. Being deprived of his splendour, wealth as well as his life through being defeated by Indra in a battle, Bali was revived by Śukra and other members of the Bhṛgu clan, Oh king. The noble-minded Bali, with utmost faith, resorted to the Bhṛgus as a disciple, offering them whatever they desired.

4. The Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgu clan, endowed as they were with extra-ordinary powers and were pleased with him, consecrated him with the great sacred ablution (called *aindra* —Pertaining to Indra) with due formalities, (as prescribed in the *Bahvṛc Brāhmaṇa*), and desirous as he was of conquering the celestial region, made him perform the *Viśvajit* sacrifice.[1]

1. This order of 'consecration' (*abhiṣeka*) and performance of sacrifice is given by G.S. In the *Viśvajit* sacrifice the sacrificer has to give all wealth (after separating the share of the eldest son and land). —Kane's *Hist. of Dh. Śāstra* II. ii. 1212, Fn. 2644.

5-6. From the sacrificial fire duly worshipped with oblations, there emerged a chariot strengthened with gold plates, horses of the same colour (green) as those of Indra, a banner blazing the emblem of a lion, a celestial bow fastened with plates of gold, a pair of inexhaustible quivers full of arrows, a divine coat of mail. His grandfather (Prahlāda) conferred on him a wreath of never-fading flowers and Śukra (his preceptor), a conch.

7. Thus with all the military equipment procured for him by Brāhmaṇas, and having got the *Svastyayana* (auspicious rites) performed through them, Bali circumambulated them respectfully, paid obeisance to them and taking his leave of Prahlāda, bowed down to him.

8-9. Ascending into the celestial chariot conferred upon him by the Bhṛgus (Śukra and his clansmen, by performing the sacrifice), the mighty (chariot) warrior Bali, wearing that excellent wreath, put on his armour, armed himself with the bow, the sword and tied up the (inexhaustible) quivers. With his arms radiant with gold armlets and with dazzling ear-rings (of the shape of an alligator) he shone like the fire blazing in its sacrificial place, when he mounted the chariot.

10-11. Accompanied by his retinue and commanders of (other) Daitya legions who were his equals in command, prowess and splendour, and were (as if) drinking the skies and burning the quarters with (their glaring) eyes, and leading the surrounding mighty Daitya army, he marched against the highly prosperous capital of Indra, shaking as it were the heaven and the earth (by its thumping march).

12. The city appeared beautiful with its splendid gardens and parks like Nandana and others, resonant with its warbling pairs of birds and humming intoxicated black-bees.

13. (It looked charming) with the celestial trees whose branches were heavily laden with tender foliage, fruits and blossoms of flowers, with lotus-ponds thereof, full of acquatic birds like swans, cranes, ruddy geese (*Cakrāhva*), and ducks and young celestials, damsels engaged in watersports with gods therein.

14. It was girt on all sides by the heavenly Gaṅgā (Mandākinī) as its moat. It was surrounded with fortifica-

tions of gold, shining like fire and was provided with high towers.

15. Constructed by Viśvakarmā, the entrance and doors of the houses were fitted with panels of gold while the city-gates were of crystals and all the roads were well laid down.

16. It appeared beautiful with its assembly halls, quadrangles and streets; it was full of trillions of mansions (or heavenly cars); the quadrangles were paved with precious stones and platforms were studded with diamonds and corals.

17. There young damsels of eternal youth and unfading beauty (ever) appearing sixteen years of age, wearing purest raiment, appeared resplendent like fires ablaze with flames.

18. Breezes wafting the fragrance of wreathes of fresh flowers dropped down from the braids of hair of the heavenly damsels blow through its streets.

19. The beloveds of gods (Heavenly nymphs) pace through the streets, covered with whitish fragrant fumes of the *aguru* (a kind of sandal-wood) that escape through the gold-windows (of houses).

20. It was covered with pearl-canopies and flag-staffs studded with precious stones, and balconies decorated all around with buntings. It was resonant with notes of peacocks, pigeons, hummings of black-bees and appeared gay and auspicious by the sweet songs of celestial damsels.

21. It was pleasing to the mind with its sounds of *mṛdaṅga*, conchs, drums and kettle-drums, as also with the sweet rhythmic sound of lutes, *murajas*, *ṛṣṭis* (kind of musical instruments) and flutes regulated to the beat of the cymbals, with dances accompanied with orchestral music and songs of demigods (such as Gandharvas, Kinnaras) and had surpassed with its effulgence, the presiding deity of lustre.[1]

22. The impious, wicked, the cruel to other beings, the rogues, the proud, the lustful and the avaricious have no access to it; only those who are free from these defects can reach it.

23. (Bali) the commander-in-chief of that army, laid siege to the capital of gods with his forces and blew his

1. v.l. The presiding deities of the sun and other planets.

tremendously sounding conch conferred on him by his preceptor, striking terror in the hearts of Indra's women.

24. Comprehending the full implications of the supreme efforts of Bali, Indra, accompanied by all the legions of gods (approached) his preceptor (Bṛhaspati) and spoke to him as follows :

25. "Worshipful Sir ! Tremendous are the (military) preparations of Bali, our old arch-enemy. Me-thinks, they are (now) irresistible. By what energy has he become so overwhelmingly powerful?

26. None is able by any means whatever to approach him or withstand him. He is swallowing the world with his mouth, licking (as it were) the ten quarters, and burning them down by his fiery eyes. He has emerged against us like the fire of dissolution consuming the universe.

27. Be pleased to disclose to me the cause of the irresistibleness of my foe, whereby he derived this energy, mental courage and physical power and prowess and was enabled to make such tremendous efforts.

The Preceptor (Bṛhaspati) Explained :

28. "I know, Oh Indra, the cause of this growth of power of your enemy. It is due to the infusion of spiritual energy in their disciple by those experts in Vedic lore, the Bhṛgus (in exchange of the surrender of all his property to them).

29. With the exception of the Almighty Ruler Hari neither your compeer nor you can stand before him (for confrontation) like human beings before the god of death.

30. Therefore, all of you should now quit the celestial region and go in hiding, biding your favourable time which would bring in the decline of your enemy.

31. With the spiritual power of the Brāhmaṇas, he is getting stronger still and is now of irresistible prowess. (In due course) by insulting those very Brāhmaṇas, he will meet destruction along with his kith and kin."

32. Having thus received a wise counsel after mature deliberation from their preceptor who viewed (the reality of the situation in the proper perspective) gods, being capable of [illegible]ng any form they like, vacated the celestial region.

33. When the gods disappeared, Bali, the son of Virocana established himself in the capital of gods and brought under control all the three worlds.

34. Bhṛgus who were affectionate to their disciple who had (now) conquered the universe, and who was devoted to them, made him perform one hundred horse sacrifices (to stabilise his Indra-hood).

35. By virtue of his greatness in the performance of one hundred horse-sacrifices he diffused his reputation, already known all over the three worlds, in all quarters and shone like the moon, the lord of stars.

36. Considering himself as one who had accomplished all his desires, the noble-minded Bali enjoyed the highly prosperous royal fortune blessed upon him by Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Instruction in the observance of Payovrata to Aditi

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When her sons thus disappeared and the celestial regions were arrogated to themselves by Daityas (Diti's son), Aditi, the mother of gods, was tormented like a helpless person.

2. Once, rising from his spiritual meditation of a long duration, the worshipful sage Kāśyapa (Aditi's husband) visited her hermitage which was cheerless and gloomy (devoid of joyful atmosphere).

3. Oh best of Kurus ! Received (by his wife) with due formalities and occupying the seat (offered by her), he spoke thus to his wife, whose countenance was mournful.

4. Oh auspicious lady ! I trust nothing inauspicious has befallen[1] the Brāhmaṇas in the world, of late. I believe nothing calamitous has happened to Dharma. I hope that

1. For *āgatam*, VR reads *gavām* : 'in the case of the cows as well'.

misfortune has not overtaken the people who are subject to the whims of death.[1]

5. Or was there any obstruction in carrying out righteous duties with respect to *Dharma, Artha and Kāma* in your household where people who do not follow the practice of *yoga*, get the fruits thereof (by disinterested performance of prescribed house-hold duties), Oh mistress of the household.

6. I believe guests, having visited your house, have not gone back, at any time, without being duly received with courtesies like going forth to welcome them, as you might have been engaged in household duties.

7. If new-comers visiting a house go away from it without being honoured with the offer of water at least, such houses are certainly no better than the dens of big jackals.

8. Have not the sacred fires been offered oblations at the proper time on any day by you, as your mind must have been stricken with anxiety due to my departure, Oh fair lady !

9. The Brāhmaṇa and the (sacrificial) fire by worshipping whom a householder attains to regions (like *svarga*) yielding all the desired objects, are verily the mouth of Lord Viṣṇu, the soul of all gods.

10. Oh high-minded lady ! Are all your sons doing well and happy? I perceive through your outward expressions (like pale-facedness) that your heart is not at ease.

Aditi replied :

11. Oh Brahman ! It is all well with the twice-born persons (like Brāhmaṇas), cows; so is the case with righteousness and with this person (me). Oh Lord of the house ! This house (of yours) is the most excellent source of the three objectives of human life (viz. *dharma, artha* and *kāma*).

12. It is due to my devoted contemplation about your worshipful self that nothing is lacking and the sacrificial fires, guests, servants and mendicants desirous of getting something, are properly attended to.

13. Oh worshipful lord ! What desire cherished in my

1. VJ. takes *chandānuvartinaḥ* as an adj. qualifying *mṛtyu* implying 'through the god of death who acts according to whim'.

heart can remain unfulfilled when you, the lord of creation and the guardian of the well-being of my children in this way, advise me on religious matters.

14. Oh son of Marīci ! All these beings imbrued predominantly with *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* severally are born of your mind or body. (It is quite natural that) you are therefore equally attached to them all. But even the Supreme Lord (who creates the whole of the universe has special attachment to his devotees.

15. Oh Lord ! Be pleased to think of the well being of mine who have been serving you, Oh excellent observer of vows ! We (I and my sons) have been deprived of our wealth and have been ousted from our abodes by the sons of my rival (Diti). Kindly protect us, Oh Lord !

16. Being deprived of my power, splendour, glory and place of residence by powerful enemies, I have been exiled and have consequently immersed in a sea of calamities.

17. Oh foremost guardian of our welfare ! Be pleased to think out such effective device by your intellect as will enable my sons to recover them all.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. Kāśyapa who was thus entreated by Aditi, spoke to her as if with a bit of smile : "Oh how mighty is the power of Lord Viṣṇu's delusive potency (*māyā*) ! The whole world is bound down with affection.

19. There is absolutely no relation between the material body which is different from the soul and the soul who transcends *Prakṛti*. Whose and who are the husband, sons and other relatives ? Delusion alone is the cause of this attachment.

20. Worship therefore the Supreme Person, the glorious Lord Janārdana, the all-pervading God who resides in the heart of all beings, and is the Father and Preceptor of the Universe.

21. Lord Hari is merciful unto the afflicted and shall grant all your desires (even if there may be some deficiencies in devotion). Unfailingly fruitful is the devotion unto

the Lord (and not to any other god). This is my conviction (about the efficacy of devotion).

Aditi requested :

22. By what procedure I should worship the Protector of the world so that he, of effective mental resolve, may grant me my desired object, Oh Brahman !

23. Be pleased to instruct me, oh best of Brāhmaṇas, in that method of worshipping the Lord whereby He will be immediately pleased with me who am sunk in despondency along with my children.

Kaśyapa said :

24. The worshipful Lotus-born god Brahmā was accosted for this by me when desirous of progeny. As narrated by him, I shall now explain to you the sacred vow that leads to the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu (Keśava.)

25. Subsisting purely on milk during the first twelve days of the bright half of the month of Phālguna, one should worship the Lotus-eyed Lord Viṣṇu with the utmost devotion.

26. On the day preceding the new moon (when the moon rises with a scarcely visible crescent) one should besmear one's body with earth, turned over by the wild-boar, if available and take bath. While standing in the middle of the current, he should recite the following *mantra* :

27. "Oh goddess ! You were lifted up from Rasātala (the nether-most region) by the Lord (assuming the form of) the Primitive Boar, with a view to secure a place (for living beings). I respectfully bow to you. Be pleased to absolve me of all my sins".

28. After completing one's daily routine of religious duties, with a serene and concentrated mind, one should worship God either in an image, or on a consecrated altar or in the sun, water, fire or even in the preceptor. (For invoking the diety, the following nine *Mantras* are to be recited).

29. Obeisance to you the glorious Lord, the Supreme Person, the greatest of the great, the abode of all created beings, (and hence called) the all-pervading Vāsudeva the witness to all and everything).

30. Salutations to the unmanifest[1] and the subtle, who is both Prakṛti (Primordial matter) and Puruṣa (the spirit)—pervading them as their *antar-yāmin* (the indwelling Principle), who comprehends twenty-four Principles[2] and is the founder of the Sāṁkhya system.[3]

31*. Hail to you who have two heads, three feet, four horns; who confer fruit of sacrifices etc., the possessor of seven hands, who are himself the sacrifice and the soul of the three *Vedas* (or are described in three *Vedas*).

32**. I bow to you who are Śiva (all auspiciousness) and Rudra. Hail to you the (wielder) of Śakti (Power).

1. Cf. Muṇḍaka up. 1.1.6.

2. These principles are subsidiary causes and as his attributes they do not exist separately. VC. thinks that the 24 *guṇas* are the categories of *Vaiśeṣikas* and may mean *Sāṁkhyatattvas* also.

3. VJ. reads : *guṇasaṁsthāna-hetave.*

* (i). ŚR compares this verse with the famous description of the Fire-god *Catvāri Śṛṅgā trayo asya pādā* etc. in the RV 4.58.3 and quotes Yāska's explanation as follows :

Two heads—the rites called *prāyaṇīya & Udayanīya.*

The three feet—three *savanas* or pressing out of the *soma* juice which is to be done in the morning, at midday and in the evening.

Four horns—the four *Vedas.*

Seven arms—the seven Vedic metres (*chandas*) viz. Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh, Anuṣṭubh, Bṛhatī, Paṅkti, Jagatī and Uṣṇik.

(ii) VJ. has accepted the above explanation of the metaphorical description but the 2nd line : 'Salutation to Lord Viṣṇu who is the *antaryāmin* (*ātmane*) of the performers of *Soma* sacrifice as enjoined in the Vedas (*Trayī Vidyā*).

(iii) VR. gives a totally different interpretation.

The whole universe of name and form is an attribute of the Lord. He is metaphorically described as a bull (Vṛṣabha) with four horns viz., names (nouns), verbs, indeclinables and prefixes (*nāma-ākhyāta-nipāta-upasargāḥ*). The three feet are three divisions of time : past, present and future; the two heads are : the essential attribute (*pravṛtti-nimitta*) and that in which the attribute lies (*tadāśrayaḥ*). The seven hands are the seven cases of declension (of nouns etc.). The Lord is known through *Vedas.* Hence he is the soul of the *Vedas.* He is Viṣṇu or sacrifice (*Yajño vai Viṣṇuḥ*) through whom men can extend the performance of sacrifice (*tantave*).

** VR regards Viṣṇu as the *antaryāmin* of Rudra (and other gods) as he is the real creator, protector and destroyer of the world.

Salutation to you the master of all *lores*[1] or knowledge and the Protector of all created beings.

33. Obeisance to *Hiraṇyagarbha* (god Brahmā), *Prāṇa* (i.e. *sūtrātman*, the soul of the subtle cosmic body), the soul of the universe. Hail to you, the embodiment of the highest powers acquired by *yoga* and the source of *yoga* (*yogic* lore).

34. Salutations to you the First (Eternal) God. I bow to you who are the witness (to everything). Hail to you the omniscient sage Nārāyaṇa and to Nara who are the manifestations of Hari.

35. Bow to you whose person is dark like emerald in complexion and who have been the master of the goddess Śrī. Salutation to you, Oh Keśava, the wearer of yellow garment.

36. You are the conferer of all boons to people. Hence you are most sought for, Oh most prominent bestower of blessings. It is hence that wise men adore the dust of your feet for the final beatitude.

37. May that glorious Lord be gracious to me—the Lord who is worshipped by gods and Lakṣmī, as if they desired to have the fragrance of His Lotus-like feet.

38. Having reverentially established the presence of Viṣṇu, the Lord of Senses, before one's self, by invoking him with these *mantras*, one should with faith, worship him, by offering water for washing the feet (*pādya*), for *ācamana* (sipping and rinsing the mouth) and other formalities of reception.

39. One should worship the Lord with fragrant sandal paste, flowers and other articles of worship and should perform his sacred ablution (*abhiṣeka*) with milk. He should then adore him by beautifying his person with clothes, sacred thread, ornaments and with water for again washing his feet and sipping water as *ācamana*, burning fragrant incense etc. before him, reciting all the while the twelve-syllabled *mantra* : OṂ NAMO BHAGAVATE VĀSUDEVĀYA.

40. If one can afford it (lit. If there is sufficient wealth), one should offer fragrant, white rice cooked

1. *Sarva-vidyādhipataye*—The preceptor of the knowledge which helps to achieve the four *puruṣārthas*—GD.

in milk, mixed with ghee and raw sugar, as an offering (*naivedya*) to him, and should pour it as oblations into the sacred fire chanting the root *mantra* (viz. the above-mentioned *mantra* of twelve syllables)[1].

41. One may give this offering (of boiled rice) to God to a devotee (of the Lord) or should eat it oneself. Having offered water as *ācamana* one should offer betel-leaves (with all the components like areca-nut powder, cardamom seeds, cloves etc.) finally.

42. One should chant this *mantra* (within one's mind) one hundred and eight times, and praise God with panygerics. Circumambulating him by the right side, one should prostrate one's self before him like a rod, with delight.

43. Reverentially placing on one's own head the remnants (flowers etc.) of the worship, one should pray the Deity to retire. One should then feed at least a couple of Brāhmaṇas with rice cooked in milk (and mixed with gur etc.).

44-45. Obtaining the assent of the Brāhmaṇas who are duly honoured (by giving betel-leaves, gift of money etc.), one should partake of the remaining food in company of his dear ones. On the night of the first day, one should observe strict continence. And on the next morning, he should take bath. Keeping himself undefiled according to the procedure laid down, and with composed and concentrated mind, he should perform the ablution of the deity with milk, and worship him (and as per details of worship given above) and thus observe the vow every day), till the period of the observance is completed.

46. Subsisting on milk-food and with full faith and devotion in the worship of Viṣṇu, one should continue to observe this vow. He should offer oblations to the sacred fire as before, and give food to the Brāhmaṇas as well.

1. With due respect to all these commentators, the translator feels that due to the obvious influence of the *Pañcarātra* on these verses, the *mūla-mantra* must be OṂ NAMO NĀRĀYAṆĀYA and NOT *Oṁ Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*, though consistency in *Mantras* is essential.

47. In this way, observing the vow of 'subsistence on milk' from day to day, he should, for a period of twelve days, perform the propitiation of Lord Hari, offering oblations to the sacred fire, worship of the image and gratification of Brāhmaṇas (with food, gift of money etc.).

48. Beginning from the first day (of the bright half of the month of Phālguna) to the thirteenth, he should observe strict continence, sleep on bare ground and take bath three times a day (viz. in the morning, at midday and in the evening).

49. He should avoid speaking the untruth and on unholy topics (as well as with evil persons). He should refrain from pleasures of high or low order; he should abstain from injury to any being, and be absolutely devoted to Vāsudeva only.

50. On the thirtieth day, he should arrange for the ablution of Lord Viṣṇu with five substances (viz. milk, curds, ghee, honey and sugar which are collectively known as *pañcāmṛta*) according to the procedure laid down in the *Śāstras*, and under the guidance of the experts in them.

51-52. Without any mean miserliness in expending money, he should perform the worship of Viṣṇu on a grand scale. For the sake of Viṣṇu who pervaded all light, he should cook rice in milk (mixed with ghee etc.) and with fully concentrated and serene mind he should offer oblations to the sacred fire, and through it propitiate the Supreme Man. He should also offer food of excellent quality (containing articles of six types of tastes and free from any impurity or non-vegetarian food) which may be enjoyable and gratifying to the Supreme Person.

53. He should then gratify the learned preceptor (who conducted the worship) as well as those who carried out the sacrificial part, with articles of dress, ornaments and cows. He should note that to be also the propitiation of Lord Hari.

54. Oh lady with charming smiles! One should then cater to them dainty food of high quality as also to other Brāhmaṇas who might have come there, according to one's (financial) capacity.

55. One should then give *dakṣiṇā* (gift for performing

religious rites) according to merits, to the preceptor as well as to other Brāhmaṇas. One should also gratify with food etc. all those who have assembled there, including *caṇḍālas*.

56. Having gratified all indigent, blind, pitiable persons with food and understanding that that gratification is the real propitiation of Viṣṇu, one should lastly enjoy the food along with one's relatives.

57. Every day the worship of the Lord should be conducted with dancing, instrumental and vocal music, recitation of glorifying hymns and benedictory sayings and narration of the holy episodes of the Lord.

58. This is called *Payovrata*, the most excellent vow for propitiating the Supreme Person. What has been explained to me by god Brahmā has been communicated to you.

59. Oh most fortunate lady ! By properly and correctly observing this vow, and with your heart full of purity and devotion, and mind under control, worship Lord Keśava.

60. This is traditionally regarded as the perfect (or the essence of all kinds of) sacrifice and the perfect vow (the essence of all vows). This is the essence of penance and donations which leads to the gratification of the Lord, Oh fair lady !

61. That by which god Viṣṇu, the Supra-Sensuous deity, is propitiated are the real *Niyamas* (restraints of the mind), and the excellent *yamas* (controls of bodily discipline), the real penance, gifts, vow and sacrifice.

62. Therefore, Oh fair lady, with utmost self-discipline and devotion, you observe this vow, being pleased wherewith the Lord shall soon confer your cherished boons on you.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Manifestation of the Lord as Vāmana

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Aditi who was thus instructed by her husband Kaśyapa diligently observed this (*payovrata*) vow consecutively for twelve days, Oh king !

2. Having controlled the wild horses of her sense-organs through (the power of) her mind and with her reasoning power as the charioteer, she meditated with undivided mind and intellect upon the Supreme Person, the Controller, of the universe.

3. Concentrating her mind with her one-pointed reason on the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the soul of all beings, Aditi verily observed the *Payovrata*.

4. (On completion of the observance) Oh child Parīkṣit, the Almighty Lord, the Eternal (First) Person manifested himself before her (in a form) clad in yellow garment with four arms wielding in (three of) them a conch, a discus and a mace.

5. On beholding him suddenly in a visible form, she was overwhelmed with love, and reverentially laid herself prostrate on the ground before him, like a rod.

6. She rose up and with folded palms stood before him to praise him but (being overwhelmed with love she could not do so. With her eyes overflowing with tears of joy, she remained silent. Her hair were standing on their ends all over her person, and her limbs were trembling with ecstatic joy at his sight.

7. Oh Scion of the Kuru race ! The goddess Aditi looked at him affectionately as if drinking up that consort of Lakṣmī, the Lord of the universe and of the sacrifice, with her eyes, while she praised him slowly in a faltering voice, full of love.

Aditi began :

8. Oh Lord of sacrifices (who confer the fruit of sacrifices upon the performers) ! Oh sacrifice incarnate ! Oh imperishable Lord, at whose feet holy waters (like the Gaṅgā) resort, Oh Lord of hallowed glory, the hearing of whose name is auspicious[1] and whose very appearance relieves the sins and inequities of those who seek refuge in you, You are

1. *'tīrtha-śravaṇa-sādhuyam*

The ears(of persons) who are devoted to *Śāstric* studies and who listen to Śāstras, become auspicious on hearing your Name, Oh Lord.—VJ.

the protector of the afflicted. Be pleased to secure (our) happiness (to us).

9. I bow down to you, Oh Lord Hari who are very great, immanent in the universe, and yet assume at your free will the *guṇas* (the modes of *prakṛti* and other powers of the *Māyā*) for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, and are still self-poised (well established in your grandeur without the least disturbance), and who have completely dispelled the darkness (of ignorance, *tamas* or *māyā*) within yourself, by your eternal, perfect wisdom.

10. The longest life-span (viz. two *parārdha* years like that of god Brahmā), body (possessing power, beauty etc.) as desired, unparalleled fortune, dominance in the celestial regions, the earth and the nether world, all the mystic powers attained by *yoga*, the three principal objects in human life (viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *Kāma*), and even the absolute (highest) knowledge—all these are attained from you by men, if you are pleased. What to speak of an insignificant blessing like victory over a rival (co-wife and her progeny) ?

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Oh King ! Thus eulogised by Aditi, the lotus-eyed glorious Lord Viṣṇu, who resides in the heart of all created beings spoke to her as follows : Oh scion of the Bharata race !

The glorious Lord replied :

12. Oh mother of gods ! Known to me is your long cherished desire concerning your sons, who have been robbed of their glory and fortune by their enemies, and have been expelled from their homes.

13. You long to stay with your sons who, after, thoroughly vanquishing the vain-glorious mighty Asura chiefs on the battle field, have recovered their fortune and glory.

14. You desire to behold the wives of the enemies approaching the dead bodies of their husbands and bewailing, when they (enemies of your sons) are killed in battle, by your sons, of whom Indra is the eldest.

15. You wish to see that your sons have retrieved all

their glory and fortune and are extremely prosperous, and having re-established themselves in the heavenly regions, are enjoying themselves in sports.

16. Oh goddess ! In my opinion those leaders of Asura forces are, for the most part, now invincible; for they are now protected by favourable time and spiritually powerful Brāhmaṇas (or spiritually powerful Brāhmaṇas are gracious unto them). Application of prowess, (even on my part) will not be conducive to happiness, under these circumstances.

17. In spite of this, Oh noble lady, an expedient (to restore your former glory etc.) must be thought out by me inasmuch as I am gratified by your observance of the (*payovrata*) vow. My propitiation which results in conferment of the desire motivating it, should not prove futile.

18. By the correct observance of the *payovrata* vow, I have been properly worshipped and agreeably praised by you, for the protection of your children. Establishing myself in the austere penance (the procreative energy) of Kaśyapa, the Son of Marīci (your husband), I shall assume your son-hood by a ray of mine, and shall protect your sons.

19. Conceiving in your mind that I, of such (as is at present) form, am abiding in your husband, attend to your husband, the sinless lord of creation, Kaśyapa (and get conceived).

20. This secret should never be divulged to another person under any circumstances, even though you are interrogated. Everything will turn out well, but this secret of gods must be thoroughly guarded, Oh divine lady.

Śrī Śuka said :

21-22. Having addressed (her) thus, the Lord (immediately) disappeared on that very spot. Being bestowed with an extremely rare boon viz. the birth of Lord Hari through her, Aditi, feeling as if her object had been accomplished, betook herself to her husband with great devotion. Kaśyapa verily came to perceive that through his meditational *yoga*.

23. The sage of unfailing insight (knowledge) cognised the penetration of Lord Hari's ray within him. (Though to him both the *devas* and *asuras*, being his sons were equal) he,

with his mind serene and concentrated, deposited in Aditi that semen (charged with Hari's rays and) conserved through a long penance, just as the wind (to which all are equal) places (frictional) fire in the wood.

24. God Brahmā, knowing the presence of that eternal glorious Lord in Aditi's womb, began to praise him, in esoteric terms.

God Brahmā said :

25. Victory to you, Oh glorious Lord who are widely extolled in the Vedas and are of mighty prowess[1] ! My salutation to you, the protector of the Brāhmaṇas (and the Vedas). I bow to you again and again, you, the master of three *guṇas*.

26. I bow to you who were in the womb of Pṛśni (i. e. Pṛśni's son) and are revealed in the Vedas. You are the Maker of all, and contain all three worlds in your navel. You transcend the three worlds and still as *antaryāmin* (indwelling-soul) you enter and stay within all living beings and are all-pervading.

27. You who are called the Supreme Person of infinite powers, are the beginning, the end and the middle of the universe. Oh Ruler of the Universe ! Being the Time-Spirit you carry away with you everything in the universe like a deep stream of water sweeping away everyting that falls into it.

28. Verily, you are competent to create all beings, mobile or immobile as well as even the Lords of creations. Like a boat unto a person about to drown in water, you are the main supporter of gods (residents of the celestial world) who have fallen from the heaven, Oh Lord !

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Lord incarnates as Vāmana. Visit to Bali's sacrifice

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The Lord whose glorious acts and powers were thus extolled, by god Brahmā and who is above birth and death

1. *Urukrama* : *Or* in anticipation of the Lord's future feat : Oh Lord of wide strides.

manifested himself through Aditi, in a form endowed with four arms wielding (in each) a conch, a mace, a lotus and a discus, clad in yellow garment and with eyes wide like a lotus.

2. Bright dark-blue in complexion, and with the splendour of his lotus-like face enhanced with the lustre of his alligator-shaped ear-rings, the Supreme Person, with the Śrīvatsa mark on his chest, was adorned with bracelets, armlets, a shining diadem, a girdle and a pair of beautiful anklets.

3. Irradiated with his special splendid *Vanamālā* (wreath of forest flowers) resonant with a swarm of humming bees and with the *Kaustubha* gem suspended from his neck, Lord Hari dispelled with his splendour the gloom in the house of Kaśyapa, the Lord of Creation, with his effulgence.

4. At that time, the cardinal points became clear and bright; lakes and ponds became translucent; all the creatures became jubilant; the seasons exhibited their characteristic efflorescence; joy reigned in the heaven, the mid air, the earth, gods (whose tongue is fire), kine, the three twice-born classes and mountains.

5. On the twelfth day of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada when the moon was within the mansion called *Śravaṇa*, and the auspicious time was the *Abhijit* (the first *aṁśa* of *Śravaṇa*), the Lord incarnated (on the earth) and all constellations of stars (e.g. Aśvinī), planets etc. (by their auspicious influence) indicated his descent to be beneficial.

6. That twelfth day (of the bright half of Bhādrapada), when the sun attained the meridian, and the birth of Lord Hari took place, is known to people as *Vijayā* (the victorious).

7. Conchs were blown and big drums, kettle-drums, tabors and *paṇavas* (a kind of musical instrument) were sounded. There was the tumultuous sound of various musical instruments.

8. The celestial damsels being highly delighted danced and prominent Gandharvas (like Hāhā, Hūhū) sang. Sages, gods, Manus, *manes* and fire-gods extolled the Lord.

9-10. Hosts of *Siddhas* and *Vidyādharas*, along with *Kiṁpuruṣas* and *Kinnaras*, *Cāraṇas*, *Yakṣas* and *rakṣas*, *suparṇas* (eagles), best of serpents, and the attendants of gods sang and

danced. Highly extolling the Lord, they showered flowers on the hermitage of Aditi and its premises.

11. Beholding that Supreme Person as born from her womb, Aditi was astonished and was transported with joy. Amazed at the assumption of a human form by his *yogic Māyā* Power, even Kaśyapa, the Lord of Creation hailed him 'May you be victorious'.

12. With that very form, decorated with ornaments and endowed with weapons which Hari, of unmanifest consciousness, manifested to them, he (instantly) transformed Himself in a dwarf Brāhmaṇa boy like a wonderfully active actor, while the parents were simply looking on.

13. Seeing (the transformation of the Lord as) the dwarf Brāhmaṇa boy, all great sages were delighted and with Kaśyapa, the Lord of creation, as their head, got performed all the religious rites and observances (from those beginning with the birth e. g. *jātakarman* and other).

14*. While his sacred thread ceremony (*Upanayana*) was being performed, the sun-god (the presiding deity of *Gāyatrī Mantra*) taught him the *Gāyatrī Mantra*; Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods, gave him the sacred thread, and Kaśyapa, the cord of *muñja* grass to be tied round his waist.

15*. The Earth-goddess conferred the skin of black-antelope on him, while Soma, the Lord of plant and herbs offered the sacred staff. The mother covered his nudity with a piece of cloth, and heavens gave an umbrella to the Lord of the Universe.

16*. God Brahmā presented him a water pot (of gourd or wood) and the seven sages, the *darbha* grass. The goddess Sarasvatī gave a rosary of beads to the Immortal Supreme Soul.

17*. When his initiation-ceremony (sacred-thread-inves-

14-17* The list of deities who presented Vāmana different articles differs in other *Purāṇas*. Thus in *Matsya P.* 245-85 we find the black antelope skin given by Brahmā, the sacred thread by Bṛhaspati, the sacred staff by Marīci, Kamaṇḍalu by Vasiṣṭha, a bunch of Kuśa grass by Aṅgiras, rosary of beads by Pulaha, a pair of white garments by Pulastya. The four Vedas, Sāṁkhya, Yoga and other Śāstras attended upon Vāmana.

titure ceremony) was over, Kubera, King of Yakṣas gave him a begging-bowl with words "This is for him". And the veritable Mother-goddess Satī (Umā) herself served him the alms.

18. Thus honoured by all, the newly initiated eminent Brāhmaṇa boy, with his splendid Brahmanic (divine) effulgence, surpassed the whole assembly of Brāhmaṇa-sages.

19. The twice-born boy instituted the sacred fire (on the altar) enkindling it, duly worshipping it by placing the *Kuśa* grass around it in their proper places (*paristīrya*), and oblated into the fire the sacred sticks (daubed with ghee—the *samidhs*).

20. Having learnt that Bali, of enormous wealth and power, was engaged as a sacrificer in a horse-sacrifice conducted by the Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgu clan, he (Vāmana) concentrating in himself all the power, proceeded (from the hermitage of Aditi) to that place (of Bali's sacrificial hall), bending down the earth at every step, on account of his weight.

21. The sacrificial priests of the Bhṛgu clan who were conducting the best of sacrifices (viz. a horse-sacrifice) of Bali on the northern bank of the Narmadā, at a spot called *Bhṛgu-Kacchaka* (near modern Broach in Gujarat), beheld him (Vāmana) approaching them, brilliant like the sun risen just near them.

22. Oh King, their glory being eclipsed by the effulgence of Vāmana, the priests conducting the sacrifice, the sacrificer Bali and the members of the sacrificial assembly began to conjecture (among themselves) whether he (Vāmana) was the Sun-god himself or was the Fire-god or the (great) sage Sanatkumāra himself, coming with a view to observe the sacrifice.

23. While the Bhṛgus along with their disciples were thus variously expressing their surmise about him, Lord Vāmana carrying with him his umbrella, sacred staff, and water-bowl full of water, entered the pandal of the horse-sacrifice.

24-25. Noticing the entry of Lord Hari, a dwarfish Brāhmaṇa boy with the (outward) appearance of a *Brahmacā-*

rin assumed with his *Māyā* powers, having the zone of *Muñja*-grass tied round his waist, and wearing as an upper garment a deer-skin in the fashion of the sacred thread (over his shoulder) and matted hair, the Bhṛgus along with their disciples and fires (fire-gods) as well, shrank before his divine lustre, and standing up to honour him, accorded unto him reception with all the due formalities.

26. Overjoyed to see his charming personality worth seeing, with limbs proportionate to his form, the sacrificer himself offered him a suitable seat.

27. According him courteous welcome, Bali washed the feet of the Lord, and worshipped him who is attractive to the minds of those who have abjured all attachment.

28. Bali, the knower of the path of righteousness, placed (sprinkled) on his head the water with which he washed his feet, and hence had become most auspicious and capable of removing all the sins of the people, and which Lord Śiva (the Lord of mount *Kailāśa*) the god of gods and the wearer of the crescent of the moon on his forehead, received on his head with utmost devotion.

Bali said :

29. (Hearty) welcome to you. I pay my obeisance to you. Oh Brahman ! (Be pleased to tell us) what we should do for you. Oh noble Sir, I deem that you are the very embodiment of the penance of all Brāhmaṇa sages.

30. (Fully) satisfied are all our fore-fathers today. Our family and house have been purified. This very sacrifice has been successfully performed inasmuch as your worship has visited our house.

31. The sacrificial fires of mine whose sins have been completely annihilated by the waters used for washing your feet, stand properly worshipped with oblations, according to sacriptural injunctions. This land of our has been purified by your tiny feet, Oh son of a Brāhmaṇa !

32. Oh son of a Brāhmaṇa ! Methinks you have come to seek something. Be pleased to accept from me whatever you desire, Oh Brahmacārin ! Oh most worshipful Brāhmaṇa !

Duly accept from me either the earth, gold, a well-furnished house, delicious food and drink or possibly even a girl or prosperous villages, horses, elephants or chariots, Oh Brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Vāmana's request for three paces of Land—Śukra's opposition

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Hearing the above-mentioned speech of Bali, the son of Virocana, which was in accordance with the prescribed path of righteousness, pleasing yet true, the glorious Lord was pleased with him. Welcoming him, He spoke.

The glorious Lord said:

2. Oh Lord of men ! This speech of yours is courteous, true, worthy of your family (traditions), full of righteousness contributory to your glory, as the descendants of Bhṛgu race are your guides in matters temporal, while in matters spiritual your quiescent grand-father, the eldest member of the family (viz. Prahlāda) is your authority.

3. No such niggardly person was born in this family who ever refused to donate (anything) to Brāhmaṇas or was so miserly as going back upon his promise to give.

4. Never there was any such coward king in your family who at the time of religious donations turned this face against persons who, deserving the gift, had requested for it, or who, at the time of battle, showed their backs to worthy foes who challenged them in fight. In your family, Prahlāda shines forth in his unsullied faultless glory like the moon in the firmament.

5. In this family was born Hiraṇyākṣa who, armed with his mace, travelled alone over this earth for the conquest of all directions i.e. of (the entire earth) and did not meet any rival (equal to him in valour).

6. When faced by him (Hiraṇyākṣa), at the time of lifting up of the earth (from the *rasātala*), Viṣṇu (in the Boar-

incarnation) vanquished him with great difficulty, but frequently remembering his great bravery, did not regard himself as the victor (subsequently).

7. Hearing the report of his (Hiraṇyākṣa's) death, his brother Hiraṇyakaśipu got enraged and went, of yore, to the region of Hari, for killing[1] the slayer of his brother.

8. Beholding him (Hiraṇyakaśipu) rushing toward himself with a spear in hand, like the god of death, Viṣṇu, who knows the (suitability of) Time, and is the foremost one among the masters of marvellous illusive powers[2], pondered over the matter.

9. 'Wherever I go, he will certainly follow me as the (god of) death does unto living beings. I shall, therefore, enter his heart, inasmuch as his vision is confined to external things (or affairs)'.

10. Taking this decision, Viṣṇu, with a disturbed mind (as a matter of fact, with a calm and undisturbed mind) concealed his subtle body in the breath of the enemy who was rushing at him, and entered his body through his nostrils (without being known by him), Oh ruler of Asuras !

11. Having ransacked his vacant residence and not being able to find him, the warrior[3] got enraged and roared loudly. He searched for Viṣṇu, the heaven and the earth, the cardinal points and the sky, the subterranean regions and the seas, but could not find him anywhere.

12. As he did not perceive him, he said positively, "The whole of the universe has been closely searched by me. The murderer of my brother must have certainly gone to the place (viz. the region of death) from which no man returns (he being ever liberated from Saṁsāra must have returned to his original nature which is *brahma-hood*).

13. In this world, the persistence in enmity continues only so far i.e. to the extent of, the death of, the (inimical) embodied beings. Anger (the cause of enmity) which is engendered through ignorance is fostered by egotism.

1. As a matter of fact for knowing Him (GS).

2. *māyāvināṁ varaḥ*—The bestower of boons like liberation from saṁsāra.—VJ.

3. *Vīra*—One devoid of knowledge (*vigatam hṛtaṁ jñānaṁ yasya*)—VD.

14. Your father Virocana, the son of Prahlāda was so devoted to Brāhmaṇas that when so requested by celestials in the disguise of twice-born ones (Brāhmaṇas), knew their real nature (as enemies), and still conferred his lease of life upon them.

15. Your worship resorted to the righteous course of conduct followed by householders, Brāhmaṇas, your valorous forefathers and others of wide reputation.

16. Oh Lord of Daityas ! You are the foremost one among the bestowers of boons. From you, I seek a small piece of land three paces in length measured with my feet.[1]

17. Even though you are a liberal Lord of the earth, I do not seek anything else from you, Oh king ! For a learned person who accepts a gift just limited to his (actual) requirements, does not contaminate any sin.

Bali said :

18. Oh Brāhmaṇa's son ! Your words are commendable in the case of the aged. You are, however, a child, of childlike (undeveloped) intelligence[2], as such, you do not know your self-interest.

19. Having propitiated me, the sole supreme ruler of the world, with courteous words, you seek only three paces (feet) of land, out of lack of intelligence[3] or knowledge, when I am capable of gifting a continent.

20. A person who approaches me (for a gift) should not (have the occasion or need to) approach another for begging. Hence, Oh Brāhmaṇa boy ! Accept from me freely, at will[4] as much land as is sufficient for you to maintain your livelihood (decently).

1. This motif of the Vāmana story is traceable to the Vedic symbolism of Viṣṇu measuring out three *lokas* in three strides. Vide RV 1.22.17 also 1.154.2, 1.155.4. Vāmana is the unmanifest principle, while Viṣṇu or Virāṭ is manifest.

2. ŚR states that as a matter of fact the 2nd line should read : *tvaṁ bālo'bāliśā-matiḥ* "You are *a-bāliśa*—whose intelligence is fully developed and as such you consider the interests of your devotees and seek no personal interest." (As you are perfect there is no scope for any personal want).

3. ŚR. : the words in the 2nd line *yo'buddhimān* should be split as *'yo Buddhimān*, "Intelligent as you are" etc.

4. *Kāmam*—By stretching your stride as much as possible—ŚR. Vāmana complies.

The Lord replied :

21. All the desired-most objects (or lands) that are available in the three worlds cannot be enough to satisfy a person who has not subdued his senses or the mind, Oh King !

22. He who is dissatisfied with three feet of land, cannot have his desire fulfilled with an island—continent consisting of nine *Varṣas* (sub-continents), as he will crave to possess all the seven island-continents.

23. We heard the report that Pṛthu, the son of Vena[1], Gaya[2] and other kings who were the Lords of the seven continents (*dvīpas*) never reached the end of their thirst for more, despite their possession of the hoards of wealth and desired objects.

24. A contented person leads a happy life with whatever comes to his lot by chance, while a discontented person who has no control over himself, is never satisfied even if the three worlds be possessed by him.

25. It is said that non-contentment with reference to wealth and objects of enjoyment, is the cause of the transmigration of man in this world, and that contentment with what one happens to get by (one's predestined) luck, is the way to emancipation (from *saṁsāra*).

26. The spiritual glory of a Brāhmaṇa who is satisfied with what he obtains through chance, enhances. It, however, is extinguished through lack of contentment, like fire with water.

27. Prominent among the bestowers of boons as you are, I, hence, seek only three feet of land from you. I shall have my purpose (of depriving you of everything) accomplished

1. *Vainya*—Pṛthu, son of Vena. He was churned out of the hand of the dead body of Vena. He "milked" the earth of food-stuffs. His reign was a golden period. He performed a horse-sacrifice. Installing his son Vijitāśva on the throne, Pṛthu retired to forest and performed penance and merged in *parabrahman*.

—*Mbh. Śānti* 59.98-128; 227. 49-56.

VP. 1.22, The *Bh. P. Supra* 4th *skandha*.

2. *Gaya*—An ancient king-sage (*rājarṣi*) who performed many sacrifices (*Mbh. vana* 75,18). He gifted away all land to Brāhmaṇas (*Mbh. Śānti* 234.25). He earned reputation and wealth by visiting sacred places and temples in India. (*Mbh. Vana.* 94.18).

with that much only. For the desirability of wealth is limited to the extent of its usefulness.

Śrī Śuka said :

28. When addressed thus, Bali laughingly spoke, "Take it as much as desired". He then took in his hand his jar of water to donate the land (with due religious formalities) to Vāmana.

29. Śukra, the foremost among the knowers (of politics) apprehending the (inner) design of Viṣṇu, forewarned his disciple who was about to gift the land to Viṣṇu.

Śukra said :

30. Oh son of Virocana ! This dwarf is no other than the eternal divine Lord Viṣṇu who is born of Kaśyapa and Aditi, with the object of accomplishing the purpose of gods.

31. I do not approve of the promise given by you without foreseeing the consequent calamities (implicit in your promise). A great disaster has befallen the Daityas.

32. This Hari who has assumed the form of a *Brahmacārin* through his delusive powers (*māyā*) will dispossess you of your position, sovereignty, fortune, splendour, world-wide reputation and learning and pass it on to Indra.

33. Assuming his cosmic form, co-extensive with the universe, he will occupy all these (three) regions with three steps. Having conferred everything that you own, upon Viṣṇu, how are you going to exist, oh fool !

34. Where is the space left for the third foot when the all-pervading Viṣṇu covers the whole of the earth in one foot, and the heaven with another, and occupies the intervening space by his body ? (Thus you cannot fulfil your promise.)

35. Me-thinks your permanent place lies in the hell, the destination of those who do not redeem their pledge, since even you will not be able to fulfil your promise.

36. They (i.e. the wise) do not commend that gift as good if it endangers the means of livelihood of the donor. For in this world, charitable gifts, performance of sacrifices, austere penances and religious acts can be performed by persons with means of subsistence.

37. A person who divides his wealth in five shares (and invests it) for the purpose of religious acts, glory, getting economic return, personal pleasure and provision of one's relatives, becomes happy here and hereafter.

38. If you feel uneasy about the break of promise hear from me, Oh best of the Asuras ! the decision of the seers of the *Ṛgveda* on this point (about truth and falsehood). Whatever is promised by uttering the sacred syllable *Om*, is the truth and whatever is denied by expressing a 'No' is untruth.

39. It is sung (in the *Śruti* texts) that one should know that truth is the flower and fruit of the tree of this body. When the tree does not survive that (viz. the fruits and flowers i.e. the truth) ceases to be. Hence, *anṛta* (viz. not giving away all one's possessions) is the root-mainstay of the body.

40. Just as a tree that is uprooted, dries up and dies in a short time, so does the body which has lost its support of *anṛta*, undoubtedly dry up soon.

41. The Vedic text *parāg riktam* etc. means that which is expressed by the assenting syllable *Om* carries away wealth to a long distance, and leaves one incomplete (bereft of wealth).

A person verily becomes poorer to that extent to which he agrees to give by uttering the syllable *Om* (yes). A donor who agrees to give everything to the mendicant cannot find sufficient for his personal enjoyment (subsistence).

42. Therefore, the term 'No' which is regarded as *anṛta* means fullness to oneself (as his wealth is unspent), and adds to his wealth (as due to the consciousness of his deficiency, he tries to get more wealth from others). But if a person who makes a false statement all the while by saying 'No' (refusing to give), gets a bad name, and is as good as dead though breathing.

43. False statements are not condemnable when made to women (while courting), in jokes, in arranging marriages, for obtaining one's livelihood, for saving one's own life in danger, in protecting cows and Brāhmaṇas and where violence (to another) is anticipated.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Manifestation of the Cosmic Form by Viṣṇu

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Bali, the Lord of the household, who was thus addressed by his family-preceptor, remained silent for a moment and (weighing the consequences) with careful mind, he submitted as follows :

Bali said :

2. What has been stated by your worship, is true. It is the duty of householders to see that the wealth, enjoyment (of life) good reputation and the means of livelihood are not adversely affected by anything.

3. Having promised the Brāhmaṇa once that I shall give, how can I, the descendant of Prahlāda, out of greed for wealth, refuse, like a gambler, to give.

4. The earth has verily said : There is no greater heinous unrighteousness than falsehood. I am capable of bearing anything else except a man given to uttering falsehood.

5. I am not so much afraid of the (tortures of) hell, poverty, ocean of misery, displacement from (my present) status and even death, as I am of cheating a Brāhmaṇa.

6. In this world, wealth (and as a matter of fact) everything else abandons a dying man. (Why should not one give it away while alive ? If only a part is given and the recipient Brāhmaṇa is not satisfied, the gift becomes fruitless). What is the propriety of that charitable act unless the recipient Brāhmaṇa is satisfied thereby ?

7. Righteous souls like sage Dadhyañc[1], king Śibi[2] and others accomplish the well-being of creatures by sacrificing their lives which are so difficult to give up; what consideration is there for the earth and other things (which are less important than life) ?

1. A famous sage, Son of Bhṛgu—Handed over his body to gods for preparation of *Vajra* (the weapon of Indra) out of his bones.—*Mbh. Vana* 100.21 *Śalya* 51.29-32.

2. An ancient royal sage who submitted his body to a hawk (Indra) to save a dove (fire-god)—*Mbh. Vana* 197. 21.28.

8. Time has swallowed up the enjoyment of the earth and the position in the next world of the kings of Daityas who (while alive) enjoyed the earth and were ever successful in war. But (it could) not do so to the glorious renown achieved by them on the earth, Oh Brāhmaṇa.

9. Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ! Those who lay down their lives without retreating from the battlefield are easily available, but not so the donors who, when approached by worthy recipients, reverentially give away their wealth.

10. Poverty and affliction in consequence of satisfying the desires of (ordinary) supplicants, appear graceful to a magnanimous and merciful soul. Need it be said that it is much more so in cases like yours who know the *Brahman* or Vedas ? Hence, I shall bestow upon the *Brahmacārin* what he wants.

11. Let him be Viṣṇu, the bestower of boons whom your worshipful self, conversant with the procedure laid down in the Vedas, so reverentially worship by performance of various kinds of sacrifices (with *Soma* or without *Soma*) or let him be an enemy. I shall confer upon him the land desired for by him, Oh sage !

12. Even if he unrighteously binds me down—an innocent sinless person, I shall do no harm unto him, a cowardly enemy disguised as a Brāhmaṇa.

13. If he be really Viṣṇu of hallowed renown he would not forfeit his fame (by deceiving me thus). He will take away the land by killing me on the battlefield or lie down killed by me.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. The preceptor Śukra, being impelled by Providence, pronounced the following curse upon his noble-minded disciple who placed no faith in his words, and would not abide by his command, but wanted to be true to his promise.

15. "You who are highly conceited as being learned and obstinate. and show disregard to us by transgressing our orders, shall, in no time, fall down from your royal splendour".

16. Though cursed thus by his preceptor, the great Bali did not swerve from the truth and worshipping Vāmana,

he gave away the land with due formality of pouring water (from his right palm in solemn confirmation of the gift).

17. The royal consort Vindhyāvalī, adorned with a costly pearl necklace, came there and brought a gold jar full of water to wash Vāmana's feet.

18. The sacrificer himself gladly washed the glorious feet of the Lord, and sprinkled on his head, the waters which are capable of sanctifying the whole of the universe.

19. In the heaven, all the hosts of gods, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas applauded that act of worship, and extolled the Asura King and his straightforwardness and overcome with joy, showered flowers over him.

20. Thousands of kettledrums were sounded; Gandharvas and Kimpuruṣas sang that a most difficult act has been done by this noble-minded Bali, in that, he knowingly bestowed the (sovereignty of the) three worlds upon his enemies.

21. That dwarf form of that infinite Hari, comprising as it is of three *guṇas*, miraculously expanded to such an extent as to include that earth, the heaven, the cardinal points, the space between the heaven and the earth, cavities and hells, oceans, the sub-human beings, human beings, gods and sages and everything else.

22. Bali along with the sacrificial priests, the president of the sacrificial assembly, and its members, saw on the body of the Great Spirit comprising of all the *guṇas*, the whole of the universe made up of three *guṇas*, and consisting of elements, the senses with their objects (of enjoyment), the mind and the *jīvas* (individual souls).

23. Bali whose army was like that of Indra espied on the cosmic form of the Lord the *rasātala* (the sub-terranean regions) at the sole of his feet, the earth resting on his feet, mountains on the shanks, birds on his knee-joints, the group of wind-gods (*maruts*) on the thighs of the Supreme Person.

24. He beheld the two twilights (deities presiding over the dawn and the dusk) on the garments of the all-pervading Lord, the lords of creation in his genital organ, *Asuras* of which he was the chief in the anus, the firmament in the navel, the

seven seas in his sides, and the string of constellations on the chest of the Lord of very colossal strides.

25-26. Oh Child ! He saw (the presiding deity of *Dharma* in the heart of the slayer of Mura (Viṣṇu), *Ṛta* (Divine Law) and *Satya* (Truth) on his breasts, the Moon-god in the mind, the goddess *Śrī* with a lotus in her hand resting on his bosom, and all the *Sāma*-hymns, articulate sounds in his throat, all the celestials with Indra as their chief on his arms, the cardinal points in his ears, and the heaven on (the crown of) his head, the clouds in the mass of his hair, the vital breath in his nostrils, the Sun-god in his eyes, and the Fire-god in his mouth.

27. He saw the Vedas in his speech, Varuṇa the Lord of waters in his palate, the interdicting and prescriptive parts (of the scriptures) in his eye-brows, the day and night on his eyelashes, Anger on his forehead, greed on the lower lip of the Supreme Person.

28. Oh King ! He saw the passion of Love in his sense of touch, water in his semen, *Adharma* (the spirit of unrighteousness) on his back, sacrificial activity in his steps, Death in his shadow, *Māyā* in his laughter, and various species of herbs in the hair on his body.

29. The warrior Bali beheld the rivers in his arteries, rocks in the nails, god Brahmā in his *Buddhi* (intellect), the hosts of gods and sages in his vital breaths, all creatures mobile and immobile on his person.

30. Perceiving all this universe resting in the Person of the Lord, all the Asuras lost their consciousness, Oh child !

The *Sudarśana* discus of unbearable velocity, force and effulgence, the *Śārṅga* bow twanging like rumbling clouds.

31. The *Pāñcajanya* conch of deep sound like the roar of thunder, the mighty mace of Viṣṇu called *Kaumodakī*, the sword called *Vidyādhara* (otherwise known as Nandaka) paired with a shield called *Śatacandra* (as it was set with hundred moonlike studs), and the two excellent quivers with inexhaustible stock of arrows, (all in personem).

32. His chief attendants headed by Sunanda, accompanied by the guardians of the worlds, waited upon the Lord. Adorned with shining diadem, armlets, a pair of alligator-

shaped ear-rings, the *Śri-Vatsa* mark, in foremost of all jewels *Kaustubha*, girdle, clad in yellow silk garment.

33. Adorned with the *Vanamālā* (a wreath of forest-flowers) hovered round by bees, the Divine Lord of mighty strides, shone in great brilliance.

Oh King ! He coverd the earth of Bali with one foot; He occupied the sky with his body and the quarters with his arms.

34. As he covered the celestial region with another step there was not the slightest space left for the third as the second step of the Lord of wide strides extended higher and higher beyond *Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka* upto Satyaloka—the region of god Brahmā.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Bali Bound Down

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On beholding that the foot of the Lord had reached (his region) *satya-loka* and finding himself enveloped in and the effulgence of his region eclipsed by the brilliant lustre of his moon-like (toe-) nails, lotus-born god Brahmā and also great sages like Marīci, sages of great vows (of life-long celebacy like Nārada) and *yogins* (of the path of knowledge) like Sanandana, came forth to receive him.

2. (The presiding deities of) the Vedas and the subsidiary Vedas (viz. *āyur-veda* the science of medicine, *Dhanur-veda* the military science, *Gāndharva veda* the science of music, *Sthāpatya veda* the science of Engineering), *Niyamas* and *yamas*[1], science of Logic (*Sāṁkhya* and *Mīmāṁsā*), History (viz. the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*), six auxiliaries of Vedas,[2]

1. Vide *Supra* Bh. P. 4.22.24.

2. viz. (1) *Śikṣā*—phonetics or Science of proper articulation and pronunciation (2) *Chandas*—science of Prosody, (3) *Vyākaraṇa*—Grammar, (4) *Nirukta*—Etymology of Vedic words, (5) *Jyotiṣa*—Astronomy, (6) *Kalpa*—code of rituals.

Purāṇas and *Saṁhitās* (sacred texts like *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitā, Brahma-saṁhitā, Garga-saṁhitā* and others) who had burnt down their impurities of sins by the fire of spiritual knowledge enkindled by the wind of *Yoga*, approached and bowed down at the foot of the Lord, by virtue of meditating which they would attain to the region of god Brahmā which is not accessible by the path of *Karmas* (religious, ritualistic acts).

3. Thereupon, the lotus-born god Brahmā, of extremely pure reputation, brought water to worship Viṣṇu's foot raised upto his region. Devoutly worshipping his feet, he sang out his praise, for he himself was born out of the lotus that adorns his navel.

4. The water that was poured out of the *Kamaṇḍalu* (water-jug) of god Brahmā, for washing the feet of the Lord of mighty strides, and being purified thereby, became the heavenly river in the sky. Like the pure hallowing renown of the Lord, it sanctifies the three worlds as it falls from the sky, and flows through them from the heavens.

5. God Brahmā and other protectors of the worlds, along with their followers, reverentially brought articles of worship to their Lord who had withdrawn his all-pervading form in a limited personality (viz. that of Vāmana).

6. With water brought for worship, with garlands of flowers and divinely fragrant sandal-paste and pigment, with burning of fragrant incense and lights, parched grains of paddy, unbroken rice, fruits and sprouts.

7. With songs of praise, shouts of victory announcing his prowess and greatness, with dancing performances, playing of musical instruments and presentation of vocal music and sounds of conchs and kettle drums.

8. Jāmbavān, the king of bears, with the speed of the mind, proclaimed with beating of drums in all directions, the victory of the Lord and the great festive occasion.

9. Finding that under a deceitful pretext of a request of three feet of land, the entire earth was taken away (fraudulently) from their master who was engaged in a sacrifice, the Asuras flared up and said to each other.

10. "Certainly this is not even a Brāhmaṇa by mere caste, (even a lowly Brāhmaṇa will not commit such a fraud).

He is Viṣṇu, the prominent one among the masters of illusive powers (and conjuring tricks). Disguising himself as a Brāhmaṇa, he desires to accomplish the objective of gods.

11. We stand cheated of everything by this enemy who assuming the disguise of a *Brahmacārin* came for begging, while our master has laid down his powers of punishment during the period of this sacrifice.

12. Being a person vowed to observe (perpetual) truthfulness, and especially when consecrated for performing sacrifice, it is not possible to utter falsehood for our master who is friendly to Brāhmaṇas full of compassion.

13. It is, therefore, our sacred duty to kill him (Vāmana) and serve the cause of our master." Saying thus the followers of Bali, Asuras, took up their arms.

14. Thus being enraged, all of them, armed with spears (*śūla*) and sharp-edged steel-bars[1] (*paṭṭiśa*) rushed to strike at Vāmana (the Dwarf), even though Bali did not wish it.

15. Seeing the generals of the Daitya army attacking Vāmana, Viṣṇu's attendants laughed at them, and thwarted them (Asuras' attack) with their arms uplifted.

16-17. Nanda, Sunanda, Jaya, Vijaya, Prabala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudākṣa, Viśvaksena, the king of birds—Garuḍa, Śrutadeva, Puṣpadanta and Sātvata—each of them possessing the strength of ten thousand elephants, advanced to kill the Asura army.

18. Seeing his people being massacred by the followers of Viṣṇu, and remembering the curse of Śukra (his preceptor), Bali prevented them from fighting, although they were enraged.

19. "Oh Vipracitti ! Oh Rāhu ! Oh Nemi ! Listen to my speech ! Please do not fight; retreat. This period is not favourable unto us.

20. Oh Daitya comrades ! No human being is powerful enough to overcome Him with human prowess, as he is the master (chief cause) who distributes pleasure and pain to all creatures.

1. *paṭṭiśo lohadaṇḍo yas tīkṣṇadhāraḥ kṣuropamaḥ—Vaijayantī* quoted in ASD p. 310.

21. The glorious Lord who was formerly in favour of our prosperity and against that of the celestials, is today disposed to do quite the reverse of it.

22. No person can verily overcome the Time-spirit by physical power, expert advisers, intelligence, fortresses, mystic formulae, medicine etc. and by expedients like *sāma, dāna, daṇḍa and bheda*).

23. These attendants of Hari have many times been vanquished by you, when Fortune was favourable to you. Today those very attendants are roaring after vanquishing you in the battle.

24. If the Providence becomes favourable (again), we shall again defeat them. Therefore wait for the favourable Time, which will turn to be advantageous to us."

Śrī Śuka said :

25. Hearing the directive (speech) of their leader, the generals of the Daitya and Dānava forces, beaten by the attendants of Viṣṇu entered the *Rasātala* (nether world).

26. On the very day of extracting Soma juice in the sacrifice, Garuḍa, king of birds, the son of Tārkṣya, informed of the desire of the Lord[1], bound down Bali with the noosecords of Varuṇa.

27. When the king of Asuras was thus being taken prisoner by Viṣṇu of superior power, there arose a loud outcry on earth, in the sky and in all directions.

28. Glorious Lord Vāmana addressed to Bali who, though bound down by the noose of Varuṇa and bereft of royal splendour, was of balanced and stable mind, and of noble reputation, Oh King !

29. "Oh Asura ! you have given me three paces of land. The entire earth (world) has been covered by two steps, Please provide space for the third.

1. ŚR explains : The Lord wanted to shower grace on Bali by depriving him of all his property and freeing him from his egoistic claim on his body. Or the Lord wanted to lower Bali's position to exhibit Bali's greatness etc.

30. As this entire land as far as the sun warms it by its rays, and the moon and the stars illuminate it, and as far as the rain-god was sending showers of water, was yours.

31. With one step I have covered the region of the earth, the sky and the quarters by my body, the celestial regions were covered by the second step as witnessed by you.

32. If you are not able to give what is promised, it is inevitable that your stay should be in the hell. Hence, you do enter the hell as approved of by your spiritual preceptor.

33. All the aspirations of that person fail. The celestial region is far away (from him). He falls down into hell who deceives a person seeking his help, by failing to give what is promised.

34. Proud of your riches as you were, you deceived me with the words "I shall give you" (three paces of land). Suffer, therefore, for some years in hell as a punishment for uttering falsehood."

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

A Dialogue between Bali and Vāmana

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Oh King ! Even though Bali was thus (humiliatingly) insulted by the glorious Lord and though he was made to swerve from the truth, Bali remained firm in mind, and gave this dignified reply.

Bali submitted :

2. Oh god of excellent renown ! Your worship regards the promise given by me as false. (It is you who fraudulently disguised yourself as a dwarf at the time of begging, and deceitfully manifested a different form at the time of the implementation of promise). In spite of this, I shall be true to my word so that I should not be regarded as a cheat. Be used to place your third step on my head (as the possessor

of wealth is more valuable than the wealth possessed) Oh Prominent one among gods !

3. Displaced as I am from my (sovereign) position, I am not so much afraid of hell or of being bound down with (Varuṇa's) noose, or of insuperable calamities or of financial difficulties or of any punishment from you as from ignoble reputation (viz. Bali was a deceitful person).

4. Methinks punishment meted out by the worthiest person is the most praiseworthy reward to men, as neither mother nor father nor brother or friends can deal such punishment.

5. In the guise of an enemy, you are certainly the highest preceptor (and hence benefactor) of us, the Asuras, inasmuch as you gave an insight in this fall to us, who were blinded by pride and arrogance caused by different factors (such as valour, wealth etc.)

6. As it is wellknown, many Asuras, by cherishing deep rooted enmity to You attained to that high position (emancipation from *Saṁsāra*) which only *yogins* with unserving devotion can reach.

7. Hence, I feel neither much ashamed nor afflicted that I have been taken prisoner and have been bound down with the noose of Varuṇa, by your worship of miraculous feats.

8. My grand-father, Prahlāda who is highly esteemed by your devotees, and whose excellent reputation of saintliness is manifest, was subjected to various cruel tortures by his own father Hiraṇyakaśipu, because he was your enemy.

9. What is the use of the body which abandons one ultimately (at the time of death) ? Of what worth are the robbers, designated as one's own people (e.g. sons, kith and kin), who take away our property ? Of what purpose is the wife who is the cause of transmigration in the *Saṁsāra* ? What is the use of houses to a mortal ? It is sheer waste of life here.

10. Having come to this definite decision, my eminent grand-father (Prahlāda) of unfathomable wisdom, and the prominent-most saintly person, disturbed by the company of worldly people, resorted to your lotus-like feet which are eternal and which offer immunity from fear (from any quarter), even though you were the destroyer of his relatives and partisans.

11. It is through sheer good luck that I too am brought to the presence of Yourself—You who are the destroyer of both subtle and gross bodies (of beings and thus grant liberation) and that I am forcibly made to give up my wealth (and glorious position). And it is wealth (and position) that deprives man of his judgement and makes him incapable of understanding the uncertainty of life, due to its being within clutches of death.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. While he (Bali) was addressing thus, Prahlāda, beloved of the glorious Lord, appeared (on the scene) like the full moon above the horizon, Oh foremost of Kurus !

13. Bali, having an army like that of Indra, noticed his grand-father, of majestic stature, charming appearance, with eyes large like (a pair of) lotuses, with long arms (reaching his knees), clad in yellow silken garments, bright dark in complexion yet radiant in his native effulgence.

14. Bali, being bound down with the noose of Varuṇa could not offer him worshipful reception as before. He reverentially bowed him with his head, and with his eyes full of tears, he hung his head with shame[1] (as he remembered his egoistic actions).

15. Seeing the Protector of righteous persons sitting there, and being attended upon by his followers like Sunanda, Nanda and others, the noble-minded Prahlāda approached him and paid obeisance to him, placing his head down on the ground, while his eyes were over-whelmed with tears, and hair stood on their ends (through ecstasy).

Prahlāda said :

16. It is fortunate (and not derogatory) that the exalted position of Indra that you yourself bestowed on Bali has been retaken from him by you. I consider that great divine grace has been shown unto him (Bali) in that he has been relieved of his fortune which infatuates the mind and bewilders the soul.

1. GS attributes this to Bali's sense of guilt for forgetting the teaching of Prahlāda about humility and his disparaging remarks to Vāmana.

17. By wealth, even a self-controlled learned person gets deluded (and forgets the essential nature of the soul, even though known previously). How can an ordinary person comprehend properly the course leading to the realization of the soul, when possessed of wealth ? Hence I offer my obeisance to you (who have rendered a gracious obligation on Bali by divesting him of his wealth and glory), Oh Nārāyaṇa, the controller of the Universe and witness unto all the worlds.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. It was in the very presence of Prahlāda who stood with folded palms that god Brahmā (who emerged from the golden egg) addressed Viṣṇu, the slayer of demon Madhu, Oh King !

19. Seeing her husband so bound down, Bali's saintly wife (Vindhyāvalī), was overwhelmed with fear. With folded palms, she bowed down to Vāmana (the younger brother of Indra), and with face drooping down in supplication burst forth in appeal (And god Brahmā respected her by giving her the priority in communicating with the Lord).

Vindhyāvalī appealed :

20. You have created these three worlds (the earth, the heaven and the subterranean region) for your own divine sport. But other persons of perverted mentality arrogate proprietory rights over it (as did Bali when he says that he has donated the three worlds as a gift and shall redeem his pledge by offering his head for the third step when as a matter of fact, he is not the master of his body, much less of the universe). You are the creator, protector and destroyer of the universe. To such as you are, what these shameless persons in whom the sense of being independent agents has been implanted by you (through your Māyā), are capable of offering ? Oh Lord ! Be pleased to be gracious unto dull-witted Bali and setting him free from bonds, protect him.

God Brahmā said :

21. Oh Creator of living beings ! Oh Controller of all creatures ! Oh God of gods immanent in the Universe ! Be

pleased to release Bali, as he is deprived of everything and he does not deserve confinement.

22. He has gifted to you the entire earth and the higher worlds that he acquired through his pious actions. Everything owned by him including his body has been donated by him to you, without the least flinching of the mind.

23. If a person with sincere and guileless mind, offers water for washing your feet and worships them devoutly with (simple) *dūrvā* (Panic) grass he attains to the highest place (Liberation from *saṁsāra* or a place in your region, Vaikuṇṭha). Then why does Bali who has gifted to you the three worlds gleefully without the least hesitation, should suffer this calamity ?

The Lord replied :

24. Oh Brahman ! I take away the wealth (fortune etc.) of a person to whom I show my Grace. For being infatuated with wealth and power, a person becomes bereft of humility and shows disrespect to the world and (even) to me.

25. It is only by a lucky chance that the individual Soul, not being his own master and passing through various species of existence according to the fruits of his action, happens to be born as a human being.

26. It should be regarded as my Grace in that particular respect, if he, in the human stage of life, is not affected by pride for his lineage, achievements, youth, beauty, learning, authority, affluence and such other circumstances (and I am not constrained to deprive them of wealth etc.).

27. My devotee should not get infatuated with pride and feel lack of humility due to high birth etc. which are obstructive to the attainment of final bliss.

28. This Bali, the leader of Dānavas and Daityas and capable of enhancing their glory, has vanquished the unconquerable Māyā (deluding power of the Lord) and hence, he is not infatuated even in distress.

29-30. He has been deprived of his wealth, dislodged from his sovereign position, insulted, reproached and fettered by his enemies, abandoned by his kith and kin, and subjected to torture, remonstrated and cursed by his spiritual preceptor,

but he remained firm in his vow, and did not deviate from the truth. True to his word as he is, he did not swerve from the truth, despite my misleading him by specious arguments about *Dharma* (righteousness).

31. A position very difficult even for immortal celestials to attain, has been conferred upon him by me. (But as he desired Indra-hood) he will be the Indra under my protection in the period (*Manvantara*) presided over by the Manu Sāvarṇi (after which he will attain that position).

32. Till then, let him live (as a ruler) in *Sutala* which is constructed (more beautifully than the celestial region) by Viśvakarman (the architect of gods). There, under my gracious surveillance, the residents are not subjected to anxieties, diseases, fatigue, laziness, defeat (from internal or external enemies) or other troubles.

33. Your Majesty Indrasena (Bali) ! May good betide you ! Accompanied by your relatives and kinsmen, proceed to *Sutala*—a region worthy of being aspired after even by celestial beings.

34. Even the *Lokapālas* (Protectors of the worlds) shall not (be able to) vanquish you. What of others ? My discus (*Sudarśana*) will put an end to the Daityas who will (dare to) transgress your commands.

35. I shall protect you along with your followers, retinue and property, in every respect. You will always find me present there, Oh great warrior !

36. If any demoniac ideas occur to you due to the company of Dānavas and Daityas, they shall immediately disappear at the sight of my glory and prowess.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Bali, free from bonds, enters Sutala

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The magnanimous Bali who was highly respected by all righteous persons, joined his palms, and with his eyes flowing with tears and throat choked with emotion, submitted in falter-

ing accents to Lord Viṣṇu, the ancientmost person who addressed him (as reported in the previous chapter).

Bali said :

2*. How wonderful! Even an attempt made to offer you obeisance was efficacious enough to accomplish the blessings coveted by your devotees who resorted to you for protection. This unique Grace has never been obtained by the protectors of the world as well as by gods (who are of *Sāttvic* disposition) before. It has been conferred upon a wretched asura (of a *rājasic* nature).

Śrī Śuka said :

3. Having addressed thus, Bali, bowed down to Lord Hari, god Brahmā along with Śiva. Being free from bondage, Bali was highly pleased and he entered the *Sutala* region along with his Asuras.

4. Restoring (the kingdom of) the celestial region to Indra in this way, and having thus fulfilled the desire of Aditi, the Lord ruled over the whole of the world.

5. Seeing that his grandson Bali, the scion of his family, freed from bondage and the recipient of the Grace of the Lord, Prahlāda, full of devotion spoke as follows :

Prahlāda said :

6. Neither god Brahmā, nor goddess Śrī or god Śiva ever received such a Grace. How can others (Indra etc.) obtain it ? You whose feet are worshipped by persons adored by the world have become the protector of the fortress of us, the Asuras.

7. Oh Lord that affords shelter ! Brahmā and other celestials have attained greatness (prosperity and power) by virtue of their enjoyment of the honey in the lotuslike feet of yours. (I, however, wonder) why we, of crooked behaviour and belonging to ferocious races, are made the recipients of your gracious look.

*SD : If mere attempt to bow down is so efficacious, how much more fruitful must be the worship etc. of Lord Hari.

8. Oh how miraculous are your acts and behaviour ! You have created the worlds as the sportive activity of your inconceivable *yoga-māyā*; you are omniscient, nay the veritable in-dwelling soul of all, and hence, view all equally. Even though you are fond of your devotees, there is no partiality in your nature, you are just like the wish-yielding tree, by nature.

The Lord replied :

9. Child Prahlāda ! May you be blessed ! Go happily to your residence in *Sutala* along with your grandson, and enhance the happiness of your kith and kin.

10. You will always see me there standing with a mace in hand, and the bonds of your karmas will be snapped by the highest bliss of seeing me.

Śrī Śuka said :

11-12. With their palms folded and head bowed down, pure-minded Prahlāda, the Supreme Commander of all the Asura forces, along with Bali, respectfully accepted the command of the glorious Lord. Circumambulating the Eternal Person, they bowed again, and with his permission entered the 'Great cavity' (of *Sutala*), Oh King.

13. Thereafter, Oh King ! Lord Viṣṇu whose abode is cosmic waters, and who removes the sins of his votaries, spoke to Śukra who was sitting near, among the sacrificial priests, in that assembly of experts in Vedas.

14. "Oh Brahman ! Do you now make up for the interruption and deficiency in the sacrificial act that was being performed by your disciple. Whatever defects remain in religious performances are rectified even by the look of Brāhmaṇas (much more so if actually performed by them)."

Śukra replied :

15. How can there be any deficiency in ritualistic performance, where you, the presiding Lord of all religious acts, the master of sacrifice who confer their fruit on performers, the sacrifice itself incarnate, are worshipped with complete devotion ?

16. The recital of Your Name rectified all the defects arising out of (wrong pronunciation and intonation of) *mantras* (Vedic verses to be chanted at the time of sacrifices), wrong ritualistic procedure, in-opportuneness of time and unsuitability of place or in the provision of materials for sacrifices.[1]

17. Still, however, as, Oh Mighty Lord, You insist on it, I shall carry out your behest. For what constitutes obedience to your commands, is (in itself) the highest beatitude of human beings.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. Gladly accepting Hari's mandate, the worshipful sage Śukra, with the assistance of other Brāhmaṇa sages, rectified the deficiencies in Bali's sacrifice.

19. In this way, having begged the earth (as well as celestial regions) from Bali, Lord Hari disguised as a dwarf, gave back to his brother, the great Indra, the celestial region (as well as the earth) which was usurped from him by his enemies.

20-21. Then for accomplishing the pleasure of Kaśyapa and Aditi, and for the well-being of all creatures, god Brahmā, the head of all the Protectors of the world (*Prajāpatis*) together with gods, sages, manes and Manu and his sons with Dakṣa, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, as well as with Kumāra and god Śiva, crowned Vāmana as the King (and protector) of all the worlds, and the guardians of the worlds.

22-23. For the sake of the prosperity of all, god Brahmā installed Vāmana, the younger brother of Indra as the protector of all Vedas, gods, *dharma* (righteousness), glory, affluence, auspicious vows and of the celestial regions as well as of *Mokṣa* (Liberation of *Saṁsāra*). Oh King, all created beings thereby felt extremely delighted.

24. Then with the approval of god Brahmā, Indra accompanied by the Protectors of the world, placed Vāmana at their head, carried him to heaven, in a suitable celestial car.

1. Cf. the famous verses quoted by VD.
yasya smṛtyā ca nāmoktyā tapo-yajña-kriyādiṣu /
nyūnaṁ sampūrṇatāṁ yāti: taṁ vande harim acyutam //

25. With the sovereignty of the three worlds restored to him, and being free from fear due to his being protected by the arms of Vāmana, Indra who was endowed with supreme glory, felt highly delighted.

26-27. Eulogising that extremely miraculous great deed of Viṣṇu and praising Aditi, god Brahmā, Śiva, Kumāra, sages headed by Bhṛgu and others, and masses, all beings, Siddhas, all beings moving in aerial cars, repaired to their respective abodes, Oh King.

28. I have recounted to you everything pertaining to the episode of the Lord of Mighty wide Strides which destroys all the sins of the listener to this story, Oh delight of the Kuru family !

29*. A mortal being who presumes to recount completely and exhaustively the glories of Lord Viṣṇu with mighty wide strides, is like unto a person who would count all the particles of dust on the earth. About such a person the seer of the mantra (RV. 1.1.54.1 etc.) asks, 'Is there born now or likely to be born (in future) such a person (who can do so) ? (The answer is 'No').

30. A person who listens to the account of this incarnation of Lord Hari, the god of gods of miraculous deeds, attains to the highest stage (of Liberation from *Saṁsāra*).

31. If this story is recited repeatedly during the performance of religious observance to propitiate gods, masses and men, the learned declare that that observance is auspiciously well-done.

**Viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi pra vocam*
—RV. 1. 154-1a: AV. 7. 26-1a
VS. 5. 18a, TS. 1.2.13.9a etc.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

*The Fish Incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu**

The King said :

1. Venerable Sir ! I now desire to hear from you the story of the first incarnation of Lord Hari of miraculous exploits, wherein he assumed the form of a fish, through his deluding potency (Māyā).

2. Why did the Supreme Lord, like one subject to (laws of) *Karma*, assume the form of a fish which is disgustible to the world, as being of *tāmasic* nature and unbearable.

3. It behoves you, Oh worshipful Sir, to tell us everything in details (as it took place), as the actions of the Lord of hallowing renown, are conducive to the happiness of all people.

Sūta said :

4. When requested thus by Parīkṣit (One protected by Viṣṇu i.e. Kṛṣṇa[1]), the venerable Śuka, the son of Bādarāyaṇa,

*The deluge is a part of race-memory in different parts of the world. It testifies to the sub-mergence of some parts of the world under water, at some distant period in the past, and the memory persisted among Hebrews, Assyrians, Hindus etc. The different periods of such deluges in different parts of the world (for example the Nohaic Flood which lasted for about 371 to 376 days was in West Asia round Mt. Ararat (The Old Testament-Genesis Chs. 6, 7, 8.) Also vide T.A. Bryant's *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, pp. 176-178; 403-4 Special Crusade Edition), while the Indian deluge was in the Himalayan region and it lasted throughout one *Kalpa*, shows that there was really no universal flood, though it appeared to be so to the people in the affected area which was their "world" in ancient times. In India the deluge is described in the *Śatapatha* Br. 1.8.6 the *MBH Vana* 187, *Agni P.* 2, *Matsya P.* 1 & 2. The *Śatapatha* tradition seems to be the earliest and is followed by *MBH* where *Manu*, the saviour of the fish, was at Badari and the locale of the flood was the Himalayan region, but with the Bh. P., King Satyavrata, the saviour of the fish (and a future Manu) was a Draviḍa King who got the fish in the river *Kṛta-mālā* in Tamil Nadu. The brief statement in the *Agni P.* makes Manu perform penance on the bank of *Kṛta-mālā*, while in the *Matsya P.* 1. 17-18 Manu was in Malaya (Kerala) where in his own hermitage the small fish fell from above. The symbolism of the fish is explained by V.S. Agrawala in *M.P.—a study*, pp. 4-8 with which one may not agree, as it presumes an advanced knowledge in Embryology in that *Purāṇic* era (Gupta Period).

1. Vide Supra 1.12.7-11.

began to narrate the history of Lord Viṣṇu as he acted in the form of a fish.

Śrī Śuka said :

5. (The object of incarnations in general :) When the Almighty Lord desires to protect cows, Brāhmaṇas, gods, righteous persons, the Vedas and the laws of *Dharma* (righteousness) and *Artha* and other *Puruṣārthas*, he assumes a body.

6. (This incarnation is not disgustible.) The Supreme Lord moves like vital airs through higher and lower beings. But Himself being transcendental to *guṇas* (attributes), he is not affected by the *guṇas* of Prakṛti and hence by the highness or lowness of status.

7. At the close of the last Kalpa (known as *Brāhma*), there was a periodic deluge caused by (the sleep that overcame) *Brahmā*.[1] At that time, Oh King, the worlds known as *Bhū* (this earth) and other (higher) worlds were submerged under the sea.

8. A mighty demon called Haya-grīva (one with the neck and head of a horse) who was in the vicinity of Brahmā, carried away the Vedas which (unconsciously) escaped from the mouth of Brahmā who was overcome with sleep under the influence of Time, and desired to go to bed.

9. Noticing that (clandestine) act of Hayagrīva the king of Dānavas, the glorious Supreme Lord Hari, assumed the form of a small glittering fish.

10. In that Kalpa, a great royal sage, by name Satyavrata who was absolutely devoted to Nārāyaṇa, was practising austerities, subsisting on water only.

11. That very person (who was then called King Satyavrata) is well known as Śrāddha-deva, the son of Vivasvat and was installed as Manu by Lord Hari, in this great Kalpa.

1. While commenting on verse No. 46, ŚR raises there a pertinent point as to the nature of this Deluge. He states that as the world was submerged within seven days without the usual draught of 100 years, and having fire from above (the sun) and from below (Śeṣa's poison), this must be *an illusory* deluge shown to Satyavrata by the Lord. This has been echoed by GS. on this verse and by VD elsewhere.

12. One day while he was offering libations of water (to sages and manes) in the river Kṛtamālā[1], a certain tiny fish was noticed in the water in the hollow of his folded palms.

13. Satyavrata, the King of Draviḍa land, was about to drop the small fish along with the water in the cavity of his folded palms.

14. To that extremely compassionate king, the fish piteously implored, "Oh king, kind unto the afflicted! How is it that you are throwing a poor helpless creature like me, into the waters of river when I am afraid of acquatic animals who kill their own species.

15. Not knowing that it was Lord Viṣṇu who, out of affection, assumed the form of a fish to confer Grace on him, he made up his mind to Protect the tiny fish.

16. Hearing the piteous appeal of the fish, the merciful king placed it in his water-jar (*Kamaṇḍalu*) and carried it to his hermitage.

17. Growing there in that jar of water (*Kamaṇḍalu*) in one night, and finding the space therein insufficient, she said to the king.

18. "I am not able to accommodate myself in this jar (Kamaṇḍalu) with difficulty. Be pleased to provide for me sufficiently spacious abode, wherein I can live comfortably."

19. He took the fish out of that jar (*Kamaṇḍalu*) and placed it in a big earthen pot for waterstorage (or a well). When thrown therein it grew to the dimensions of three cubits within a *muhūrta* (48 minutes).

20. (The fish requested :) "This reservoir is not sufficient to accommodate me comfortably. As I have adopted you as my protector, please provide me with a more spacious place.

21. Bringing that fish from the reservoir, the king threw it into a lake. Occupying the whole (expanse of the) lake with its body, it grew into a monstrous fish.

22. (The fish requested) "I am an acquatic animal, Oh king! The waters of this lake are not sufficient for my comfor-

1. The river Vaiga in Tamil Nadu. It rises in the Malaya mountain and the holy city of Madura is situated on it—GDAMI, p. 104.

table stay. Be pleased to place me in a pool of inexhaustible storage of water, making arrangement of my safe transit to it."

23. Thus requested, the king carried the fish to various pools of inexhaustible stores of water (each bigger and deeper than the former). When the fish went on growing coextensive with the expanse of the lake, he threw it at last, into the sea.

24. While he was being thus deposited into the sea, he spoke to the king as follows : "Oh heroic king ! It is not proper that you throw me here, as extremely powerful alligators and other acquatic animals will eat me."

25. Being deluded by the fish with the expression of charming words, Satyavrata enquired, "Who are you who beguile us in the form of a fish?"

26. Never such acquatic animal possessing such (miraculous) power and capacity has been seen or heard by us, inasmuch as you fill a lake of one hundred *yojanas* (i.e. 800 miles) in extent, in a single day.

27. Certainly you must be the Imperishable, glorious Lord, Nārāyaṇa or Hari Himself who assumed the form of an acquatic creature for showing Grace unto living beings.

28. Oh Supreme-most Person ! I bow to you who are the Master of the creation, protection and the destruction of the Universe. Oh all-pervading Lord ! You are the real self, the goal and the refuge to us, your votaries, who approach you for protection.

29. All your sportful incarnations are meant for the prosperity and well-being of created beings. I wish to know the main purpose for assuming this form by your worshipful self.

30. Oh Lotus-eyed Lord ! Seeking resort to your feet—you who are the friend and dear soul of all—shall never be futile, as to those others who look upon the body as their soul For you have manifested your miraculous form to us.

Śrī Śuka said :

31. To king Satyavrata who was addressing him in this way, the lord of the Universe who assumed the body of a fish as he desired to sport in the ocean of deluge at the end of

Yuga (which was about to take place), but who, being fond of his exclusive, unflinching votaries, wished to accomplish the good of king and spoke as follows :

The Glorious Lord said :

32. Oh vanquisher of enemies ! On the seventh day from today, all the three worlds, viz. the terrestrial world, the celestial region and space (aerial region) between the two, will be submerged in the ocean of deluge.

33. While the worlds will be sinking in the waters of the deluge, a spacious boat despatched by me will approach you.[1]

34-35. In the meanwhile, you take with you all herbs and plants and seeds of various types (both of inferior and superior qualities) and surrounded by seven sages and accompanied by all varieties of animals, you will board that spacious ship and shall fearlessly sail over the one undivided ocean[2] completely devoid of light but illuminated with the effulgence of sages (to guide you).

36. While the boat will toss hither and thither by strong gales, I shall be near you. You moor it fast to my horn with a big serpent (Vāsuki, as a rope).

37. Oh King ! While the night of god Brahmā lasts, I shall move (through the ocean) dragging the ship with you and the sages on board.

38. In reply to your well-reasoned questions, you will find revealed in your heart, through my Grace, my real greatness, which is designated as Supreme Brahman".

39. Having instructed the King in this way, Lord Hari disappeared. Satyavrata waited for the period about which Lord Viṣṇu forewarned him.

1. In the Bible story of the Flood or Deluge, God gave Noah exact instructions for building the Ark (Genisis 6.14-16). God led Noah and his family as well as pairs of animals into the Ark and shut the door of the Ark (Genisis 7.16). In *MBH Vana* .187.31 the king is asked to build a strong ship.

2. *Ekārṇava*—The original ocean of infinite waters, the source of cosmic creation. In Bh. P. *supra* 3.8.23, it is called *yugānta-toya*. In Ha[illegible] terms Mahārṇava, Ekārṇava, Agādha, Stabdha Salila are

40. Spreading the *darbha* grass with their points towards the east, the royal sage sat with his face to the North-East meditating over the feet of Lord Hari in the fish-form.

41. Then the ocean was seen overflowing its boundaries and inundating the earth on all sides, and seemed to be increasing in volume by the heavy downpour from great clouds.

42. While musing over the command of the Lord, he saw the arrival of a boat. Taking with him all the plants and herbs, he boarded the ship alongwith the prominent Brāhmaṇa sages.

43. Being pleased with him, the sages advised him : "Oh King ! Meditate upon Lord Viṣṇu (Keśava). He will be our saviour from this calamity, and bring about our happiness."

44. Thereupon when the Lord was contemplated upon by the King (as per advice of the sages), there appeared in that vast ocean, a golden fish with one horn and body one hundred thousand *yojanas* in dimensions.

45. Having moored the ship to the horn of that fish with the serpent (-King Vāsuki) as the rope, as per previous instructions of Lord Hari, the King felt highly delighted, and praised Lord Viṣṇu (The slayer of the demon Madhu) as follows :

The King said :

46.* Your Lordship is our highest preceptor[1] Who confer on us Liberation from *Saṁsāra*—we, whose[2] knowledge

*ŚR. shows that this is not only not the Final Deluge (*mahā-pralaya*), but not even a periodic one. But just as sage Mārkaṇḍeya was shown the scene of Deluge in this very (Vaivasvata) Manvantara, King Satyavrata was shown the Deluge with a view to initiate him in the spiritual knowledge. BP. however, controverts this and basing himself on *Laghu-Bhāgavata* subscribes to the theory of two fish-incarnations just as there had been two boar-incarnations.

matsyo'pi prādur abhavad dviḥ kalpe'smin varāhavat /
ādau svāyambhuvīyasya daityam ghnanāharat śrutiḥ /

He further quotes *Viṣṇudharmottara* for support. The main objection of ŚR i.e. the impossibility of a real Deluge *within seven days*, without any famine etc., is not met by the critics of ŚR.

1. *Paramo gurur bhavān*: The seven sages were Satyavrata's preceptors and the Lord was the preceptor of these sages. Hence the Lord is the "Grand-sire" (preceptor) of Satyavrata—VC.

2. *anādyavidyā,...saṁviduḥ* : whose knowledge about the supreme soul and soul *as they are*, is obscured by our date-less ignorance whereby we wrongly identify the body with the soul—VR. By *'ātma-saṁvit'* VJ, understands 'the knowledge of the Supreme Soul' JG. interprets *'avidyā'* as the Lord's Deluding Potency (Māyā).

about the soul is screened (and hence obscured) by Nescience (*avidyā*) which is beginningless, are subjected to suffer the three types of afflictions in this *Saṁsāra* rooted in that very Nescience. It is through your Grace that we take shelter in You[1] and attain to realize You.

47. This category of beings (subject to the cycle of births and deaths) is ignorant (as he identified body with the soul) and is fettered with (and hence subject to the fruits of) his actions. With the desire of enjoying pleasures (derivable from objects of senses), he performs acts with great pains. By adoring you the wrong notion (consisting of the identity of the body and the soul *or* 'in doing Karma') is shaken off. May he, being our preceptor, cut off the knot of false notion (or attachment) in our heart.

48. May that Imperishable Supreme Ruler (of the Universe), our preceptor's preceptor be our preceptor, by serving (adoring) whom, a person (desirous of Liberation from *Saṁsāra*) purges the *tāmasic* dirt from himself and regains its original (blissful) character just as a lump of gold or silver becomes purified of the dross, by being blown into the fire and recovers its original colour and nature.

49. I seek asylum in that Supreme Lord (whose Grace is so unlimited that) not even one out of ten thousand parts of his Grace, the gods, preceptors and all people combined together can, by themselves, show to a person (their devotee).

50. Just as a sightless person is called upon to lead the blind, a spiritually unenlightened person is made the preceptor of ignorant people. Like the light of the sun, you are self-illuminating and providing light to all our senses or are (capable of direct perception). Hence, we have sought you as a preceptor and guide, with the desire of knowing our way and destination.

51. A (spiritually ignorant) person imparts wrong instructions to another person (leading to wealth and

1. *yadṛcchayehopasṛtā* : To whom people attain to after resorting to and through spiritual preceptors.—VR. VR. insists that it is through God's Grace that one comes in contact with spiritual preceptors. But VJ thinks that the very birth in the human species is due to His Grace secured by meritorious acts in the previous births.

gratification of lust) whereby the follower is sure to land in the insuperable darkness (in the form of *Saṁsāra*). You, however, impart eternal unfailing knowledge (of the soul) in the light of which, a person can easily and definitely attain to his (spiritual) goal.

52. To all the people in the world, you (alone) are certainly a friendly well-wisher, the beloved Supreme Ruler, the very soul, the preceptor, the spiritual wisdom itself and the goal to be realized. But people of 'blind' intellect and understanding, who are deeply rooted in worldly desires, cannot see you even though you exist in their very heart.

53. For the sake of spiritual awakening and guidance, I resort to you, the Almighty Ruler, adorable even to gods and worthy of being sought by all. Oh Lord ! Cut asunder the knots (of egotism, ignorance etc.) in my heart, with your words shedding light on the (spiritual) truth and reveal unto me your own self.

Śrī Śuka said :

54. To the king who was praying thus, the glorious Lord, the ancient-most person who was sporting in the ocean in the form of a fish, imparted the highest truth.

55. He revealed to the royal sage Satyavrata the divine compilation of Purāṇa[1] (known as the *Matsya Purāṇa*) dealing with the Sāṅkhya system of Philosophy, and the science and practice of Yoga, and also instructed him in the secret lore about the soul.

56. Seated on board the ship along with the sages, the king listened to the discourse on the real nature of the soul and the Eternal Brahman so expounded to them by the glorious Lord as to leave no (shadow of) doubt about it.

1. The *Matsya p.*, in its preamble, (ch. 2.22-24) makes Manu ask the Fish all the topics covered in a *purāṇa* e.g.

utpattiṁ pralayaṁ caiva vaṁśān manvantarāṇi ca /
vaṁśyānu-caritaṁ caiva bhuvanasya ca vistaram //

But *MBH Vana* 187 is silent on this point. The word *mātsya-purāṇa* etc. in 187.57 means 'the episode of Fish incarnation' narrated in MBH.—

57. To god Brahmā who was awkened after the end of the Pralaya (Deluge), Lord Hari restored the Vedas after killing the demon Hayagrīva.

58. That King Satyavrata who was thus blessed with discriminating knowledge and spiritual wisdom, has become Vaivasvata Manu in this Kalpa, through the Grace of Viṣṇu.

59. He who listens to the great story consisting of the dialogue between the royal sage Satyavrata and Viṣṇu who, through his Māyā, assumed the form of a horned fish, stands absolved of all sins.

60. A person who, every day, extols this incarnation of Lord Hari, finds that all his desires are accomplished here, and he attains to the Final Beatitude (hereafter).

61. I do bow unto the Lord who is the cause of everything and who disguised himself as a fish[1] in the cosmic waters of the Deluge, and killing the demon (Hayagrīva), restored to Brahmā the corpus of the *Śruti* texts which were stolen away from his mouths (by Hayagrīva) when his (Brahmā's) powers became dormant in sleep and who imparted the knowledge of Brahman to Satyavrata and the seven sages.[2]

1. GS. on the authority of VC. states that this fish of a curved body is called *āḍi* in common parlance.

2. Curiously enough as a *phala-śruti* of this *skandha*, VD quotes a *purāṇic* story of a king Viṣṇujit who was absolved of the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa by listening to the VIII Skandha of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

SKANDHA NINTH

CHAPTER ONE

The story of King Sudyumna

The King (Parīkṣit) requested :

1. All the Manu-epochs (*Manvantaras*) described by you and the (account of) glorious heroic feats of Lord Hari of infinite prowess and energy, achieved during those epochs as narrated by you, have been heard by me.

2-3. I learnt from you that he who, at the end of the last *Kalpa*, was the royal sage named Satyavrata, the King of Draviḍas (or Draviḍa country), attained spiritual knowledge by worshipping the Supreme Person, has verily become a Manu (Śrāddhadeva), the Son of Vivasvat; I have also heard from you the (history of) his sons, the kings, of whom Ikṣvāku was prominent.

4. Be pleased to describe to us in details, Oh Brahman, the history of the race and the deeds of those belonging to that line, separately, as we are ever eager to listen to them, Oh highly blessed sage.

5. Kindly relate unto us the heroic exploits of all those kings of hallowed (or sanctifying) renown who belonged to the past, who will rule in future and who belong to the present age.

Sūta said :

6. When accosted in these words by king Parīkṣit, in the assembly of the exponents of Vedas and Brahman, venerable Śuka, the expert in the highest form *dharma*[1] proceeded to narrate in details.

1. This *dharma* is 'the extolling the excellences of the Lord' according to VR, while 'Protection of the subjects is *the* dharma of crowned kings' (VJ).

Śrī Śuka said :

7. Oh chastiser of enemies ! Listen to the main events in the history of the race of Manu (in brief), for it will not be possible to describe it in details for centuries together.

8. At the end of the *Kalpa*, there was only the Supreme Person, who is the Soul of all beings high and low. There was neither universe nor anything else.

9. From his navel sprouted forth the calyx of a gold lotus wherein was born the self-created four-faced god Brahmā, Oh mighty king.

10. From his mind was born Marīci and from Marīci was born Kaśyapa. From Kaśyapa and his wife Aditi, the daughter of Dakṣa (Prajāpati) was born a son called Vivasvat.

11. From Vivasvat and his wife Saṁjñā was born Śrāddha-deva, the Manu and through his wife Śraddhā, the self-controlled eminent Śrāddhadeva begot the (following) ten sons :

12. (Namely) Ikṣvāku, Nṛga, Śaryāti, Diṣṭa, Dhṛṣṭa, Karūṣaka, Narīṣyat, Pṛṣaddhra, Nabhaga, Kavi.

13. It is reported that in the beginning, when Manu was childless, the worshipful and (spiritually) powerful Vasiṣṭha performed a sacrifice, in honour of Mitra and Varuṇa.

14. In that sacrifice, Śraddhā, the wife of Manu who was observing the *payo-vrata* vow, approached the *Hotṛ*-priest, paid obeisance to him and begged for the birth of a daughter.

15. The *Hotṛ* (the reciter of Vedic *mantras* in a sacrifice) who was directed by the *Adhvaryu* (the officiating head sacrificial priest), was brooding over the request of Śraddhā. The Brāhmaṇa (contemplating over her request) with full concentration of mind, offered oblations while uttering the mystic word—*Vaṣaṭ* (and propitiated the fire).

16. As a consequence of the dereliction of duty on the part of the *Hotṛ* (the reciter of *mantras*), a daughter named Ilā was born. Not being much delighted at the sight of the daughter (when the sacrifice was performed for the birth of a son), Manu addressed the preceptor (as follows) :

17. "Worshipful Sir, what is this that the act (of sacrir) performed by the expert exponents of Vedas has led to

the contrary result? Ah! What a pity! There should not have been such a reversal (in the fruit) of Vedic *Mantras*.

18. You are experts in the knowledge and sacrificial application of the *Mantras* and are self-disciplined. You have burnt down all your sins by your austerities. What is the cause of the failure of this expectation. This is as impossible as falsehood in the case of gods. (Just as what gods think or say turns out to be true, your will power should have similarly prevailed)".

19. Hearing this (complaining) speech (of Manu), the worshipful great-grandfather[1] Vasiṣṭha came to know the transgression committed by the reciter of *mantras* (*Hotṛ*) and replied to Vaivasvata Manu (the son of the Sun, Vivasvat).

20. "This frustration of your expectation is due to the dereliction of duty on the part of the *Hotṛ*. Yet by virtue of my spiritual power, I shall accomplish your object of having a good son".

21. The adorable Vasiṣṭha of great renown, determined thus and with the desire of securing manhood to Ilā prayed Lord Viṣṇu, The Eternal Person.

22. The glorious Lord Hari, The Ruler (of the universe), being pleased with Vasiṣṭha, conferred on him the boon sought for (by him). In virtue of that boon, Ilā became Sudyumna, the foremost among men.

23. On one occasion, riding a horse of Sindhu breed, and accompanied by a few ministers, he went on a hunting expedition in a forest, Oh great king.

24. Clad in an armour and arming himself with a beautiful bow and extremely wonderful arrows, the hero went to the northern direction, in pursuit of the game (a deer).

25. It is reported that the prince entered a forest on the foothills of mount Meru, where the glorious Lord Śiva sports amorously with his Spouse Umā.

1. It should have been grand-father's grand-father as can be seen from the following genealogy of Śuka from Vasiṣṭha:

Vasiṣṭha—Śakti—Parāśara—Vyāsa—Śuka but if *pra-pitāmaha* is to be defended (as VD does it) by saying that the father and the son are to be regarded as one as per the Śruti text *ātmaiva putranāmā'si*, the chain of identity will reach to Śuka also.

26 Hardly did Sudyumna, that vanquisher of inimical warriors, enter the forest, when he found himself transformed into a woman and the horse into a mare, Oh king.

27. Noticing a change of sex in themselves, all his followers became dejected at heart and began to stare at each other.

King Parīkṣit asked :

28. Oh venerable Sir ! How is it that the region came to acquire such power ? Who made it so ? Be pleased to answer this query, as our curiosity has become intense.

Śrī Śuka said :

29. On one occasion, sages, who were strict observers of sacred vows, came to that region (Ilāvṛta) to pay visit to god Śiva, the lord of mount Kailāsa, dispelling darkness from all quarters (with their spiritual lustre).

30. Having seen them, goddess Pārvatī, who was then ungarmented, got extremely abashed, and quickly getting up from her consort's lap, put on her raiments immediately.

31. Noting the union of the divine couple in amorous enjoyment, the sages instantly turned back and proceeded to the hermitage of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

32. Then, with a desire to satisfy his divine beloved, the glorious god Śiva announced : 'Whoever enters this region, shall (automatically and instantly) turn into a veritable woman.

33. Hence all males avoid going to that forest since then. She (Sudyumna, now a woman Ilā) went on wandering from one forest to another, accompanied by her retinue.

34. Now beholding that excellent young woman surrounded by ladies, (leisurely) wandering on the precincts of his hermitage, god Budha (the presiding deity of the planet Mercury) conceived an amorous passion for her.

35. That lady with beautiful eyebrows, in her turn, reciprocated his love and sought him, the son of King Soma, as her husband. He begot on her a son named Purūravas.

36. We hear it reported that King Sudyumna of Manu's

race who was thus transformed into a woman, happened to remember Vasiṣṭha, his family preceptor.

37. (As soon as he was thus remembered, Vasiṣṭha appeared on the scene). Seeing that sad plight of Sudyumna, Vasiṣṭha was overwhelmed with compassion. Being deeply moved, and wishing to restore the manhood of Sudyumna, he approached (appealed to) god Śaṅkara.

38. Being pleased with Vasiṣṭha and with a view to grant his prayer as well as to retain the veracity of his own utterance, the glorious god Śiva spoke as follows, Oh King.

39. 'Sudyumna who is born of your race, shall be a man for one month and a woman for another month alternately. May he protect the earth at his will, under this arrangement'[1].

40. Having accomplished his desire of restoration to manhood through the grace of his preceptor, he ruled over the earth under the above-mentioned arrangement. But his subjects did not approve of it.

41. He got three sons, Utkala, Gaya and Vimala. They became righteous rulers of the Deccan (the southern region including Mahārāṣṭra).

42. With the ripeness of the age, King Sudyumna, the ruler over pratiṣṭhāna[2] handed over (the kingdom of) the earth to (his son) Purūravas, and went to forest (for performance of penance).

1. The story is briefly mentioned in *MBH. Ādi* 75.16, *Anu* 147. 26, *Liṅga P.* 1.65.

2. Most probably *Jhusi* opposite to Allahabad across the Gaṅgā. Mentioned in *MBH Vana.* 85.76. According to *Liṅga P.*I.65 the kingdom of Ikṣvākus was divided among Sudyumna's sons, while according to Vasiṣṭha's advice, the son of Ilā (the female transformation of Sudyumna) Purūravas, was given Pratiṣṭhānapura as he had no hereditory rights on the kingdom of *Ikṣvāku.* But Bh.P. 9.2.2 shows that Ikṣvāku was born, when Sudyumna left for the forest.

D.P. Mishra's conjectural identification of this Pratiṣṭhāna with 'Ortospana' (near Kabul—'nearer Bactria, the home province of Purūravas') of Greek writers deserves consideration. Vide *studies—Proto. Hist. of Ind.* pp. 116-17.

CHAPTER TWO

History of Karūṣa and other four sons of Manu

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When his son Sudyumna thus left (for the forest), Manu, the son of Vivasvat, being desirous of begetting a son performed penance for a hundred years, on the bank of the Yamunā.

2. Thereafter he worshipped Lord Hari (by performing a sacrifice) for (male) progeny; and he had ten sons, Ikṣvāku being the eldest, all resembling himself.

3. Manu's (eighth) son, Pṛṣadhra, was entrusted with the duty of protecting the cows, by his preceptor (as Vasiṣṭha found him competent to tend the bulls). Vigilantly he tended the cows at night, remaining alert in the posture called *Vīrāsana* (kneeling on one knee).

4. On one occasion, while it was raining at night, a tiger made its way into the cowpen. Cows which were lying there, got panicky and springing to their feet, ran about in that enclosure.

5-6. The powerful tiger seized one of the cows, and she, overwhelmed with fear, screamed loudly. It is reported that when Pṛṣadhra heard that screaming in agony, he rushed in haste in that direction, with a sword in hand. In the darkness of night, when even stars were invisible due to clouds, he unwittingly chopped off the head of a tawny coloured cow, believing it to be a tiger.

7. The tiger too got its ear severed with the end of the sword in that stroke, but escaped in extreme panic, dripping blood all the way.

8. Pṛṣadhra, the destroyer of inimical warriors, who believed that the tiger had been killed, found, at the close of night, to his sore grief, that a reddish-brown cow had been killed by him, in the (darkness of) night.

9. To Pṛṣadhra who has unknowingly committed the sin of killing a cow, Vasiṣṭha, the family preceptor (instead of [illegible]ng him the expiatory rite or procedure for such unwitt-[illegible]acts) pronounced the following imprecation : "In conse-

quence of this (thoughtless) act, you shall be not even the vilest of Kṣattriyas but a veritable Śūdra."

10. When cursed in this way by the family preceptor, the great warrior accepted it (respectfully) with folded palms. He observed the vow of life-long celibacy—a vow so esteemed by sages.

11. Being exclusively and absolutely devoted to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the absolutely pure (blemishless), transcendental, universal Spirit, he became a friend and a well-wisher of all beings, impartial to all.

12-13. Completely devoid of attachment, with a serene mind, and with all senses under full control, bereft of all possessions, maintaining himself on whatever came to him by chance (without asking for it), fixing his mind in the Supreme Soul, satiated in spiritual knowledge[1], and absorbed in meditation, he roamed about the earth, presenting an appearance of a blind and deaf dunce.

14. Leading this way of life, he happened to enter a forest where, seeing the outbreak of forest-conflagration, he silently allowed his body to be consumed by it and became one with the transcendental Brahman.

15. And the younger son Kavi[2] (even as a child) had no desire for worldly objects. Renouncing the kingdom along with the relatives, he enthroned the self-effulgent Supreme Person in his heart and repairing to the forest, even in his boyhood, ultimately attained to the Supreme Brahman.

16. From Karūṣa, the son of Manu, was descended the Kṣatriya clan called Kārūṣas who ruled over the northern regions, were friendly to Brāhmaṇas and devoted to righteousness.

17. The Kṣatriya clan called Dhārṣṭa was born from Dhṛṣṭa but attained Brāhmaṇahood (Brahmanical virtues and way of life) on the earth. In the race of Nṛga, Nṛga had a son Sumati whose son was Bhūtajyoti to whom was born a son, Vasu.

1. v.l. *jñāna-hṛṣṭa*—Delighted in spiritual knowledge.

2. VJ. takes *Kavi* 'wise' as the adj. qualifying Pṛṣadhra and treats this verse as a further elucidation of the above (12-13) verses. (*uktameva vivṛṇoti*).

18. Vasu had a son Pratīka whose son Oghavān was the father of a son called Oghavat and a daughter named Oghavatī whom Sudarśana married.

19. Citrasena who was born from Nariṣyanta had a son called Dakṣa. Dakṣa's son was Mīḍhvān of whom was born Kūrca who had a son called Indrasena.

20. Indrasena's son was Vītihotra who got a son named Satyaśravas who, on his part, had Uruśravas as his son. Devadatta was born from Uruśravas.

21. The venerable fire-god Agni himself was born as a son of Uruśravas, and was called Agniveśya. He became famous as a great sage Kānīna or Jātukarṇya.

22. From Agniveśya descended a Brāhmaṇa clan known as Agniveśyāyana, Oh king. The race of Nariṣyanta has been thus described in details. Now listen to the line of Diṣṭa.

23. Nābhāga, another son of Diṣṭa (different from the one to be described later[1]) became a *Vaiśya* by following the profession (agriculture, cow-tending etc.) of that class. His son was Bhalandana whose son was Vatsaprīti.

24. Prāṁśu was the son of Vatsaprīti. Prāṁśu's son is wellknown as Pramati; whose son was Khanitra[2], Khanitra's son was Cākṣuṣa, the father of Viviṁśati.

25. Rambha[3] was the son of Viviṁśati. Rambh's son was the religious Khaninetra, and Karandhama was Khaninetra's son, Oh great king.

26. His son was Avīkṣit. His son Marutta became a sovereign of the whole of the globe of the earth—the same sovereign for whom the great *yogin*, Saṁvartta, the son of sage Aṅgiras, performed sacrifices.

27. Nobody else has ever performed a sacrifice so gloriously as did Marutta. All the utensils therein were of pure gold, and whatever other materials were used in his sacrifice, were auspicious and beautiful.

28. Indra (drank so much *Soma* in that sacrifice that he) became inebriated and Brāhmaṇas were oversatisfied with the gifts (*dakṣiṇā*). Marut-gods served food (in that sacrifice), and

1. Vide infra ch. 4.
2. VR. reads 'Svamitra'.
3. VR. reads 'Dambha'.

the whole fraternity of gods (Viśvedevāḥ) were the members of the sacrificial assembly.[1]

29. Marutta had a son called Dama whose son was Rājyavardhana; his son was Sudhṛti and Nara was born as a son of Sudhṛti.

30. His son was Kevala whose son was Bandhumān of whom was born Vegavān. Bandhu was his (Vegavān's) son. Of Bandhu was born the king of the earth Tṛṇabindu.

31. Being an abode of praiseworthy qualities, a prominent heavenly damsel Alambuṣā resorted to him (as his wife), and bore him a number of sons and a daughter known as Iḍaviḍā (v. l. Ilavilā).

32. The sage Viśravas begot on her a son known as Kubera (the donor of wealth). From his father who was a master of *yogas*, Kubera received the Supreme Lore (about the soul).

33. The sons of this king were Viśāla, Śūnyabandhu, and Dhūmraketu. Visāla was the founder of a dynasty and built the city of Vaiśālī.

34. His (Viśāla's) son was Hemacandra, whose son was Dhūmrākṣa. From his son Saṁyama were born Kṛśāśva and Devaja[2].

35. From Kṛśāśva was born Somadatta who, by performing horse-sacrifices, worshipped the Supreme Person, the presiding deity of sacrifices[3] and attained to the foremost (highest goal through the support of the master of *yoga*.

1. This is nothing but an echo of:
marutaḥ pariveṣṭāro maruttasyāvasan gṛhe /
āvikṣitasya kāma-prer viśvedevāḥ sabhāsada iti //
—*Ait. Br.* 8.21.14, *Śat.Br.* 13.5.4.6. *MBH* 12.29.18.
The same is repeated in *MBH Droṇa* 55.43-44.

2. But according to VR & VJ. Dhūmrākṣa's son was Sahadeva and Kṛśāśva was Sahadeva's son.

3. *Iḍaspati* (1) The Supreme Person to be propitiated by performing *Iḍā Homa*—VR.
(2) Overlord of the earth (Iḍā)—VR.
(3) The Lord who gives us food—VJ.
(4) The Lord bestower of the Power of speech—VJ.

36. Somadatta's son was Sumati, whose son was Janamejaya. These rulers of the kingdom of Vaiśāli held up the glory (glorious tradition of Tṛṇabindu).

CHAPTER THREE

The story of Cyavana and Sukanyā

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. It is reported that Manu's son, king Śaryāti was the master of the Vedic lore and it was he who, in the sacrificial session of the Aṅgiras, authoritatively explained the procedure of the ritualistic course of the second day (of that session).

2. He had a daughter Sukanyā by name, whose eyes were beautiful like lotuses. Accompanied by her, he went to the hermitage of the sage Cyavana.[1]

3. Surrounded by her maids (of honour), she was leisurely wandering in the forest enjoying the sight of beautiful trees, when she happened to notice a pair of glow-worm-like luminous objects, in the hole of an ant-hill.

4. Impelled by her fate, she, in her childish innocence, perforated the pair of shining objects with a thorn, and blood flowed profusely out of them.

5. That very moment instantly, there was obstruction in the lower passage of his soldiers (stoppage of the excretion

1. A sage of Bhṛgu Clan. *MBH. Vana* chs 122, 123 & 124 give how he was blinded by Sukanyā and was pacified when Sukanyā married him, and how at his request the celestial physicians Aśvinīkumāras rejuvenated him in consideration of a share in Soma-drinking, and how he petrified Indra's arm when in protest against Aśvinikumāra's share in Soma, Indra attacked with his Vajra. The story is repeated in the *Devī Bhāgavata* Skandha VII. Chs.2-7. In that story Sukanyā deliberately perforates the eyes of Cyavana in spite of his warning. A number of verses are common to *MBH. Vana*, the *Bh.P.* and the *Devi Bhāgavata*, possibly all borrowing from a common source which supplied the story background for RV.1.116 (A hymn to AŚVINS).

and urination). Observing that, the royal sage was astonished and enquired of his men.

6. 'Has any of you given offence or done wrong to Cyavana, the descendant of the Bhṛgus. Obviously, someone of us must have profaned his hermitage'.

7. Being terrified, Sukanyā confessed to her father. "Something has been done by me in ignorance, inasmuch as a pair of glittering objects were unknowingly pierced by me".

8. Hearing the words of his daughter, Śaryāti was seized with fear. He slowly tried to appease the sage, lying hidden in the ant-hill.

9. Having ascertained the desire of the sage, the king gave (in marriage) his daughter to the sage. Having thus extricated himself from the scrape, and taking his leave (of the sage), he proceeded to his capital cautiously.

10. Having obtained the extremely wrathful Cyavana as her husband, Sukanyā who (studied and) understood his mentel proclivities, won him over by meticulously careful obedience.

11. After a lapse of some time after this, the twingods Aśvinikumāras visited his hermitage. Worshipping them (with due formalities as guests), he earnestly requested, "Oh ye celestial physicians ! Be pleased to restore to me my youth.

12. Even though you are not eligible to share the Soma-juice, I shall bear you both gobletfuls of Soma in the Soma sacrifice. Be pleased to bestow on me that youthfulness and beauty, covetable to young damsels."

13. "Assuredly" approved the foremost of physicians rejoicing at his offer. "May your worship be pleased to plunge in this pool created by Siddhas."

14. With these words, Cyavana, whose body was stricken with old age and was all over covered with protuberant veins, and appeared repulsive due to his wrinkles and grey hairs, was made to enter the pool by the pair of Aśvin gods.

15. There emerged three men (from that pool)—all bewitchingly beautiful, captivating to women, adorned with lotus-garlands and ear-rings, clad in rich garments, resembling each other in form.

16. Finding them all resembling each other in form, resplendent like the sun, the chaste lady Sukanyā, being unable to distinguish as to who her husband was, sought refuge with Aśvinikumāras (to help her in knowing the husband, by standing apart).

17. Being pleased with her fidelity to her husband, the Aśvinikumāras pointed out her husband. Taking leave of the sage, they left for the celestial region, in their heavenly car.

18. One day, king Śaryāti, intending to perform a sacrifice, went to the hermitage of Cyavana, and found a man glorious like the Sun, by the side of his daughter.

19. When the daughter bowed down to him (to pay respect), the king was not much pleased in his mind about her, and instead of giving the usual benedictions, censured her.

20. "What have you intended to do? Your husband, a sage respectfully saluted by all the world, is deceived by you, inasmuch as abandoninig the aged husband falsely approved by you, you have resorted to a way-farer as your paramour, you unchaste woman!

21. How is it that your mentality stooped to such low wickedness? Otherwise, you are born in a noble family of righteous persons, and this is a vile stigma on the family. You have lost your sense of shame and are harbouring a paramour, hurling thereby the families of your father and husband into the dark depth of hell."

22. To her father who was thus indicting her, Sukanyā, of pure gentle smiles, replied slightly laughting, "Father! This is your son-in-law Cyavana, the delight (or descendant) of Bhṛgu".

23. Then she reported to her father how he (Cyavana) came to regain his youth and beautiful looks. Full of astonishment and being extremely pleased with her, he embraced his daughter.

24. Cyavana made the heroic king Śaryāti to perform a Soma sacrifice, in which by dint of his personal ascetic powers, he bore a cup of Soma to the pair of Aśvinikumāras, even though they were not entitled for a share in Soma till then.

25. The irascible Indra was instantly enraged and raised his Vajra (thunderbolt) to kill him. But Cyavana, a descendant of Bhṛgus, petrified Indra's arm along with the Vajra.

26. Thenceforth, all of them (gods) agreed to give a share in Soma juice to Aśvinikumāras who, being physicians, were previously excluded from the oblations of Soma to them.

27. Śaryāti had three sons—Uttāna-barhis, Ānarta and Bhūriṣeṇa. Revata was born of Ānarta.

28. Building a city called Kuśasthalī, in the middle of the sea, he occupied it and ruled over the country called Ānarta (and adjoining territories), Oh subduer of enemies.

29-30. One hundred excellent sons, of whom Kakudmin was the eldest, were born to him. Taking with him his daughter Revatī Kakudmī went to god Brahmā for cousulting him for a suitable husband to his daughter. The region of Brahmā was then open. As a musical concert of Gandharvas, was going on, he did not get opportunity (to speak to god Brahmā) and waited for a moment.

31. After the conclusion of the musical programme, he bowed down to god Brahmā (the first created god), and told the object of his visit. Hearing that, god Brahmā laughed loudly and said.

32. "Oh King! Suitors that you had in your mind, have already been swallowed up by Time long ago. We do not even hear of their sons, grandsons, great-grandsons. Nay, not even their *gotras* (races).

33-35. The time calculated as thrice nine (i. e. twenty-seven) revolutions of the group of four *yugas* has now elapsed. Therefore, now you go back and offer this jewel of a daughter to the extremely mighty Baladeva, the ray of the God of gods, and a jewel among men. The glorious Lord, the creater of all beings, the chanting and hearing of whose name is meritorious, has incarnated on the earth by his own *aṁśa* (ray) for lightening the burden of the earth". When thus commanded, he bowed down to the unborn god Brahmā, and returned to his capital which was already abandoned by his brothers, out of fear of *yakṣas*, who were scattered all over the quarters (different parts of the earth).

36. Having given in marriage his extremely beautiful daughter to the mighty Balarāma, the king repaired to the hermitage of Nārāyaṇa, known Badarī, to perform austerities.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Account of Nābhāga and Ambarīṣa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Nābhāga was the son of Nabhaga. He was the youngest (of the brothers), the most learned and wise, and had spent (an unduly) long time as a celibate (in his teacher's hermitage). When he returned (from the hermitage of the preceptor and demanded his share of the ancestral property), they gave him their father (a commitment of father's maintenance) as his share of hereditary property, (as they have shared among themselves the whole of their father's estate presuming that Nābhāga would remain life-long celibate, and never return).

2. "Brothers ! What have you alotted as my share (in the ancesral propetrty) ?" (Nābhāga asked). (We forgot you then *or* Hearing of your renunciation, no share was set aside in the division of the property). 'Now, however, we give father (maintenance of father) as your share'[1] (replied the brothers). (Nābhāga went to his father and told him), "My elder brothers have alotted you as my share in the family property, dear father". The father told, "Do not place any faith in their words, Oh child"[2] (I am not a property to be enjoyed, but am a life-long commitment for maintenance).

1. "Let us go to father. If father asks us to give you a share, we shall"—VR.

VJ reads : *bhajāna pitaraṃ* : 'If you want a share, go to your father, propitiate him and ask for your share. We also shall come and ask him'.

2. Do not entertain any desire for a share in the family property —VR.VJ.

3. (But for your maintenance, I advise). These (neighbouring) intelligent descendants of the Aṅgiras family are now engaged in a sacrificial session (of a long duration). But on every sixth day, they get confounded about the exact procedure ordained for the sacrifice, Oh learned son.

4-5. You teach those noble-minded (great-souled) Brāhmaṇas the two hymns (sūktas) celebrating the *Viśvedevas*[1]. When (after completion of the sacrifice), they will ascend to heaven, they will bestow upon you all their wealth that remains unspent after the sacrificial session. Hence you approach them (the Aṅgirases). He abided by his father's advice. They donated to him all the wealth that remained after the sacrificial session and went to heaven.

6. While he was about to accept that wealth, a certain man, of black complexion (Rudra), came from the north and claimed, "All this wealth in the premises of this house is mine".

7. Then replied the descendant of Manu, "This is mine inasmuch as it is given to me by the sages (who performed the sacrifice)". "Let this question (dispute) between us be referred to your father." Accordingly Nābhāga asked his father.

8. (His father replied), "On a certain occasion, sages have offered all that remains in the sacrificial hall as Rudra's share.[2] The god deserves (has a rightful claim on) the whole of that wealth."

9. (On return) Nābhāga bowed to him (Rudra) and reported, "Oh Lord ! My father said that all this is your property. Oh Brahman ! I propitiate you by bowing (apologizing with) my head low respectfully.

10. Rudra said, "Since what was spoken by your father was according to (the canons of) religion and you too speak the truth, I shall impart to you, the seer of Vedic *mantras*, spiritual knowledge about the Eternal Brahman.

10A. One should never, even under duress, speak the untruth. Nor should one covet another man's property. I

1. The Sūktas are :
   (1) *idam itthā raudraṁ gūrtavācaḥ* — RV.10.61.1
   (2) ye yajñena dakṣiṇayā samaktāḥ — RV.10.62.1
2. *Vide Supra* Bh.P. 4.6.53. ŚR supports this by the Śruti text : *ucchoṣaṇī-bhāgo vai rudraḥ |*

am extremely pleased with truthfulness and a truthful person is liked (desired) by me.

11. Please accept this wealth, the remainder of my sacrifice, which is granted to you". Saying this the glorious Lord Rudra, who is kind to the truthful, disappeared.

12. He who remembers this sacred story[1] with full concentration, both in the morning and in the evening, becomes blessed with spiritual wisdom, well-versed in the Vedic *mantras*, and attains his good (Liberation from Saṁsāra) or the true knowledge of Ātman as it is.

13. From Nābhāga was born Ambarīṣa who was an eminent devotee of Lord Viṣṇu and had realized fully the Brahman. He was so virtuous that even the imprecation of the Brāhmaṇa Durvāsas which was never ineffective before, could not touch him.

The King (Parikṣit) asked :

14. Worshipful Sir ! I am eager to hear the story of that intelligent royal sage against whom the Brāhmaṇa's curse (in the form of the destructive female deity) which is irresistible, could not prevail.

Śrī Śuka said :

15-16. The highly fortunate Ambarīṣa inherited the earth with all its seven continents, inexhaustible fund of wealth, and incomparable power and glory in this world—all of which is extremely difficult for men to attain. But he regarded all this as unreal as a dream. He understood correctly the perishability of wealth, and that it ultimately leads man to darkness (of hell).

17. He attained to such a supreme devotion to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, and so much friendly affection toward his pious devotees, as to regard this universe as a clod of earth —(what to speak of his kingdom ?)

18. He engaged his mind (in meditating) on the lotus-like feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, his speech in singing of the excellences of Lord Viṣṇu (Vaikuṇṭha), his hands in services e.g. cleansing

1. As ŚR. points out this story of Nābhāga is based on a legend of the same person recorded in the *Bahvṛc Brāhmaṇa*.

the temple of Hari and such other duties, and his ears (sense of hearing) in listening to excellent stories of the Imperishable Lord.

19. He employed his eyes (faculty of seeing) in beholding the images and shrines of god Viṣṇu (Mukunda), his tactile sense in embracing the persons of the servants of gods, his olifactory sense in smelling the fragrance of the Tulasī leaves dedicated to his feet, and his tongue (sense of taste) to what is offered to the Lord.

20. He used his feet in walking to the holy places hallowed with Lord Hari's feet, his head to bow down to the feet of god Viṣṇu (Hṛṣīkeśa), his own desire in the humble services of the Lord, and not for the fulfilment of his worldly desires—All he did for enhancing his fondness or devotion to those who have resorted to the Lord of excellent renown.

21. In this way, he dedicated all his acts and round of duties to the glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Ruler who bestows the fruits of the performance of sacrifices, every day. Placing his faith in the presence of the Lord in all beings (or beings devoted to Viṣṇu with their heart and soul[1]), and according to the advice of those who were devoted to the Lord and Brāhmaṇas (like his family preceptor Vasiṣṭha), he ruled over the earth.

22. He worshipped the Supreme Ruler, the presiding Deity of the Sacrifice, by performing horse-sacrifices in which all the 'limbs' (detailed parts of the sacrifice) were duly conducted and sumptuous sacrificial fees were paid befitting his great affluence. He performed these sacrifices under the guidance of great sages like Vasiṣṭha, Asita and Gautama in a desert place called Dhanva in the opposite direction of the current of the river Sarasvatī, (changing the venue of sacrifice along its banks from its mouth towards its source upwards.)

23. In his sacrifices, the sacrificial priests and members of the sacrificial assembly were so richly attired (and adorned), and through wonder or meticulous care in carrying out their

1. GS, GD quote the ideal devotion of *gopīs* in this context :
tan-manaskās tadālāpās tad-viceṣṭās tadātmikāḥ !
tad-guṇāneva gāyantyo nātmāgārāṇi sasmaruḥ !! Bh.P.10.30.44

duties, they forgot to wink and looked like the celestials (in form, dress ornaments and unwinkingness).

24. The heavenly region which is so dear to immortal gods was not coveted by his men, as (subjects) they constantly listened to and sang the glorious deeds of Lord Viṣṇu of excellent renown.

25. To them (his subjects) who visualized Lord Viṣṇu in their hearts, objects of pleasure which are not easily accessible even to Siddhas (who are endowed with mystic powers), did not fascinate and gladden, as they (objects of pleasure) are (as if) thrown into the shade by the essential blissfulness of self-realization (enjoyed by them).[1]

26. In this way the king, by his path of devotion combined with austerities, propitiated Lord Hari by abiding by the ordained course of duties, and gradually dissociated himself from all attachments.

27. He developed the sense of unreality of (and hence did not cherish any attachments to) his palaces, queens, sons, relatives, excellent elephants, chariots, horses, foot-soldiers, his inexhaustible (quantity of) jewels, ornaments, arms etc. and to his unlimited treasures.

28. Being pleased with his unflinching single-minded devotion, Lord Hari assigned to him, for the protection of his servant (devotee) his discus Sudarśana which struck terror in inimical forces.

29. With a desire to propitiate Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), the hero, along with his chief queen of a similar pious disposition, undertook the vow of observing a fast on the *Dvādaśī* day (viz. twelfth day of the dark and the bright half of every lunar month), for the period of one year.

30. At the close of the observance of the vow, in the month of Kārttika, he observed fast for three previous con-

1. Not that Ambarīṣa did not desire the objects of sense-pleasure due to their scarcity. They were in abundance as they were impelled and brought about by His essential greatness, though they were difficult for even Siddhas to obtain. He, however, was not enamoured of them as he saw Lord Viṣṇu in his heart—VJ.

secutive nights.[1] On one *Dvādaśī*, he took his bath in the Yamunā and worshipped Lord Hari in the forest-grove of the (demon) Madhu (the site of future Mathurā).

31-32. After performing the ablution of Hari according to the procedure laid down for the *Mahābhiṣeka* (royal coronation type ablution or a bath in which two thousand *palas* of gold is gifted) along with abundantly rich variety of accessories and ornaments, sandal paste, flowers, offerings and other articles of worship, he adored Lord Viṣṇu with a mind completely absorbed in him, and worshipped highly virtuous[2] Brāhmaṇas even though they had already accomplished their desire.

33-34A. He donated and sent to the houses of pious Brāhmaṇas six hundred million cows of good disposition and attractive appearance, all young and yielding milk in abundance. Their horns were encased in gold and hoofs plated in silver, and all were covered with rich cloth. They were gifted along with their calves and other necessary accessories (such as bells, pots for milking etc).

34B-35. Having first fed Brāhmaṇas with sweet and wholesome dish of excellent quality, and with the permission of those Brāhmaṇas who received their desired objects he (King Ambarīṣa) was making preparations of breaking his fast, when there arrived an unexpected guest who was no other than the venerable sage Durvāsas himself.

36. The king received his guest respectfully, by rising from his seat and proferring a respectable seat and other articles of worship, and bowing down to his feet, he requested him to take meals.

1. In the vow known as *Ekādaśī-vrata*, one has to take no meals at night on the 10th day, to observe complete fast on the 11th day and after breaking fast in the morning of the 12th day, observe fast at night.

2. *mahābhāga* :

VD. quotes a definition of *mahābhāga Brāhmaṇas*

tapo-vidyā-dayā-yuktā hari-niṣṭhaika-cetasaḥ /
pratigraha-nivṛttā ye mahābhāgā dvijāḥ smṛtāḥ //

'Those who are engaged in penance, learning and merciful activities and whose minds are solely and unflinchingly devoted to Lord Hari, and who have ceased to accept gifts, are regarded as *mahābhāga* (highly virtuous) Brāhmaṇas.'

37. Gladly accepting the invitation, he went to perform the prescribed religious duties (of the mid-day). Contemplating over the Suprme Brahman, he plunged in the holy waters of the Yamunā.

38. (As it is necessary to break the fast of *ekādaśī* during the period of *dvādaśī* and) as only half of a *muhūrta* (twenty-four minutes) remained of the *dvādaśī* day to expire in which one has to conclude the fast, the king, who was conversant with the religious technicalities, consulted the Brāhmaṇas (as to what righteous course be adopted) in that critical condition (involving conflict of duties).

39. (The king placed his dilemma before the Brāhmaṇas): (On the one hand) there is sin in transgressing a Brāhmaṇa (if I take meals before feeding the invited guest), and (on the other hand) it is sinful not to break a fast during the *dvādaśī* period. (Advise me) what course would be conducive to my good, and unrighteousness should not touch me.

40. I shall conclude the observance of the fast by sipping water only. For taking of water has been declared by Brāhmaṇas as breaking the fast but at the same time it is no eating at all."[1]

41. Coming to this conclusion, the royal sage took in some water, and waited for the return of the Brāhmaṇa contemplating in his mind the Imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu) all the while, Oh best of Kurus.

42. After finishing the necessary religious duties (of the midday), sage Durvāsas returned from the bank of the Yamunā. He was greeted by the king. But he knew by his intellectual (intuitional) power, the action of the king (viz. breaking of the fast by drinking water).

43. With his limbs quaking through intense wrath, and with his face crooked with knitting of brows (in anger), and being extremely angry, he expostulated the king who stood with folded palms (respectfully).

44. "Oh ! Look at the transgression of the established religious practice committed by this wicked fellow maddened

1. ŚR. quotes *Śruti* text in support :
apośnāti tannaivāśitam naivānaśitam /

with his wealth, who regards himself as God and is devoid of any devotion to Viṣṇu.

45. Having extended an invitation to receive his hospitality to me who came to him as an unexpected guest, he himself took his meals without serving me food. (To the king) I show you forthwith the consequence of your misdeed."

46. Saying these words and extremely flared up with rage, he pulled out a matted hair (from his head), and created out of it a female spirit, (fierce) like the fire at the time of the destruction of the universe (to kill him).

47. Seeing the female evil spirit rushing toward him with a sword in hand, emitting fire, and making the earth quake under her feet (as she advanced), the king did not at all stir from his place.

48. The discus Sudarśana that was previously commissioned for protecting his servant (Ambarīṣa) by the Noble-souled Supreme Person, burnt down that evil spirit even as a fire would burn an angry serpent.

49. When Durvāsas saw that all his efforts (against Ambarīṣa) became infructuous, and that the discus was advancing towards him, he got frightened and ran in different directions, to save his life.

50. The discus of the Lord closely pursued him even as a forest conflagration with its flames thrown up follows a serpent. Observing it so close behind him, he took to his heels with a desire to enter one of the caves of mount Meru.

51. He fled to different quarters, the sky, the earth, the nether-world, the (seven) seas, to guardian deities of different regions, and to the celestial region. But wheresoever he ran, he saw the Sudarśana of unbearable splendour close on his heels.

52. When he could not find a protector anywhere, he became terrified at heart, and trying to seek asylum, approached god Brahmā appealing to him, "Oh Creator (of the Universe)! Oh self-born god! Protect me from the discus of Hari—the unvanquished god.

Brahmā said :

53. At the close of the divine sport (of the creation etc. of the universe), at the end of the period called *dviparārdha*

(when Brahmā's span of life ends), my own sphere, along with the whole of the Universe shall vanish (come to an end), by mere contraction of the brow of god Viṣṇu, the Soul of the Time-Spirit wishing to burn it all.

54. I, god Śiva, Dakṣa, Bhṛgu and others, and prominent Lords of created beings (*Prajāpatis*), rulers of goblins and of gods—all of us being subject to his Command, bear on our heads (most respectfully), the divine law for the welfare of the world. (Hence our inability to give you asylum).

55. Being thus refused protection by Brahmā, and being scorched by the discus of Lord Viṣṇu Durvāsas approached god Śiva on mount Kailāsa, for seeking asylum.

Śrī Rudra said :

56.* We cannot prevail against the Supreme Lord, oh child. In that Supreme Ruler great gods like god Brahmā who comprise the universe in their body, are nothing but ordinary *jīvas*; there are thousands of other such Brahmāṇḍas which are born as well as dissolved in the course of time. We are just wandering in transmigration in them.

57-58. I, Sanatkumāra, Nārada, the worshipful god Brahmā, Kapila, the sage Apāntaratamas,[1] Devala, Dharma,

*(i) We are not capable of protecting you against the discus of the Lord Who deserves to be sought after by us. In this universe we who regard ourselves as masters of (our) regions, are wandering (like insects). Thousands of such Brahmāṇḍas appear, when He wills to create, and are dissolved, when He wishes to withdraw—VR.

(ii) We are powerless in affording you protection. At the time of creation numerous deities like me are born from Hari, the Perfect Bliss and are no more at the time of the destruction of the Universe. There are crores of other such Brahmāṇḍas which form the bodies of so many Brahmās in which we and unintelligent beings wander in transmigration. May that Supreme Ruler be your Saviour—Not we—VJ.

(iii) Therefore you seek resort in that Lord Viṣṇu—SD.

(iv) *tāta*—Term of endearment as Durvāsas was a part of ray of god Śiva—GD.

1. A great sage born when god Viṣṇu uttered the word *bhā*. He was absolutely free from the inner darkness or ignorance about the soul. Hence his name is also known as *Sārasvata* as he was born out of the speech (*Sarasvatī*) of the Lord.

—*MBH. Śānti* 349. 38-39.

Āsuri and other leaders of Siddhas who are perfect in wisdom (have seen the other end) of whom Marīci is prominent, all of us are enveloped in Māyā, and we cannot comprehend his Māyā.

59. This is the weapon of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. It is unbearable and irresistible even to us. You seek refuge in Lord Hari. He will make you happy.

60. Being thus disappointed, Durvāsas went to the region of the Lord called Vaikuṇṭha where Lord Viṣṇu abides along with goddess Śrī.

61. Scorched with the fire emanating from the weapon of the unconquerable Lord, he fell trembling at the feet of Viṣṇu and appealed, "Oh Imperishable, Infinite Lord! You are the goal aspired after by the righteous. Oh Almighty God! You are the protector of the Universe. Oh Protect me who am an offender.

62. Being ignorant of Your Supreme glory, an offence against your dear one has been committed by me. Be pleased to absolve me of that sin, as even a being in hell is released by uttering Your name (what of wiping out this sin?).

The Lord replied :

63. Oh Brāhmaṇa! I am completely under the control of my devotees. I am like one who has no self-dependence. My heart is won over and hence is in possession of my righteous devotees, and I am the beloved of them.

64. To my devotees, I am the Supreme goal, (hence) apart from my righteous devotees, I do not covet even my person (myself), or even (my consort) Goddess Śrī[1] who is absolutely faithful to Me.

65. How can I abandon (to their fate) my devotees who have renounced their wives, homes, sons, kith and kin, their very life, property, (their good in) this world and the next, and resorted to me as their protector.

66. These righteous people who have completely dedicated their hearts to me and entertain impartiality of outlook to all, have enthralled me by their devotion, even as good wives do by their devotion to virtuous husbands.

1.—The highest glory of eternal six excellences—VD.

67. So thoroughly satisfied are they in rendering service to me that they do not long for the four types of Liberations such as *Salokatā*—co-residence with the Lord in his region and others[1] which are easily available by my worship. How can they covet for other positions or things which are subject to ravages of time.

68. Righteous people (are so beloved to me that they as if) constitute my heart. I am (reciprocally so much dear to them that I form) their heart. They do not recognize anything beside me. Nor do I know anything else than them.

69. I shall therefore tell you a remedy. Listen to it, Oh Brāhmaṇa. You should verily approach him (Ambarīṣa) on account of whom the act of violence has rebounded against you. The energy discharged against pious people boomerangs against and harms its own author.

70. Asceticism and learning are both for the spiritual good of the Brāhmaṇas but those very powers when mishandled by the indisciplined ones produce the contrary results.

71. Hence, Oh Brāhmaṇa ! May good betide you. You go to King Ambarīṣa, the son of Nābhāga. Apologize and seek forgiveness of that great king. Then alone you can get peace and relief.

CHAPTER FIVE

Protection of Durvāsas. The story of Ambarīṣa Concluded

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Being thus commanded by the glorious Lord, Durvāsas who was afflicted by the discus Sudarśana, returned to Ambarīṣa, and sought protection at his feet (by touching them) remorsefully.

1. The remaining three are : *Samīpatā*—Proximity to the Lord, *Sarūpatā*—resemblance in form with the Lord, *Sāyujyatā*—complete identification or absorption in the Deity.

2. Observing the act (of supplication and touching his feet) by Durvāsas, Ambarīṣa felt ashamed at the touch of his feet (by the sage), and being overwhelmed with deep compassion, prayed to the missile of Lord Hari.

Ambarīṣa prayed :

3. You are the glorious Fire-god, the Sun-god, Soma (or Deity presiding over the moon), the Lord of luminaries (constellations of stars, planets). You are (the elements like) water, the earth, the sky, the air. You are the subtle elements and the senses (or the objects of the senses and fire etc. function due to your power).

4. Oh Sudarśana ! I pay my respects to you who are of thousand spokes and so dear to The Imperishable Lord. You are the destroyer of all missiles, and protector of the earth. May you be propitious to the Brāhmaṇa.

5. You are the righteousness (*dharma*) itself, the Divine Law (*ṛta*) and the Truth (incarnate). You are the sacrifice, and you are the presiding Deity of the Sacrifice who enjoys the oblations. You are the protector of regions, the soul (the Inner Controller) of all; you are the splendour and energy of the Supreme Person.

6. Oh beautifully centred discus ! (Nobody being able to glorify you adequately) I simply utter the word "Bow" to you who are the defender of the injunctions of the Divine Law (ominous and destructive like) a comet unto the unrighteous and the Asuras, the Protector of the three worlds, endowed with purest splendour, of quick speed like the flight of thought and of miraculous deeds.

7. Oh Lord of speech ! By your splendour (constituted) of righteousness, darkness of ignorance obscuring the vision (or the knowledge of the Deity) has been dispelled, and the light (of god-realization) has been flashed and preserved, for the noble-souled righteous people. This entire universe, gross or subtle, high or low has been lighted by you (through the sun, the moon and other luminaries). Your greatness is simply unfathomable.

8. Oh Invincible one ![1] when discharged by the blemi-

1. v.l. *ūrjita* : the (army) of mighty Daityas and Dānavas.

shless Lord, you enter the army of the Daityas and Dānavas and severing (incessantly) their arms, bowels, thighs and feet and necks, you shine irresistible in battles.

9. Oh protector of the world ! You who overcome all (enemies in battle), have been commissioned by the wielder of the mace (Lord Viṣṇu) for the annihilation of the wicked. Therefore, for the sake of the prosperity of our family, be pleased to grant welfare (protection) to the Brāhmaṇa (Durvāsas). That will be your grace unto us (otherwise we shall be responsible for committing the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa)

10. If a charitable gift has been donated (by us), or a sacrifice has been performed, or our righteous duty has been properly executed, or if our family regards Brāhmaṇas as our gods, may this Brāhmaṇa be free from his distress.

11. If the glorious lord, the sole abode of all excellent qualities be pleased with us due to our looking upon (regarding) all beings as possessing souls like us (or his Spirit), may this Brāhmaṇa get rid of his distress and anxiety.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. While the king was thus praying to Viṣṇu's discus Sudarśana, which was scorching the Brāhmaṇa on all sides, it subsided at the request of the king.

13. Being relieved of the scorching heat of the fire of the missile (Sudarśana), Durvāsas felt comfortable. Bestowing on him the highest blessings, he praised the king.

Durvāsas said :

14. "Oh ! How wonderful ! I have witnessed today the magnanimity of servants of the Infinite Lord in that you wish for the well-being of a person who has offended you, Oh king.

15. What is difficult to be achieved for those righteous persons or what is impossible to give up in the case of those noble-souled persons, who have treasured up (and made their own) the glorious Lord Hari, the leader of the Sātvatas.

16. Can there be any deficiency or unfulfilment in the case of the servants of the Lord of the hallowing feet (to which

even holy rivers resort for purification) by listening to the name of whom a man is absolved of all sins and impurities.

17. Oh King ! I am highly favoured by you in that, exceedingly merciful as you are, you ignored the wrong done by me, and have completely saved my life."

18. The king who did not take any food but waited in expectation of the sage's return, clasped his feet, conciliated him, and made him accept the meal.

19. Having enjoyed the hospitality and the food that was suitable to all tastes and (thus) gratifying all desires) and was served with respect and care, he felt himself thoroughly gratified, and courteously requested the king to take his meals.

20. "I am thoroughly pleased with you, and have been laid under great obligations by the sight, touch, conversation as well as by the hospitality-offered with full devotion to the Lord—of a great votary of the Lord (like you).

21. The celestial damsels will often sing of this noble behaviour (act) of yours (in heaven), and this earth (the whole world) will extol this highly hallowing glory of yours."

Śrī Śuka said :

22. Having thus praised the king, Durvāsas who was highly satisfied, took his leave of him and through ethereal space went to the region of Brahmā[1] which lasts for two *Parārdha* years.[1]

23. A complete year elapsed since the departed sage Durvāsas did not return. It is reported that during this period, the king who longed to see him returned, subsisted simply on water.

24. After the departure of Durvāsas, Ambarīṣa ate the (remnant of the) food that was rendered extremely holy by being partaken of by the Brāhmaṇa (Durvāsas). Pondering over the calamity on Durvāsas and his final release and his own fortitude, he considered all that being due to the power of the Supreme Person.

25. The king Ambarīṣa who was thus endowed with such ennumerable excellent qualities, continued in his devotion

1. *ahaitukam*—where dry rationalists have no place—GS.

of the Lord by dedicating all his acts suitable to his own caste and stage of life to the Supreme Soul, Brahman designated as Vāsudeva. By virtue of such (firm) devotion, he came to regard all positions upto the part of god Brahmā as hellish.

26. In course of time, Ambarīṣa entrusted his kingdom to his sons whose disposition and character were similar to him, and entered the forest. Concentrating his mind wholly on Vāsudeva, his own soul, he destroyed (became free from) the current of guṇas viz. *Saṁsāra* or transmigration of the soul.

27. He who glorifies this sacred story of king Ambarīṣa or ponders over it, becomes a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu.

27A. Those who listen to the story of the noble-souled Ambarīṣa, all of them attain to Liberation from Saṁsāra through the devotion to and by the Grace of Lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SIX

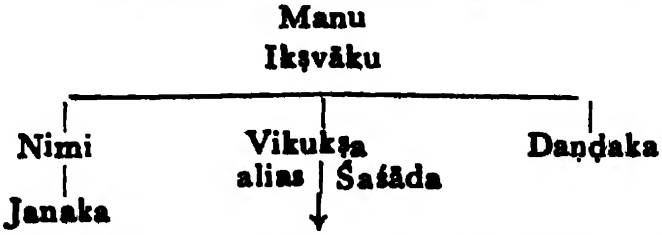
*History of Ikṣvāku's Posterity**

The Story of Saubhari

Śri Śuka said :

1. Virūpa, Ketumān and Śambhu were the three sons of Ambarīṣa. From Virūpa was born Pṛṣadaśva whose son was Rathītara.

*This chapter gives the first twenty generations of the Solar race :



Śaśāda → Purañjaya (Kakutstha) → Anenas → Pṛthu → Viśvarandhi → Candra → Yuvanāśva → Śabasta → Śābasti → Bṛhadaśva → Kuvalayāśva (Dhundhumāra) → Dṛḍhāśva → Haryaśva → Nikumbha → Barhaṇāśva → Kṛśāśva Senajit → Yuvanāśva → Māndhātṛ (Trasaddasyu).

2. When requested for the continuation of the family of Rathītara, Aṅgiras begot by the wife of Rathītara who was childless, a number of sons, possessing the lustre of the Vedic lore.

3. Though these were born from the wife of Rathītara, they were known as belonging to the family of Aṅgiras (instead of that of Rathītara); they became the leaders of other sons of Rathītara as they were Brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristic qualities of Kṣattriyas.

4. While Manu was sneezing his son Ikṣvāku was born from his nostrils. Of the hundred sons of Ikṣvāku, Vikukṣi, Nimi and Daṇḍaka were the eldest.

5. Of these one hundred sons, twentyfive became monarchs in (the principalities lying in) the east of Āryāvarta[1], twentyfive became rulers in the West (of Āryāvarta), three in the middle (of that tract), and the rest in other directions (north, south and other directions).

6. Once, on the occasion of *aṣṭaka-Śrāddha*[2] Ikṣvāku ordered his son, "Oh Vikukṣi ! Hurry up and bring meat suitable for the purpose of *Śrāddha*. Don't delay, please."

7. Saying 'Be it so' (in compliance of his father's order), the hero went to the forest, and killed beasts suitable for religious rites. Being fatigued and hungry, he unwittingly ate a hare.

8. He brought the remaining flesh to his father. When Ikṣvāku requested the family preceptor (Vasiṣṭha) to sprinkle it with water, he refused saying that it was contaminated, and hence unsuitable for religious rites.

9. Having ascertained from his son the perpetration of the (sacrilegious) act as reported by his family preceptor the king, out of anger, exiled from his land, his son who violated the restrictions of the rite.

1. The sacred land between the Vindhya and the Himālayas—ŚR.

2. (A *Śrāddha* to be performed on the seventh, eighth, ninth and the thirteenth day of dark and bright halfs of the lunar months).

GS quotes :

saptamyādi-trayaṁ caiva tathā caiva trayodaśī !
catasras tvaṣṭakāḥ proktāḥ sarvapakṣād viśeṣataḥ !!

10. The king discussed with his preceptor Vasiṣṭha about the nature of the Truth. As a consequence of it, Ikṣvāku became established in *Jñāna-yoga* (path of knowledge). And casting off this physical body, he attained to what was the highest (*Brahman*).

11. Vikukṣi who came to be known as Śaśāda (the eater of a hare) returned after the demise of his father, and while ruling over the earth, he worshipped Lord Hari with (the performance) of sacrifices.

12. His son Purañjaya (conqueror of a city) was called Indravāha (one borne by Indra), and was also named as *Kakutstha* (one seated on the hump of a bull). Now listen to (what) deeds earned for him these designations.

13. At the end of the Kṛta Age (or at the beginning of the Tretā age)[1], there was a battle between gods and Dānavas— a battle that was fierce like the *Pralaya*, at the end of world. This hero (Purañjaya) was sought as an ally by gods who were defeated by Daityas.

14. ('I shall kill the demons if Indra agrees to be my mount' on this condition) Indra was sought to be a mount. According to the advice of Lord Viṣṇu, the god of gods and the soul of the universe, Indra assumed the form of a big bull (to carry Purañjaya).

15. Accoutered in a coat of mail and armed with a celestial bow and sharp arrows, he, being eager to fight, mounted the bull and occupied his seat on its hump, while he was being extolled by gods.

16. Strengthened with the spiritual energy of Lord Viṣṇu, the Inner Controller, the Supreme Soul, he besieged the town of the Daityas in the west, with the army of gods.

17. He engaged them in a fierce battle which made hair stand on end. Whosoever of the Daityas dared to face in the battle, he despatched them to the god of death with his *bhalla* arrows.

18. While the Daityas were being killed, they avoided the range of the flight of his arrows which were unbearable

1. *Kṛtānta* — Both the meanings of the pun on *Kṛtānta* are accepted.

like the fire that consumes the universe at the end of *yugas* and fled to their region (the subterranean world).

19. Having conquered the splendid city and all its wealth, the royal sage gave it all to Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt. Hence he was designated with the epithets (mentioned above).

20. Purañjaya had a son called Anenas (the sinless). His son was Pṛthu whose son was Viśvarandhi (v. l. Viśvagandha) His son was Candra whose son was Yuvanāśva.

21. His son was Śābasta who built the city called Śābasti. Bṛhadaśva was the son of Śābasta; thence (the next generation) was Kuvalayāśva.

22. For achieving the well-being of sage Utaṅka, the powerful king, surrrounded by his twentyone thousand sons, killed the demon called Dhundhu.

23. He, thereby, became celebrated as Dhundhumāra. All of his sons except the three who survived, were burnt by the fire that emanated from the mouth of Dhundhu.

24. The surviving sons were Dṛḍhāśva, Kapilāśva and Bhadrāśva, Oh descendant of Bharata. Dṛḍhāśva's son was Haryaśva whose son is remembered at Nikumbha.

25-26. Barhaṇāśva was the son of Nikumbha. His (Barhaṇāśva's) son was Kṛśāśva whose son was Senajit. To him was born Yuvanāśva who, being childless, repaired to the forest, along with his hundred wives, in despair. The merciful sages took pity on him, and with great concentration of mind, they conducted for him a sacrifice, specially dedicated to Indra.

27. (Once) being thirsty at night, the king entered the sacrificial hall. Finding all the Brāhmaṇas in the hall asleep, he himself drank the water consecrated with *mantras* (and meant for the queen).

28. On getting up (at dawn), the Brāhmaṇas found the pitcher of (consecrated) water empty. Then, Oh king, they enquired whose work it was that the water meant for begetting a male issue, was drunk.

29. Then, having come to know that it was drunk by the king who was (as if) impelled by God, they bowed down to the Almighty Lord (with the words) "The power of the Providence is really Supreme and irresistible".

30. It is reported that after the expiry of the due period (of nine months), the son of Yuvanāśva who (later) became the sovereign monarch of the globe of the earth, was born splitting open the right side of his belly.

31. 'The child is incessantly crying[1]. Whom will it suck?' (asked the Brāhmaṇas anxiously 'He will suckle me. Oh child, do not cry; saying this, Indra (who was propitiated with a sacrifice for its birth) put (in his mouth) his index finger (which was dripping with nectar.)

32. Through the grace of gods and that of Brāhmaṇas, his (Māndhātṛ's) father did not die. Yuvanāśva attained to the Final Beatitude, there (in that very hermitage) through his penance.

33. Indra gave him *Trasad-dasyu* (The terror of evil-doers) as another epithet. For enemies of gods and men like Rāvaṇa and others trembled at the mention of his name and were perturbed.

34. In due course, Māndhātā, the son of Yuvanāśva became the universal monarch, and being infused with the Spiritual power and glory of the Imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu), solely ruled over the world consisting of seven island-continents.

35. A knower of the Self as he was, he performed a number of sacrifices with liberal gifts and *dakṣiṇās*, and thereby worshipped the Supreme Deity of the sacrifices, the Lord who represents all gods (in his person) and who, through his being the inner Controller of all *antaryāmins* is beyond the ken of senses.

36. Materials of sacrifices, *mantras* (recited in the course of the sacrifice), the sacrificial procedure, the sacrifice proper, the performer of sacrifice and priests participating in the sacrifice, the merit accruing from the sacrifice, time and place of sacrifice—all these are his constituents. (In fact, the whole of the universe is constituted of him. Him he worshipped through sacrifices.

37. The point at which the sun rises, to the point where it sets—the whole of the region lighted by the sun is

1. The child which wishes to suck the breast of his mother is incessantly crying—VJ.

regarded as the land (kingdom) of Māndhātṛ, the son of Yuvanāśva.

38. The king begot on Bindumatī, the daughter of Śaśabindu, (three sons, viz.) Purukutsa, Ambarīṣa and Mucakunda, the yogin. Their fifty sisters sought the sage Saubhari[1] as their husband.

39-40. Submerged in the waters of the Yamunā, and practising austere penance, Saubhari happened to observe the happy state of the king of fishes engaged in coition (with a female partner), and he was affected with that passionate desire, and (approaching the king) requested him for a girl. (The king) replied, "Oh Brahman, you can freely have any daughter, provided she selects you of her own accord voluntarily.

41. The sage realized the ruse and said to himself, 'Considering that I, being far advanced in age, grey-haired, covered with wrinkles, with a head unstable and shaking (all the while), will be repulsive and disagreeable to women, I have been (politely) refused by the king.

42. I shall make myself so (attractively) beautiful that I shall be covetable even to celestial nymphs; not to speak of daughters of lords of human beings. The spiritual master (Saubhari) became thus determined (and by his power of asceticism, he became so actually).

43. He was ushered in by the chamberlain, in the richly magnificent and luxurious harem reserved for the princesses. And Lo ! That one suitor was sought after and courted as a husband by all the fifty princesses.

44. Throwing to winds (forgetting) their mutual sisterly affection, there arose a great controversy among them about securing him (as a husband). Their hearts being fixed upon him, each one of them argued, "He is suitable in beauty and form only to me, and not to anyone of you (at all)".

45-46. Saubhari, well-versed in the *Ṛgveda* (and master of powerful *mantras*) enjoyed for a long period his life with

1. *Saubhari*—The story, how the old sage Śaubhari married all the fifty daughters of the emperor Māndhātṛ seems to be popular in the epic period, and is found in *Viṣṇu P.* 4.2.3, *Garuḍa P.* 1.138. In fact the whole of that chapter seems to be based on this chapter of the Bh.P.

them (the princesses of Māndhātṛ) in mansions furnished by the power of his inexhaustible penance, with invaluable paraphernalia and furnishings such as highly costly beds, seats, rich clothes, ornaments, baths, articles of beautifications (pigments etc.), sweet dishes, wreaths and flowers, waited upon by men and women adorned with precious ornaments, and resonant with warbling birds, humming bees and singing panegyrists. He revelled with them delightfully in various gardens studded with pools of translucent waters, and in parks full of scented flowers (like Kalhāra).

47. Observing his affluent state of house-holder's life, Māndhātā, the master of the entire earth consisting of seven island-continents, was so astonished that he ceased to feel the obstinate pride of universal sovereignty.

48. Although he was enjoying various objects of pleasure with deep attachment to his houses which were full of various kinds of pleasure[1], Saubhari did not feel sated like a fire fed with drops of ghee.

49. On one occasion, while he was sitting (all alone), Saubhari, the great preceptor of *Ṛgveda*, became conscious of his ascetic degeneration (spiritual oblivion) caused by his observation of the sexual pleasure of the fish.

50. 'Alas! Look at the ruinous fall of mine—an ascetic of pious conduct, conforming strictly to vows, due to my noticing (the sexual intercourse of) the acquatic animals, under waters, my asceticism[2] which I observed for a long time, was lost.'

51. A person desirous of liberation from *Saṁsāra*, should, with all his heart and soul, avoid association with all who follow married life. He should endeavour not to permit his senses to external objects. Leading a life in solitude, he should fix his mind on the Infinite Ruler (of the universe). If occasion arises, he should associate himself with saintly persons who observe vows (of celibacy etc.) and are devoted to the Lord.

1. VR. reads *nānā-mukhaiḥ*: 'Through many sets of senseorgans'. assumed various bodies simultaneously to enjoy through multiple-sets of senseorgans, all the objects of pleasure fully.

2. *brahma—Brahman*, the Supreme Spirit I used to meditate upon for a long time past, was completely forgotten—VR.

52. I was an ascetic without any companion. But due to my association with the fish under water, I became fifty (by marrying fifty wives[1]). (By procreating hundred sons per wife) I became five thousand. I cannot reach the end of desires about them, or I do not see any limit to my wishes relating to man and wife, or this world and the next. I have lost my judgment due to the *guṇas* of *Māyā*. I have come to believe that achievement of worldly objects are the real goal in life.

53. Continuing in the householder's stage of life for some (more) time, he felt disinclination (to that life), and adopted the life of a *Vānaprastha* (*nyāsa*). He repaired to the forest and was followed by his fifty wives who looked upon their husband as God.

54. The self-controlled sage performed there a severely austere penance which reduced his body (to a skeleton), and got absorbed along with the fires (like *gārhapatya*) into the Supreme Soul (and was liberated from *saṁsāra*).

55. Noticing the absorption of their husband in the Supreme Brahman, his wives too followed him through his spiritual power (and attained Liberation from *Saṁsāra*) just as flames become extinguished with a subsided fire.[2]

CHAPTER SEVEN[3]

The Story of King Hariścandra[3]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The celebrated Ambarīṣa, who was the most excellent son of Māndhātṛ, was adopted as his son by his grandfather.

1. GS : I assumed fifty forms for simultaneous association with fifty wives.

2. VJ's Text does not end this chapter here.

3. This chapter deals with the following generations of Kings of the Solar race :

Māndhātṛ (mentioned in the last ch.)→Purukutsa→Trasaddasyu II→Anaraṇya→Haryaśva→Aruṇa→Tribandhana→Satyavrata alias Triśaṅku →Hariścandra→Rohita

This line is confirmed in the VP. 4.3.

The rivalry between Vasiṣṭhas and Viśvāmitras is as old as the *Ṛgveda*. Here the story is based on the famous Śunaḥśepa legend in the

(Yuvanāśva). His (Ambarīṣa's) son was Yauvanāśva whose son was Hārīta. These are the three important members (and the first three branches of the Māndhātṛ family).

2. Narmadā (a Nāga princess) was given by her Nāga brothers to Purukutsa (the eldest son of Māndhātṛ). As directed by the serpent-King (Vāsuki), she took him (Purukutsa) to the nether-world called *Rasātala*.

3. Infused with the spiritual energy of god Viṣṇu, Purukutsa killed Gandharvas who deserved to be slain. He received a boon from the Nāgas that those who remember this story (of emancipation of Nāgas from Gandharvas) would be immune from the fear of serpents.

4. Purukutsa's son was Trasaddasyu (the second[1]) who was the father of Anaraṇya. His son was Haryaśva whose son was Aruṇa. Aruṇa's son was Tribandhana.

5-6. Tribandhana's son Satyavrata became celebrated as Triśaṅku.[2] He was reduced to the status of a Cāṇḍāla by the curse of his father, but by dint of the spiritual power of Viśvāmitra, he ascended heaven along with his (physical) body, where he is still seen in the sky. When he was made to fall with his head downward by gods, he (Viśvāmitra) stopped him in the mid-air by the spiritual force (of Viśvāmitra).

7. Triśaṅku's son was Hariścandra on account of whom[3] a continuous fight lasting for many years took place

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. The way in which this Hariścandra treated Varuṇa is different from that of the Hariścandra who sold himself to keep his promise to Viśvāmitra. Two contradictory legends are grafted on the same Hariścandra ! The MBH and VP. corroborate the 'Triśaṅku' legend!

1. 'Trasad-dasyu' is the name of Māndhātṛ also. Vide supra. 9.6.33

2. ŚR. explains: He is called Triśaṅku—one in whom are embedded three darts in the form of three offences, viz. abduction of a Brāhmaṇa girl from her marriage pandal, killing the cow of his preceptor Vasiṣṭha, eating meat before its consecration with water. He quotes a verse from the *Harivaṁśa* enumerating these transgressions :

pituś cā'pariteṣṇa gurordogdhrīvadhena ca /
aprokṣitopayogācca trividhas te vyatikramaḥ //

3. This refers to the persecution of Hariścandra by the sage Viśvāmitra who deprived Hariścandra of everything as a sacrificial fee for conducting a Rājasūya sacrifice. When Vasiṣṭha learnt of this, he cursed Viśvāmitra to be a crane (*ādi*) while Viśvāmitra retaliated by imprecating him to be a heron (*baka*). They fought for years in these forms—ŚR.

between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra in the form of birds (viz. a crane (āḍī, Viśvāmitra) and a heron (Vasiṣṭha).

8. He (Hariścandra) being issueless became dejected in mind. On the advice of Nārada, he resorted to god Varuṇa with the request, "Oh Varuṇa, Bless me with a son.

9. "If he grows to be a warrior, I shall worship you by sacrificing him to you". 'Be it so', replied Varuṇa in granting him the boon. And a son called Rohita was born to him, through the grace of Varuṇa.

10. Varuṇa demanded, "Now a son is born to you, worship me by sacrificing that child". Hariścandra replied, "When a (prospective) victim crosses the first ten days of his life, it becomes fit for sacrificial purpose."

11. When the time limit of ten days was over, Varuṇa arrived and asked the king to worship him (with that child). Hariścandra replied, "It is after dentition that an animal becomes fit for sacrifice."

12. "(After the dentition of the child, Varuṇa appeared again and) said, "Now that the teeth have appeared, do you worship me with the child ?" "But the victim will be fit for sacrifice when its teeth have fallen."

13. (Varuṇa appeared again and (demanded, "The teeth of the sacrificial animal have fallen, now worship (me with him)". "But a victim becomes pure when its teeth grow again." replied Hariścandra.

14. "Now that (the teeth) have grown again, sacrifice it now to me", said Varuṇa. To him replied Hariścandra, "Oh King ! When a Kṣatriya victim is (of the age of) wearing an armour, he is regarded as a pure animal fit for sacrifice."

15. In this way due to affection for his son and with his mind overpowered with (paternal) love, he went on deceiving by postponements (of sacrifice), and the god waited.

16. Rohita who, by then, came to know what (type of) act his father intended to do, and desirous of saving his life, escaped to the forest with a bow in hand.

17. Having come to learn that his father is possessed by Varuṇa and has developed *mahodara* (a disease called 'Dropsy'), Rohita was returning to the capital when Indra forbade him to do so (lest he should be sacrificed).

18. Indra advised Rohita to travel all over the earth, as visiting the holy places and ablutions in sacred waters are meritorious, and Rohita stayed in the forest that year.

19. Assuming the form of an old Brāhmaṇa, Indra visited him in the second, third, fourth and fifth year and tendered him the same advice.

20. Having wandered in the forest for the sixth year, Rohita returned to his capital (and on way) purchased the middle son (the second son by name Śunaḥśepa) from Ajigarta (of the Bhṛgu clan).

21-23. Handing over Śunaḥśepa as a sacrificial animal to his father, Rohita bowed down to him. King Hariścandra of great glory, worshipped Varuṇa and other gods with human sacrifice and became free from dropsy, and his stories came to be sung in the assemblies of the great. In that sacrifice Viśvāmitra was the high priest (*hotṛ*), the self-controlled (or one who has realized the self), Jamadagni officiated as *adhvaryu*, Vasiṣṭha became the Brahmā, and the sage Ayāsya sang the Sāman hymns. Being pleased with him, Indra gifted to him a gold chariot.

24-25A. The greatness of Śunaḥśepa will be recounted later on (in ch. 16). Being highly pleased to notice the resoluteness deriving its strength from firmness in truth of both the king and the queen, he (Viśvāmitra) imparted to them the unobstructed knowledge of the ultimate truth.

25B-27*. (In meditation) fusing his mind (the root-

* The gists of the explanations of different commentators are as follows :

(1) VR. : Hariścandra in his meditation identified the mind with the earth and the earth with water . . . so on up to *Tāmasic* Ego into *Pradhāna* which contains *Mahat* in itself. Having contemplated the Intelligent principle in it (i.e. by contemplating the *pratyagātman* as being characterised by devotion-cum-knowledge — *upāsanātmaka-vidyā-viśiṣṭam pratyagātmānam anusandhāya ityarthaḥ*), and burning down by that knowledge the wrong notions of the identification of the body with the soul, absolute independence of *ātman* (*svatantrātmā'bhimāna-rūpam*), and discarding it by realising the limitations of that aspect of devotion-cum-knowledge, and becoming free from the bondage of *karmas* (merits and sins), he realised his blissful nature of the soul which is beyond description (either as a man or a god or a sub-human being etc. or in usual terms of name and form), stayed in his own essential nature (transcend sin etc.).

cause of *Saṁsāra*[1]) into the earth (which is another designation for food which constitutes and hence modifies the mind[2]), the earth into water, water into fire, fire into the air, the air into ether or space, and that into the Tāmasic aspect of Ego (which is the source of all elements), the *Tāmasic* ego into the *mahat* (the principle of cosmic intelligence), but of the intellectual and objective aspects of the *Ātman*, he contemplated the intellectual or knowledge aspect into the *Mahat* ignoring the objective aspect, and thereby burnt down completely the Nescience (that obscured the soul). Through his intelligent consciousness of the absolute bliss of *Nirvāṇa*, he transcended that aspect also, and completely severed off the bondage (such as identification of the soul with the body), and stood in his own essential nature which is beyond the range of description and abstract reasoning.

(II) VJ : Agreeing with ŚR about the procedure of merging of the mind into the earth etc. upto *Mahat* which is presided over by the four-faced god Brahmā, wherein lies the Intelligent principle of which the presiding deity is Sarasvatī; contemplating over this and destroying all the bondages, he stayed in his natural stage of knowledge and blissfulness which is beyond my i.e. human power of description or reasoning capacity.

(III) SD : The fickleness of the mind depends on the food eaten. Thus the mind being identical with the food which grows out of the earth and hence one with it for the control of the mind, he meditated it as identical with the earth. This procedure goes upto *Mahadātman* : but SD states *mahadātman* means *Pradhāna* which is the soul or cause of *Mahat*. *Jñānakalā=Buddhi*, 'Intelligence'. Though it is *jaḍa* (unconscious), it is associated with the knower i.e. *Jīva* and hence called *Jñānakalā*. Contemplating over the distinction between *jīvātman* and *buddhi* and burning down (dispelling) the ignorance i.e. the false identification of the soul with body, mind, intelligence etc., and thus discarding intelligence and distinguishing *Pradhāna* from the self, he became liberated from bondage of *karmas*.

(IV) BP. takes *jñānakalā* as the power of knowledge of jīva (*jñāna-śabda-vācya-jīvasya vidyā-śakti* / Hence—*upāsanāvisiṣṭa-pratyagātma*.

1. *mano-mūlo hi saṁsāraḥ* ! Śruti text quoted by ŚR and GS.
2. *anna-mayaṁ he saumya manaḥ* ! —Chāndogya up. 6.6.5 6.7.6.
   — quoted by commentators.

CHAPTER EIGHT[1]

The Story of King Sagara[2]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Harita was the son of Rohita; from Harita was born Campa who built up the city of Campā.[3] Campa's son was Sudeva whose son was Vijaya.

2. Vijaya's son was Bharuka (Bhiruka, Ruruka in other *purāṇas*). From him was born Vṛka whose son was Bāhuka. This king, being deprived of his kingdom by his enemies, repaired to the forest along with his wife.

3. When the queen was about to immolate herself in fire along with the (body of the) old king who died, she was prevented (from ascending the funeral pyre) by sage Aurva who knew about her pregnancy.

4. Having come to know of this (her pregnancy), she was administered poison (mixed) with food by her co-wives (to kill her alongwith the child). But he (the son) was born along with it (poison). Hence, this highly glorious son was named *Sa-gara* (born with poison).

1. This chapter deals with the following rulers of the solar race in a chronological order :
Rohita (mentioned in ch.7)→Harita→Campa (also known as *Cañcu* in *Vāyu P.* 3.88.119 and other *purāṇas*)→Sudeva→Vijaya→Bharuka→(also called Ruruka, Karuka, Bhiruka in other *purāṇas*)→Vṛka→Bāhuka→Sagara →(Asamañjasa→*Aṁśumān* mentioned only). The *Matsya* group of Purāṇas (viz. Matsya, Padma and Agni) drop all kings between Rohita and Vṛka, possibly being unimportant.

2. The Sagar legend is very popular with all the *purāṇas*, vide *Vāyu* 3.88.123-167, *Brahmāṇḍa* III. chs 47-55, *Matsya* briefly in 12.39-43, *Śiva-Umā Saṁhitā*. 38.29-57, and Textual similarity (including repetition of identical verses) in three different groups of *purāṇas* leads one to assume a common source which though not extant now, can be reconstructed.

3. A site at a distance of four miles to the west of Bhagalpur. It was the capital of Aṅga, of which Karṇa was the King at the time of MBH. Even then, it was a place of pilgrimage (*MBH. Vana* 85, 14-15). It is full of ancient Buddhist and Jain relics as it was sacred to both the sects due to the association of the founders of their sects and other famous teachers of their sects. The Chānd Sadāgar and Behulā episode is supposed to have happened here and a fair in honour of Behulā is held here.

5A. Sagara became a universal monarch. It is his sons who excavated the sea (and hence it became known after them as *Sāgara*).

5B to 7A. He conquered Tālajaṅghas[1], Yavanas[2], Śakas[3], Haihayas[4] and Barbaras[5], but to honour the promise given by his preceptor Aurva, he did not massacre them, but caused them to wear loathsome dress and appearance; some were got clean-shaven; some were left with beards and moustaches only (with no hair on the head); some had only hair on the head (but with clean-shaven face); some had only half-shaven heads; some were made to remove the under-garment, while others, of the upper garment[6].

7B & 8. In accordance with the guidance in *yoga* given by Aurva, he (sagara) worshipped by horse-sacrifices Lord Hari, the very Soul of all Vedas and of gods, who was his own self and the Supreme Ruler. God Indra stole away the sacrificial animal (the horse consecrated for sacrifice), and let free (to wander all over the earth).

9. In compliance of their father's command, the proud sons of (Sagara's queen) Sumati, excavated the earth on all sides, in search of the horse.

1. A famous *Kṣattriya* clan known after its founding father Tālajaṅgha, a descendant of Śaryāti—*MBH. Anu* 30.7 also *Vana* 106.8
It was one of the five clans of Haihayas.

2. The Ionians; the Indo-Greeks who settled in the former NWF. provinces and the adjoining parts.

3. Śakas or Scythians came from the valleys of the Oxus and the Jaxartes and they conquered a part of Western India and settled there.

4. Haihayas were a branch of the Yādava clan. They ruled at Māhiṣmatī, near modern Māndhatā in Nimar District M.P., on the Narmadā.

5. D.C. Sircar identifies these as a people of the country called Varvara or Barbara which lay in the lower valley of the Indus, where the city of Barbara was probably founded by Alexander. Sircar rejects S. Levi's identification with Barbaria of the *Periplus*, the Coast of Somali on the Gulf of Aden. (SGAMI p. 233). The close association of Śakas and Barbaras in *Purāṇas* suggests their geographical proximity, which rules out S.Levy's suggestion of its location in Africa.

6. This is an explanation of the fashions of dress and hair-cut of these extra-Indian tribes, whose war-like qualities (*Kṣatriyatva*) are tacitly admitted, but are relegated to non-Indian status.

10-11. They saw the horse in the north-eastern direction near the sage Kapila. "Here is the thief, the horse-lifter, who sits with his eyes closed. Let this wicked fellow be killed forthwith." Shouting thus, those sixty thousand (sons of Sagara) with their arms lifted, attacked him when the sage opened his eyes.

12. (Firstly) Being deprived of their good sense through the deceptive influence of Indra and now being (as good as) dead through the transgression (insult) committed by them against a great personage (like the sage Kapila), they were reduced to ashes in a moment by the fire that emanated from their own bodies.[1]

13. It is not correct to say that the sons of the emperor were burnt down through the wrath of the sage (Kapila). How can *Tamas* in the form of anger be imagined in the case of that sage who was abode of pure *Sattva* (undiluted by *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and whose person purified the whole universe ? It is as impossible as the sticking of the particles of the earthly dust to the sky.

14. It is his promulgation in the form of *Sāṅkhya* system of philosophy, which serves here as a strong and safe boat by means of which a person desirous of Liberation (from *Saṁsāra*) crosses this sea in the form of *Saṁsāra* which is so difficult to cross, and is a road (destined) to death. How can there exist at all the sense of difference (as between a friend or a foe) in the omniscient sage who is no other than the Supreme Lord ?

15. He who is (wrongly) called Asamañjasa ('unreasonable' but was actually very reasonable and virtuous) was the son of the king (Sagara) born of his queen Keśinī. His son named Aṁśumān engaged himself in achieving his grandfather's interest.

16. Asamañjasa showed himself outwardly as being unreasonable. He was in his former birth a *yogī* who deviated from his *yogic* path on account of evil association, and was born now with the recollection of the past life. (He dissociated himself from all).

1. According to *Śiva P. Umā-saṁhitā* 38.53-54. only four sons, viz. Harṣaketu, Suketu, Dharmaratha and Pañcajana were spared.

17. He used to behave in a manner censured (by people) in this world, and committed acts unliked by his kith and kin. (For example) he hurled children in the Śarayu while they were playing and thus harassed the public.

18. As he conducted himself in this way, he was abandoned (transported beyond his kingdom) setting aside his parental affection. By his yogic power he showed them all the children alive and then he departed (from Ayodhyā).

19. Having seen all the children returned alive, hale and hearty, the citizens of Ayodhyā were astonished Oh King ! But king Sagara was however, filled with remorse.

20. Aṁśumān, being commanded by the king to find out the sacrificial horse, went along the path dug out by his uncles and perceived the horse near a heap of ashes.

21. Seeing there Lord Viṣṇu in the form of a sage named Kapila, sitting nearby, Aṁśumān folding his palms and bowing down respectfully, prayed him with concentrated mind.

Aṁśumān prayed :

22*. Neither through his concentration of mind in spiritual meditation nor through his capacity of abstract reasoning could Brahmā, even to this day, either perceive you or comprehend you as being transcendental to himself.[1] How is it possible for others like us, who belong to different species

*(i) VR.: Not even *yogins* can clearly realize, even to this day, the essentially true nature of you, the Supreme Soul, in spite of their attempts through concentration of mind in spiritual meditation or through their reasoning capacity. How can other persons like us who are not *yogins* but are creations of *Hiraṇya-garbha* (god Brahmā) and others, who, in their turn, are products of your mind, body, intellect, comprehend your true nature.

(ii) VJ.: The unborn god Viriñci (Brahmā) could not, to this day, perceive you to be a part or ray (*aṁśa*) of the Supreme Soul. Due to your infinite nature, he cannot correctly comprehend you directly or indirectly through his power of mental concentration in spiritual meditation. How can others—other than Viriñci—who are devoid of meditational power and reasoning capacity, comprehend you ? For these derive their knowledge through their sense-organs which are presided over by Marīci and other Lords of creations, who, in their turn, are the products of Viriñci's body and mind.

1. *ātmanaḥ param*—Brahmā's predecessor, father, Lord Viṣṇu.

of beings (such as gods, sub-human beings and human beings), and who, being later creations from his mind, body and intellect (and as such are the products of *Sattva*, *Tamas* and *Rajas*), are devoid of the light (of spiritual wisdom), to realize or comprehend you.

23*. The embodied beings[1] (such as gods, men) whose understanding is deluded by your Māyā and who, being dominated by the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) can cognise (lit. get light of wisdom on) external objects only, do not know you, (even though you) abide in them (as their Soul, the Indwelling controller). What they perceive are only products of *guṇas*, the objects of senses, while they are in the waking and dreaming states, and utter darkness (total ignorance), when (immersed) in deep sleep.

24. How can an ignorant person like me reflect upon you who are an embodiment of knowledge (and hence not an object of knowledge), and capable of being contemplated only by sages like Sanandana who have by their power (or since their very inception) destroyed the *guṇas* of Māyā, and the resultant notion of difference and delusion.

25.** We salute to you, the Ancient-most Eternal Person Whose assumption of the (present) body is for the sake of

*(i) VR. : The corporeal beings, being under the dominance of three *guṇas*, see i.e. brood over *gunas* or objects of senses, or perceive the body which is the product of *tamas* i.e. *pradhāna*, but not the indwelling soul, as they can cognise external objects only.

(ii) VJ. : The embodied beings are classified according to the dominance of three *guṇas* viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Out of them, human beings, being dominated by *rajas*, are intent on the first three objectives of human life (*dharma*, *artha*, *Kāma*) and hence perceive objects of senses, and are not interested in *Mokṣa*. The Asuras are dominated by *Tamas*, and have their minds deluded by Māyā, the binding power of Hari, and they see. i.e. experience the blinding darkness of hell. These are ignorant about their soul, and do not perceive Lord Viṣṇu who dwells in them.

1. *dehabhājaḥ*—Gods, men etc. who identify their bodies with the Soul—GD.

**VJ. : Who are not affected by the *guṇas* of Māyā (e.g. *Sattva*) and are devoid of *Karmas* and the material body (evolved out of *guṇas*); who are different from Brahman (*sat*) and material atoms (*asat*); your assumption of the body being for showering grace on the people (by imparting knowledge) and not as a result of *karmas*. Hence, you are above miseries.

imparting spiritual wisdom, but Who, (as a matter of fact), are absolutely free from (the laws of) cause and effect or from merits and demerits, and are devoid of (material) body, actions (*karmas*), name and form which are the products of the *guṇas* of Māyā, Oh Serene Sage.[1]

26. In this world, a creation of your Illusive Power (Māyā), people whose intellect is deluded by their being steeped in lust, greed, envy and infatuation, presume that houses and other objects of senses are real and wander in *Saṁsāra.*

27. Oh glorious Lord ! The very Soul of all beings ! Today, simply by seeing (meeting) you, the strong bondage (lit. cord) of our delusion (in identification of the body with the Soul), which is the root-cause of our desires (for objects of pleasure), actions (striving for securing them), the sense-organs (the tools of such actions), is cut asunder.

Śri Śuka said :

28. The illustrious sage Kapila whose glory was thus eulogised, blessed Aṁśumān mentally, and addressed to him as follows, Oh King.

The glorious sage (Kapila) said :

29. "Oh child ! This is the horse, the (consecrated) sacrificial beast of your grand-father. It may (now) be taken away (by you). These are your forebears who are reduced to ashes, and deserve (need) to be purified by the waters of the Gaṅgā and by nothing else."

30. Aṁśumān circumambulated Kapila, and securing his grace by bowing him down with his head, brought the sacrificial horse. Sagara completed the remaining part of the sacrifice with that (consecrated) animal.

31. Having entrusted the kingdom to Aṁśumān, Sagara who became free from all cravings and from bond of attach-

1. *OR* (1) Oh Sage, who have subdued Māyā and have been devoid of *guṇas*.

(2) Oh Sage in whom Māyā, its *guṇas* (and their products etc.) have been quiet and ineffective—ŚR.

ment (or the false identification of the body with soul) attained to the highest goal (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*) by following the spiritual course taught to him by the sage Aurva.

CHAPTER NINE*

The Descent of the Gaṅgā[1]; *The Story of Kalmāṣa-pāda*

Śrī Śuka said :

1. (Like his grandfather Sagara) Aṁ umān (also renounced his kingdom in favour of his son Dilīpa), and practised penance for a long time, with the desire of bringing the Gaṅgā down on the earth. But he was not successful (in his mission). In course of time, he passed away.

2. His son Dilīpa also proved unsuccessful, and met death (in his attempt to bring down Gaṅgā). His son Bhāgīratha performed very severe austerities.

3. The goddess (Gaṅgā) manifested herself to him and said, "I am pleased (with your penance). I shall bestow on you the boon (desired by you)." Being assured thus, the king bowed low (in humility), and submitted to her his object (of performing the penance).

* This chapter describes the Solar race from King Aṁśumān to Khaṭvāṅga. The genealogy (or rather the chronological order of kings) is as follows :

Aṁśumān→ Dilīpa →Bhagīratha→Śruta→Nābha→Sindhu-dvīpa→ Ayutāyu → Ṛtuparṇa → Sarvakāma→ Sudās → Saudāsa (Kalmāṣapāda) →Aśmaka→Mūlaka (Nārīkavaca) → Daśaratha→Aiḍāvīḍa→ Viśvasaha→Khaṭvāṅga (Bh.P. omits the name of King Ambarīṣa Nabhāgi, the descendant of Śruta, vide *VP.*4.4.36, *Śiva P.Umā* 39. 9-10 *Vāyu P.* 3.88, 169-71.)

1. The Descent of the Gaṅgā is another popular legend recorded in the *MBH. Vana.* chs. 108, 109, *Bhīṣma* 6.28-50; Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa—Bāla* Sargas 43-44; *Brahmāṇḍa* P. II.56. 34-50.

It is probably a race-memory how three generations of the Solar race tried to irrigate the parched plains of the kingdom of Ayodhyā.

4. (She replied:) "Is there anyone capable of sustaining my force while I descend on the earth. Otherwise, I shall penetrate the crust of the earth and go down to Rasātala, the 6th sub-terranean region, Oh King.

5. Besides, I am not willing to go to the earth. Men will wash of their sins in me. Where (and how) can I absolve myself of that sin ? Some remedy on this should also be considered, Oh King."

Bhagīratha said :

6* "Righteous persons who have renounced actions (for obtaining worldly objects), and have controlled their sense-organs, and persons devoted to the contemplation of Brahman, (or prominent knowers of Brahman), are themselves capable of purifying the world. By the contact of their body (while bathing in you) they will annihilate your sins, as Lord Hari, the destroyer of sins, abides in them.

7. God Rudra, who is the very Soul of corporeal beings, and in Whom is woven this universe, warp and woof, as threads are interwoven in a piece of cloth, will bear your force."

7A. Having heard this speech of Bhagīratha, Gaṅgā advised, "In that case, propitiate the great god Śiva, for sustaining the velocity of my waters."

8. Having spoken thus,[1] the king propitiated god Śiva by his penance. Within a short period (of penance), Lord Śiva was also highly pleased with him.

9. Granting the prayer of the King with the words, "Be it so", Lord Śiva who is always benevolent to the world, carefully bore on his head the Gaṅgā whose waters are hallowed by the feet of Hari.

*VJ : Pious persons endowed with quiescence, self-control etc., completely free from desires (for heaven, pleasures etc.), thoroughly devoted to meditation of Brahman and thus established in Brahman and purifiers of the world, will annihilate your sins by their physical contact (e.g. washing hands or feet in your waters or by ablutions).

VR and GD. : As Lord Hari, the destroyer of sins, abides in them, the question of transfer of your sins by them to others does not arise, as Hari annihilates the sins altogether.

1. v.l. : *tac chrutvā*—Hearing this—VR.

10. The royal sage Bhagīratha led Gaṅgā, the purifier of the Universe, to the spot where the bodies of his fore-fathers (great-grand-uncles), lay reduced to ashes.

11. (Closely on the heels of) Bhagīratha who rode (in advance) in a chariot speeding with the velocity of the wind she rushed after him, hallowing the countries or regions (through which she flowed), and bathed the burnt-up sons of Sagara (with her waters).

12. The sons of Sagara, though struck down by their offence against a Brāhmaṇa (sage Kapila), attained to the celestial regions simply through the contact of her waters with their ashes.

13. Merely by the contact of her waters with the ashes to which their bodies were reduced, the sons of Sagara ascended the heaven. What need be said in case of those who observe religious vows and serve her with faith ?

14. What has been glorified above about (the hallowing power of) the heavenly river is not very miraculous, inasmuch as She springs from the lotus-like feet of the Infinite Lord (Viṣṇu) and puts an end to *Saṁsāra.*

15. Concentrating their minds properly with faith in Him, pure-minded sages shed off their contacts with (and attachment to) the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* (and its product—their body,—misidentified with the soul)—which is so very difficult to cast off—and have instantly attained identity with Brahman.

16. Śruta was born from Bhagīratha who had another son named Nābha. His son was Sindhudvīpa from whom was born Ayutāyu.

17. Ayutāyu's son was Ṛtuparṇa, a friend of Nala who, in exchange of imparting the secret technique of the play of dice to Nala, learnt from him the equestrian science (the secret of managing horses). His (Ṛtuparṇa's) son was Sarvakāma.

18. From his loins was born Sudās whose son was the husband of Madayantī, Oh King. People called him Mitrasaha, and rarely as Kalmāṣapāda. He became a demon through the curse of Vasiṣṭha, but remained issueless in consequence of his own act.

King (Parikṣit) asked :

19. We wish to know the reason or the occasion of the pronouncement of the curse by preceptor Vasiṣṭha on the great-souled son of Sudās. Be pleased to narrate it to us, if there be no secret about it.

Śrī Śuka said :

20. As the tradition goes, king Saudāsa (the son of Sudās) happened to kill a certain demon, while on hunting expedition. He allowed his brother to escape. He (the Rākṣasa's brother) went away with a determination to wreak revenge.

21. Remembering the offence (of killing his brother) committed by the king, and disguising himself as the cook of the king in the palace, he dressed human flesh and presented it for service to the king's preceptor Vasiṣṭha, who came there to dine.

22. Perceiving easily that a prohibited article of food (human flesh) was about to be served to him, the venerable sage flared up in rage, and cursed the king, "You will turn into an ogre by this improper act of yours."

23. Having come to know that, that act (serving of human flesh) was committed by a demon (and that the king was innocent), he limited the duration of his curse to (a period of twelve years. But (in the meanwhile) Saudāsa took water into the hollow of his joined palms and was ready to counter-curse his preceptor (who uttered the unjustifiable imprecation).

24. He was however prevented (from cursing his preceptor) by (his queen) Madayantī. The king found that all the cardinal points, the sky, the earth were all instinct with life. (And lest he should injure living beings), he let the water be charged with wrathful *mantras*, fall on his own feet (and thus justified his epithet—*mitra-saha*, indulgent towards friends).

25. Changed into a demonic state, and with both of his feet turned black (by the water charged by him with a curse), he happened to see a forest-dwelling couple of Brāhmaṇas in the act of sexual intercourse.

26. Overpowered with hunger, he caught hold of the Brāhmaṇa, when his wife helplessly appealed to him, "Your honour is not a born ogre. You are veritably a great hero (a chariot-warrior) belonging directly to the race of Ikṣvākus.

27. Oh warrior ! You are the husband of Madayantī. It does not behove you to perpetrate unrighteous deeds. Be pleased to restore to me who am desirous of having a child, the Brāhmaṇa, my husband, who has not accomplished his purpose.

28. Oh King ! This human body is capable of securing all the objects (*puruṣārthas*) in human life. Hence the destruction of this body is called the total destruction of all purposes.

29. This Brāhmaṇa is learned and endowed with asceticism, virtuous character and other qualities. He desires to propitiate Brahman which is designated as *Mahā-puruṣa* (Viṣṇu) who abides in all beings as their Inner Controller, but lies obscured in them on account of *guṇas*.

30. This being the case, how does this prominent Brāhmaṇa sage deserve death at the hands of a great royal sage like you, even as the death of a son at the hands of the father, Oh knower of the righteous path ?

31. Your worship is respected by the righteous. How do you approve of the death of the righteous, sinless (innocent) *Śrotriya* who is well-versed in the Vedas (or innocent like a child in the womb), any more than killing of a cow.

32. If he is to be your victim, please devour me first, inasmuch as I shall not live without him for a minute, and am as good as dead."

33. Disregarding the piteous appeal of the helpless bewailing Brāhmaṇa woman, Saudāsa deluded by (his preceptor's) curse, devoured the Brāhmaṇa, as a tiger would prey upon a beast.

34. Finding her impregnator (husband) eaten up by a cannibal, the Brāhmaṇa woman lamented herself. Flying in a rage, the chaste lady uttered the imprecation on the king.

35. "You wicked fellow ! Inasmuch as my husband has been devoured by you while I was afflicted with sexual desire, your death too is indicated to follow while engaged in sexual intercourse, you foolish one."

36. Having thus cursed king Mitrasaha, the woman who was determined to attain to the region of her husband, consigned to flames his bones in a burning fire, and followed the course of her husband (by immolating herself to fire).

37. When freed from the curse at the end of the twelfth year, he (Saudāsa) proceeded to have sexual intercourse (with his queen), but the queen who knew well the imprecation of the Brāhmaṇa lady prevented him from that attempt.

38. Thenceforth, he gave up all pleasures with women and he remained issueless by this act. It was with his consent that the sage Vasiṣṭha begot an issue on queen Madayantī.

39. For seven years she carried the foetus and did not deliver. Vasiṣṭha then hit her abdomen with a stone, and the son so born came to be known as Aśmaka.

40. From Aśmaka was born Mūlaka who was protected on all sides (from Paraśurāma) by women, and hence he is called *Nārī-kavaca* (women-armoured). He is called Mūlaka as he was the root of further pro-creation of the Kṣatriya race, when it was being exterminated by Paraśurāma.

41. From Mūlaka sprang forth Daśaratha of whom a son, Aiḍaviḍa was born. His son was King Viśvasaha whose son Khaṭvāṅga became the sovereign ruler of the world.

42. Being entreated by gods, the invincible king killed a number of demons in the battle. Learning (from gods) that only one *muhūrta* (48 minutes) of his life is left, he hurried back to his capital (in a celestial car) and concentrated his mind on the Supreme Lord.

43. (He mused to himself). Neither my life nor my sons, nor my wealth nor the earth, nor my empire or my queens are dearer to me than the Brāhmaṇa race who form our family-deities.

44. Not even in my childhood, my mind ever took delight in unrighteousness. I did not look upon anything other than the Lord of hallowed reputation (Viṣṇu) as the reality.

45. A boon of my choice was offered for bestowal on me by gods, the rulers of the three worlds. But as I contemplate on the creator of all beings, I do not seek any object of desire.[1]

1. —As the boon will come in the way of my realization of the Lord —VR. Gd. BP.

46. The celestials themselves have got their minds and senses distracted (by objects of senses), and do not realize the beloved, eternal Soul who stays established in their own heart. Need it be said that human and other beings, characterised by *rajas* and *tamas*, can never do so.

47. I shall give up, through deep devotion to the Creator of the Universe, attachment to *guṇas* (the product of *guṇas* viz. the object of senses) which has been firmly fixed in the mind, by the very nature of things, but which are the creation of the Illusive Power (Māyā) of the Lord, and hence are as unreal and transitory as the city of Gandharvas in the sky, and take asylum in him.

48. Having determined thus by his reasoning capacity and intellect, which was attracted towards himself (and thus possessed) by Lord Nārāyaṇa, he discarded ignorance[1] and the consequent false notions of the identity of the body with Soul and attained to his essential nature (which is Brahmahood).

49.* (The state) that is the Supreme Brahman which is very subtle but not a void[2] though it is as good as intangible, as it is beyond the rage of expression, and which the devotees of Lord Viṣṇu sing as the glorious Lord Vāsudeva.

Any act except the propitiation of Hari, is not acceptable to me as it is not conducive to Liberation—VJ.

1. *hitvānyabhavam ajñānam*—Having given up his body.—VR.

*VJ. : The stage to which Vedantins call the Supreme Brahman, the *yogins* describe as very subtle, beyond the ken of senses like the sky. Some non-vedic thinkers (viz. the Buddhists, especially the followers of Mādhyamika school) assume it as void; but it is really positive (and not void) and which the followers of the Pañcarātra school (Sātvatas) call Lord Vasudeva.

JG. With his intellect (mind) possessed by Nārāyaṇa, Khaṭvāṅga attained to Brahmā's region in a *muhūrta*.

2. BP. *aśūnya*—(i) Proved as positively existent and not non-existent like horns of a hare.

(ii) *Śūnya* is destitute of *guṇas*, attributeless. *a-śūnya* means full of infinite excellences, conducive to the good of all or devoid of *guṇas* which deserve to be discarded.

Sva-bhāva : The *brahmabhāva* implies devoted service to the Lord as of a chaste woman to her husband.

CHAPTER TEN[1]

The Story of Rāma[2]

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. To king Khaṭvāṅga was born Dīrghabāhu, whose son was Raghu of extensively spread renown. From him sprang the emperor Aja of whom Daśaratha was born.

2. When earnestly prayed by celestials this[3] glorious Lord Hari, directly and entirely composed of Brahman[4] Itself, divided Himself in four parts, and was born as Daśaratha's sons under the designations Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna—himself in its entirety as Rāma and as his rays (*aṁśa*) in Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna.

3. His life and works have been described in details and also heard by sages who have clearly understood the Truth.

1. This chapter covers only five generations :
Khaṭvāṅga (mentioned in ch. 9) → Dīrghabāhu → Raghu → Aja → Daśaratha→Rāma.

2. The Rāma legend is one of the most popular ones in Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. Limiting ourselves to Brahmanical Sanskrit epics or *Purāṇas*, the most important source is Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. Its critical edition (M.S. University, Baroda) shows that the Rāma legend is better preserved in the *MBH Vana* 274-293 (also ch. 148-152, *Sabhā* 50, *Droṇa*, 59) than in the vulgate of *Vālmīki Rām.* The spurious nature of many cantos, the *Bāla* and *Uttara Kāṇḍas*, is now established. We find Rāma legend in *Padma P.*, *Pātāla khaṇḍa* chs. 1-68 (Rāma's Aśvamedha), and ch. 116-117 (a slightly different version in prose and verse); *Garuḍa P.*I.143, *Nārada P.* I.79.7-26; II. 75, *Agni P.* Chs. 5-11; *Skandha P. Brahma khaṇḍa—Dharmāraṇya* ch. 30; *Vāyu P.III.*88.183r197; *Devī Bhāgavata* III. chs. 21-30 and in *Upapurāṇas* like *Nṛsiṁha* chs. 47-52, *Saura* ch.30 and later versions like *Adhyātma* and *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇas*. The Rāma problem is extensively studied by Indian and Western scholars (vide A.D. Pusalkar: *Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, pp. 189-205). A comparison of Rāma legend in the Bh.P. with those in the above *Purāṇas* is beyond the scope of this work. But the special feature of the legend in the Bh. P. is the non-mention of fire-ordeal of Sītā after the conquest of Laṅkā, and at the time of horse-sacrifice afterwards. After her abandonment by Rāma, Sītā does not return to Ayodhyā, but after entrusting her children to sage Vālmīki, meditating on Rāma she enters in a cavity in the earth never to return.

3. This whom you have witnessed in your mother's womb—GS.

4. The main subject or import of the Vedas—VJ.

The story of the Lord of Sītā might have been listened by you many times.

4. May that Lord of the Kosala (country) protect us—the Lord who gave up his kingdom for honouring the pledge given by his father, and wandered from forest to forest on his lotus-feet that were too tender to bear the touch of the palms of his beloved Sītā (who pressed and massaged them to relieve their fatigue), and whose fatigue from journey was soothed by the leader of the monkeys (Hanumān or Sugrīva) and his younger brother Lakṣmaṇa; the Lord who constructed a bridge at the request of the deity presiding over the ocean, which was terrified at the display of his frowning eyebrows, excited by his wrath at the separation from his beloved, caused (by Rāvaṇa who was incited to do so) by disfiguring of Śūrpaṇakhā (by Lakṣmaṇa's mutilating her nose and ears), and thus who was like a conflagration to the forest (in the form) of the wicked (demons).

5. During the sacrificial session of Viśvāmitra, prominent demons and nocturnal predators like Mārīca and others were (single-handedly) despatched by him while Lakṣmaṇa was simply witnessing.

6. In the hall specially erected for Sītā's free election of her (prospective) husband, wherein were assembled eminent warriors of the world, Rāma, like unto a cub of an elephant sportively picking up a sugar-cane, lifted up the formidable bow of god Śiva which required three hundred bearers to bring it (at the hall), strung it, drew it and broke it in the middle, oh King.

7. Having won (as a prize) Śrī, the beautiful goddess of prosperity, who had already a place of honour on his bosom, —but is now called Sītā, who was eminently suitable to him in beauty, virtues, disposition, age and form, Rāma, on his way (to Ayodhyā), humbled down the overbearing pride and arrogance of Paraśurāma, the chief of Bhṛgus who extirpated the Kṣatriya race from the earth thrice seven times.

8. He honoured with his head (bent low) the order of his henpecked father who was bound by the noose of truthfulness (pledge to grant two boons to Kaikeyī who now demanded kingdom for her son and banishment of Rāma to forest). With

his spouse, he relinquished his kingdom, wealth, his beloved relations (like his mother etc.), friends and palace and left for the forest just as a *yogin* who has renounced all attachments, would give up his body.

9. While (armed) with an irresistible bow in his hand, he went about leading a hard life (in the forest as a model for mankind to follow), he got mutilated the features of the wicked-minded sister of Rāvaṇa (viz. Śūrpaṇakhā who wanted to devour Sītā with a view to enjoy amorous life with Rāma etc.), and killed fourteen thousand of her kinsmen of whom Khara, Triśiras and Dūṣaṇa were prominent.

10. Being enticed away from his hermitage on seeing a miraculous (golden) form of a deer (assumed by Mārīca), who was so deputed by the Ten-necked demon Rāvaṇa whose passion (for Sītā) was inflamed by listening to the description of Sītā's beauty, Rāma quickly slew Mārīca with an arrow, even as god Rudra (or Vīrabhadra) despatched Dakṣa (or Lord Nṛsiṁha killed Hiraṇyakaśipu), Oh Lord of men.

11. When, during his absence (from the hermitage) in the forest, the princess of Videha (Sītā) was abducted by the vilest demon Rāvaṇa like a wolf (stealthily carrying away a sheep), Rāma, being separated from his beloved, wandered in the forest with his brother Lakṣmaṇa simulating pitiable helplessness[1] demonstrating (to the world) the tragic fate of those who are attached to women.

12*. Rāma, whose feet are adored by gods Brahmā and Śiva even though he assumed the human form, then performed (like a son) the prescribed formal obsequies of Jaṭāyu (the king of vultures) who laid down his life (in attempting to free Sītā) for Rāma's sake; he then slew the demon Kabandha[2]

1. VJ. quotes a 'Smṛti' text which denies the possibility of affliction in the omnipresent Almighty Rāma. He feigned affliction for the public. VC. quotes *Rāma-tāpanī UP.* 1.1 and denies the possibility of affliction in Rāma, the veritable *Para-Brahman* Himself. Rāma simply gave support to *Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra-rasa.*

*Not found in VJ's text.

2. He was originally a Gandharva Prince Viśvāvasu who was blessed with immortality by god Brahmā. He arrogantly attacked Indra who, with his Vajra squeezed his head and thighs into his body. When he beg-

(whose head was in his chest and who attempted to seize Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with his hands); he made an alliance with the monkeys. When Vāli was killed, He learnt the whereabouts of his beloved (Sītā). He then reached the shores of the ocean (near Laṅkā) with his forces of monkey chiefs (Sugrīva, Hanumān etc.).

13. (When, even after a fast of consecutive three nights, the presiding deity of the sea did not present himself, Rāma flared up in anger). The sea (its presiding deity) with alligators and acquatic animals in whom got panicky and bewildered, at the cast of his side-glance in apparent anger, and with its roar hushed up in terror, assumed a (human) form and taking on his head articles of worship approached his (Rāma's) lotus-like feet and spoke as follows :

14. "We, dull witted fellows, did not know you definitely to be the Immutable, Eternal (First) Person, the overlord of the Universe, Oh Supreme Lord. You are the Lord of *Prakṛti* (the source of *guṇas*), from the *Sattva-guṇa* out of which are evolved the celestials, from the *rajas*, the *prajāpatis* (Lord of creation) and from *tamas*, the goblin-leaders and other evil spirits.

15. May you be pleased to cross me at your sweet will. Do kill Rāvaṇa, the excreation of Viśravas who makes the three world shriek (in fear). Regain your consort, Oh hero ! (Although my waters will not obstruct your movements) do construct a bridge here for the spread of your glory which (future) kings, conquerors of the quarters (world) reaching here, will sing."

16. Having constructed a bridge across the sea with mountain peaks of various sizes, covered with trees the branches of which were shaken off by monkey chiefs, Rāma, the foremost in the Raghu's race, under the supervision and guid-

ged for livelihood, he was given two long arms and a mouth on the belly. He was asked to stay near Mātaṅgāśrama in Krauñcāraṇya—a part of Daṇḍakāraṇya. When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa came after Jaṭāyu's funeral, he caught hold of them. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cut his hands. He asked who they were and then told them his life story and fell dead. When they cremated his body, a Gandharva King (Kabandha's former self) rose in the air, advised Rāma to go to Sugrīva for more information about Sītā.—*Vālmīki Rām.· Araṇya Kāṇḍa*—Sargas 70-72.

ance of Vibhīṣaṇa, and accompanied by the forces of Vānara chiefs like Sugrīva, Nīla, Hanumān, entered Laṅkā which was already burnt by (Hanumān) previously.

17. Like a river churned up by herds of elephants, the city of Laṅkā was in a state of commotion when its playgrounds, barns and granaries, treasuries, doorways, citygates, assembly-halls, roofs, balconies and pigeon-cots were barricaded and besieged by the armies of the monkey-chiefs, and platforms, flagstaffs, gold-vases (on either sides of entrances) and public squares were destroyed.

18. Observing the state of siege, the king of Rākṣasas (Rāvaṇa) despatched against them all his followers like Nikumbha, Kumbha, Dhūmrākṣa, Durmukha, Surāntaka, Narāntaka and others, and his sons Indrajit, Prahasta, Atikāya, Vikampana and others, and finally (his brother) Kumbhakarṇa.

19. Accompanied by Sugrīva, Lakṣmaṇa, Hanumān, Gandhamāda, Nīla, Aṅgada, Jāmbavān the bear, Panasa and others, Rāma marched against the Rākṣasa army impenetrable on account of its weaponry like swords, spikes, bows, *prāsas* (darts), double-edged swords, lances, arrows, iron clubs and long swords.

20. Aṅgada and all the generals of Rāma's forces fell upon the Rākṣasa army consisting of battalions of elephants, infantry, chariots and cavalry, and engaged them in duels and struck them down with trees, rocks, maces and arrows, as their Lord Rāvaṇa had lost his auspicious luck by the touch of Sītā (in abduction).

21. Perceiving the destruction of his armies, Rāvaṇa, the king of Rākṣasas, got enraged. Ascending his aerial car Puṣpaka, he attacked Rāma who rode resplendent in a refulgent chariot brought from the celestial region by Mātali (the charioteer of god Indra). Rāvaṇa struck Rāma with sharp arrows with horse-shoe-shaped heads.

22. Rāma scolded him : "You, excretion of a man-eater ! During our absence our beloved was taken away by you, a wicked fellow, even as a dog (steals away things when the house-owner is away). To you, a shameless fellow, I, like the god of death of irresistible power meting out the puni-

shment to the perpetrator of a sin for his act, shall award the fruit of your detestable action, just now."

23. Reproaching Rāvaṇa thus, Rāma shot his arrow that was already fixed on the bow. It pierced Rāvaṇa's heart as if with the impact of the thunderbolt. Like a meritorious person whose balance of good acts is exhausted, Rāvaṇa fell from his aerial car, with blood gushing out of his ten mouths, while his partisans cried out 'Alas !'.

24. Thousands of Rākṣasa women (whose husbands were killed[1]) along with Mandodarī (Rāvaṇa's chief queen) came out of Laṅkā and rushed to the battle-field[1] wailing loudly.

25. They embraced their respective relatives who were struck down by Lakṣmaṇa's arrows. Beating themselves (their breasts with their own hands), those helpless ladies lamented loudly.

26. "Alas ! Oh Rāvaṇa ! Oh Lord ! The terror of the world ! Undone we are ! Bereft of you, now trampled over by the enemies, to whom can Laṅkā look up for protection ?

27. Oh highly blessed glorious Lord ! Being overwhelmed with the passion of love, you did not estimate and anticipate the potential superforce of Sītā's virtue whereby you have been reduced to this wretched condition.

28. Widowed is Laṅkā and we as well, Oh delight of your family ! Your body has become now food for vultures, your soul fit for hell."

Śrī Śuka said :

29. Under instructions from Rāma, the king of Kośalas Vibhīṣaṇa performed the prescribed funeral rites known as 'sacrifice to manes', of his relatives.

30. Thereafter, the glorious Lord Rāma caught sight of Sītā sitting under a *Śiṁśipā* tree, in the retreat of the Aśoka forest. She was emaciated and suffering from the (mental) agony, due to her separation from him.

1. Although commentators like GS., VR., GD. and BP. insist that those thousands of Rākṣasa women went to the spot where Rāvaṇa fell, the above translation is justifiable as correct, in view of the next verse— The translator

31. Perceiving his most beloved wife in that helpless condition, Rāma was moved with compassion, even though her lotus-like face began to blossom with delight, at the sight of his own self.

32-33-34-A. Having conferred on Vibhīṣaṇa the sovereignty over Laṅkā, and Lordship over the Rākṣasas, and the life-span of a *Kalpa* (a period of the life span of fourteen Manus), the glorious Lord placed her in the aerial car Puṣpaka and accompanied by brothers (Lakṣmaṇa and adopted brother Sugrīva) and Hanumān, Rāma ascended Puṣpaka. As he had completed the vow (of forest-dwelling for fourteen years), he returned to his capital (Ayodhyā), being showered on the way with flowers offered by the presiding deities of various regions, and his glorious deeds being joyously sung by gods like Brahmā and others.

34-B-36. When Rāma heard that his brother put on bark-garments only, and subsisted on barley seeds boiled in cow's urine, had grown matted hair and slept on bare ground with Kuśa grass spread over it, being extremely merciful by nature, he was deeply distressed.

37-39. Hearing of the arrival of his elder brother Rāma, Bharata took over his head the pair of wooden sandals (given to him as a token of love by Rāma) proceeded from his camp at Nandigrāma[1], along with citizens, his cabinet ministers and family preceptors. With vocal and instrumental music and in company of knowers of the Vedas loudly singing Vedic hymns, with flags of guilt edges and chariots plated with gold, and decked with beautiful banners of various colours, with gold caparisoned noble horses and warriors clad in gold armours, with artisans of different guilds and prominent courtesans and servants following on foot, and taking with him the royal insignia (such as white umbrella, chowries etc.), and valuable articles of various kinds (as presents), Bharata fell at his feet with his heart melted in tears of affection.

40. Bharata placed before him the pair of Rāma's sandals (carried on his head so far), and stood before him with

1. Modern Nandgaon, close to Bharata Kuṇḍa, eight or nine miles South of Fyzabad (U.P.)—N.L.De—GDAMI, p. 138.

folded palms, and eyes full of tears. Rāma embraced him with his arms for a long time bathing him with waters that flowed from his eyes.

41. Rāma along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa paid personal obeisance to the worthiest of the Brāhmaṇas, and he (in turn) was bowed down by his subjects.

42. Seeing that their (real) lord had returned after the lapse of a long period, the subjects of northern Kosala, waving their upper garments and showering them with flowers, danced in joy.

43. Bharata carried the pair of sandals (of Rāma); Vibhīṣaṇa along with Sugrīva wielded chowries (cāmaras) and a fan (on his either side); Hanumān, the son of the wind god, held up the umbrella.

44. Śatrughna (the youngest brother of Rāma) held a a bow and a pair of quivers, Sītā, a waterpot of gourd, Aṅgada, the sword, Jāmbuvān, the king of bears, his gold plated shield, Oh King.

45. Occupying a seat in the Puṣpaka, attended to by prominent courtesans (mentioned above), and extolled by bards, the glorious Lord Rāmacandra shone like a rising moon in the midst of planets, Oh King.

46-47. Greeted by his brothers, Rāma also entered his festive capital city. Entering the palace, he paid due respects to the wife of his preceptor (or Kaikeyī and Sumitrā), his own mother, Kausalyā, the preceptors and elderly persons, his friends and younger (brothers etc.), and was worshipped by them in return. Sītā, the princess of Videha, and Lakṣmaṇa paid respect with due formalities.

48. Just as (dead) bodies get up after the return of the vital principle (life), the mothers were as if inspired with life when their sons returned. They placed their respective sons on their lap, and bathed them in the flood of their tears, and shed off their grief (of separation for their sons).

49. Having got removed (cut off) Rāma's matted locks of hair, the preceptor Vasiṣṭha, along with elderly persons, sprinkled over him the waters of the four seas, holy rivers etc., as the coronation ceremony even as Bṛhaspati did, as per procedure laid down in *Śāstras*, to Indra.

50. Having taken a full bath including his head (the matted hair whereof were dressed off), Rāma, attired richly and adorned with wreaths of flowers and ornaments, appeared resplendent with his elegently dressed and richly adorned (younger) brother and his consort Sītā.

51. When respectfully requested with a bow (to occupy the throne) by his brother Bharata, Rāma accepted the throne and protected in a fatherly way, his subjects who were devoted to their righteous duties according to the characteristics of their respective class in society (*varṇa*) and stage in life (*āśrama*). The subjects on their part regarded him as their father.

52. While Rāma, a king, expert in Dharma (Law and righteous duties of everyone) ruled and brought happiness to every being, the period of his reign was like the *Kṛta* Age (the Golden Age) even though actually the Age called Tretā was then, current.

53. (During his reign) forests, rivers, mountains, subcontinents, continents and seas—all yielded whatever was desired by the subjects, Oh prominent Bhārata.

54. While Rāma, (the incarnation of) Lord Viṣṇu was the king, there was no trouble from anxieties, diseases, old age, fatigue, pain, sorrow, fear, exhaustion. Even death did not take the toll of unwilling persons.

55. Strict in the observance of the vow of having only one wife throughout his life, leading a pious life of a royal sage, and of pure character, he himself performed strictly his duties as a householder, teaching thereby (a model life) to the world.

56. By her deep love, obedience, pious character, disciplined modesty, intelligence and bashfulness, the chaste queen Sītā who understood the mind of her Lord, captivated Rāma's heart.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Story of Rāma (concluded)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The glorious Lord Rāma who was educated in his preceptor's academy[1], worshipped his ownself, viz. the Supreme Lord (Viṣṇu) who represents all gods in his person, by performing sacrifices with excellent materials.[2]

2. (When the sacrifice was concluded), the Lord donated as sacrificial fee the eastern direction (eastern part of his empire) to the *Hotṛ* (the sacrificial priest who recites the *mantras* from the *Ṛgveda*), the Southern quarter to the sacrificial priest called *Brahmā*, the Western part to the *adhvaryu* (reciter of *Sūktas* from the *Yajurveda*), northern direction (northern part of his empire) to the priest that sang *Sāma* hymns in the sacrifice.

3. To his preceptor (Vasiṣṭha), he gave as grant the remaining portion of the land at the centre, considering a Brāhmaṇa who is devoid of any craving or desire, deserves all this.

4. In this way he was left with his clothes and ornaments (that were on his person), while the queen Sītā (princess of Videha) had only those ornaments which were essential for a lady whose husband is alive (the rest, she distributed to Brahmaṇa ladies).

5. Perceiving this affection of the Lord who treated Brāhmaṇas as gods, the Brāhmaṇas were highly pleased and with their hearts overwhelmed with affection, returned all the gifts to him and said :

6. "Oh illustrious Lord ! What is it that you have not given to us when entering into our hearts you dispel the darkness (of ignorance) by your effulgence, Oh ruler of the world.

7. We bow down to you, Oh Rāma who regard Brāhmaṇas as gods, and whose intelligence (i.e. knowledge) is boundless and unrestricted. You are the leader of those

1. *ācāryavān*, cf.
ācāryavān puruṣo veda—Chāndogya up. 6.14.2
2. Conducted by excellent sage like Vasiṣṭha—VR.

possessing excellent renown. Your feet are being meditated upon by sages and recluses".

8 Once upon a time, while Rāma went about in disguise and unnoticed at night, with a desire to know the pulse of the public, he overheard somebody speaking with reference to his queen Sītā.

9. "I would not accept you a wicked, unchaste woman who lived in the house of a stranger. Rāma, an exorbitant doter of that woman Sītā, might be retaining her, but I am not Rāma to have you again."

10. In this way, Sītā was abandoned by her husband who was afraid of the myriad-tongued, ignorant, unplacative public. She arrived at the hermitage of Vālmīki, the son of Pracetas.

11. Then being pregnant, in due course, she gave birth to twins—sons who came to be called Kuśa and Lava. The sage Vālmīki performed their purificatory rites (*jātakarma*).

12. Lakṣmaṇa had two sons known as Aṅgada and Citraketu (Candraketu, Cakraketu), and Bharata's sons were Takṣa and Puṣkala, Oh protector of the earth.

13-14. The sons of Śatrughna were Subāhu and Śrutasena. During the course of the conquest of directions (i.e. of the world) Bharata slew Gandharvas by tens of millions and collecting their wealth, he handed it over to the king Rāma. Śatrughna slew the demon Lavaṇa[1], the son of Madhu and built up a city called Mathurā, on the site of Madhuvana.

15. Sītā who was forsaken by her husband, entrusted both of her sons to the sage (Vālmīki), and meditating upon the feet of Rāma, she entered into the bowels of the earth—so goes the tradition.

16.* Hearing of that news (about Sītā) and remembering of her various excellent virtues, (even) that glorious Lord Rāma was not able to restrain his grief, despite his attempts (to suppress it) by force of reason.

17. The attachment between men and women in this way brings (in its train) fear and affliction everywhere—even

1. Although Bh.P. calls him a demon, it means an unfriendly king, for his father Madhu was not a demon (vide infra 9.24.5).

*Deleted in VJ.'s text.

in the case of rulers of the world. What needs be said of ordinary persons whose minds are fixed on their house-hold (or of a common house-holder whose mind is attached to his house and property).

18. Thereafter the Lord (Rāma) led a life of strict continence, and continued to offer oblations to the sacrificial fire, for thirteen thousand years, without any interruption.

19. Leaving behind him in the heart of his devotees who meditate upon his foliage-like tender feet which were (once) pricked with thorns in the Daṇḍaka forest, Rāma then repaired to his own self-luminous region.

20. Rāma assumed this (human) form as a sport at the request of gods. His prowess (or essential nature) is free from (i.e. has no) equals or superiors. (Glorification of feats like) the destruction of Rākṣasas with multitudes of missiles or the construction of a bridge across the sea are no great praise in the case of Rāma. (It was only his sportive action). Were the monkeys his real helpmates in exterminating the enemies? (No).

21. I seek asylum with Rāma, the chief of Raghus, as my protector, whose pure glory efficacious enough to destroy all sins and serving as decorative ornaments to the elephants supporting the cardinal points (i.e. has spread all over the world)—is sung even today by sages (like Mārkaṇḍeya) in royal courts (as that of Yudhiṣṭhira), and whose lotus-like feet are adored by the crowns of the rulers of the celestial world (e.g. Indra), and Lord of wealth (Kubera) or by Protectors of the earth).

22. All the residents of the Kosal country by whom he was touched, seen, seated (by the side) or followed, attained to that region (*Mokṣa*) where persons expert in *yoga* go.

23* Oh King! A person who treasures up in his mind the story of Rāma, (heard) through his ears, and exercises

*VJ : 'By merely listening to the name of Rāma, one becomes free from the bondage of *karma*. He quotes the following verse indicating how the whole world was imbued with Rāma, when Rāma was ruling:

rāmo rāmo rāma iti sarveṣām abhavattadā |
sarvo Rāma-mayo loke yadā Rāmas tva pālayat ||

This verse is quoted by VD also.

control over his passions, becomes free from the bondage of *Karmas* (and is liberated from *Saṁsāra*).

The King (*Parīkṣit*) *asked* :

24. How did the glorious Lord Rāma behave with his brothers and relatives ? How did he conduct himself ? How did they (his kith and kin), his subjects and citizens of Ayodhyā (reciprocally) behave with their ruler ?

Śrī Śuka replied :

25. When the coronation was over, Rāma, the sovereign ruler of the three worlds, directed his brothers to conquer (and protect) all the four quarters (i.e. countries all over the world). He granted audience to all his people, and looked after the capital city along with his attendants.

26. With its streets besprinkled with water perfumed with sandal etc. and with fragrant drops of ichor exuded from the temples of elephants in rut, the city appeared to be exceedingly intoxicated with rapturous joy[1] at the return of its master.

27. It was beautified with gold domes (lit. pitchers) set on the crests of mansions, towers, assemblies, shrines, temples as well as with flags.

28. (The city was decorated) with (auspicious) arches erected with banana trees surrounded by (branches of) areca-nut trees, (or decorations consisting of bunches of fruits and plantains) banners of fancy cloth, mirrors, canopies and wreaths of flowers.

29. With articles of worship (and presents) in their hands, citizens approached him at various places and conferred blessings on him and prayed, "Be pleased to protect the earth which you lifted up formerly (in your boar-incarnation)".

30. Perceiving (hearing) that their Lord had arrived after a lapse of a long period, his subjects—both men and women—left their household duties, and with a desire to see him directly, climbed up to the tops of their houses, but though their eyes remained unsatisfied with viewing the lotus-eyed Rāma, they showered him with flowers.

1. v.l. *Vāśita-gāmiva*—like a cow overwhelmed with passion

31-32. Thereafter, the Lord entered his own residence which was once occupied by his predecessor-kings. It was rich in unlimited treasures of every kind, and was furnished with invaluable articles of furniture, coverings etc. It was beautified with doors the thresholds of which were of coral, and with rows of pillars of *Vaiḍūrya* (cat's-eye) gems, reflecting (mirror like) floors of emeralds and walls of shining crystals.

33-34. It was decorated with garlands of various colours and kinds, with banners and buntings, with cloths, gems canopies and pearls brilliant like intelligence or at places the columns of *vaidūrya* (cat's eye)were decorated with brilliant pearls and equipped with all beautiful covetable objects. It was full of fragrance of incenses and lights and was decorated with flowers. It was provided with the services of men and women who being beautiful like gods, enhanced the charm of ornaments (they put on) themselves.

35. It is reported that in that palace the glorious Lord Rāma, the chief of spiritually wise persons who find bliss in their own self, enjoyed himself with his affectionate darling Sītā.

36. Rāma whose foliage-like tender feet are contemplated upon by men, enjoyed for a great number of years all the pleasures at the proper time, without causing any violation of righteousness.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Description of Ikṣvāku's Race[1] (*concluded*)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. From Kuśa's (Rāma's son's) loins sprang up Atithi who gave birth to Niṣadha, whose son was Nabha. Nabha's son was Puṇḍarīka from whom was born Kṣemadhanvā.

1. This chapter gives a chronological statement of the kings in the Ikṣvāku family which will end with Sumitra (118th king), as follows: (The list differs in some respects from Pargiter's Table of Royal Genealogies in AIHT.)

2. His son was Devānīka who had a son called Anīha, whose son was Pāriyātra. His son was Bala from whom was born Sthala[1] (Cala), and his son Vajra-nābha was born from an *aṁśa*—ray—of the Sun-god.

3. His son was Khagaṇa from whom Vidhṛti was born as a son. From Vidhṛti sprang Hiraṇyanābha who became a preceptor of *yoga* and a pupil of Jaimini.[2]

4. It was from Hiraṇyanābha that the sage Yājñavalkya of Kosala got instructions in *yoga* pertaining to the science of the soul (spiritual lore), which leads to the attainment of great mystical powers (*siddhis*), and cuts asunder the knot of ego or ignorance in the heart.

5. Hiraṇyanābha's son was Puṣya from whom was born Dhruvasandhi. His son was Agni-varṇa, the father of Śīghra who had Maru as his son.

6. It is this Maru who, having perfect mastery over *yoga*, is still residing at a village called Kalāpa[3] and at the end of Kali Age, he will revive the extinct solar race again.

Kuśa→Atithi→Niṣadha→Nabha→Puṇḍarīka→Kṣema-dhanvā→Devānīka →Anīha→Pāriyātra→Bala→Sthala→ Vajranābha → Khagaṇa → Vidhṛti →Hiraṇyanābha→Puṣya → Dhruvasandhi → Sudarśana → Agnivarṇa → Śīghra→Maru→Praśruta→Sandhi→Amarṣaṇa→Mahasvān→ Viśvasāhva →Prasenajit → Takṣaka → Bṛhadbala (contemporary of Pāṇḍavās, but an ally of Kauravas; killed by Abhimanyu) → Bṛhadgaṇa → Urukriya → Vatsavṛddha→Prativyoma→Bhānu→Divāka → Sahadeva → Bṛhadaśva→ Bhānumān→Pratīkāśva→Supratīka→Marudeva→Sunakṣatra → Puṣkara →Antarikṣa→Sutapas→Amitrajit→Bṛhadvāja → Barhis → Kṛtañjaya → Raṇañjaya → Sañjaya → Śākya → Śuddhoda→ Lāṅgala → Prasenjit→ Kṣudraka→Raṇaka→Suratha→Sumitra (kings from Bṛhadbala onwards ruled in the Kali Age).

1. GS.GD.BP. take Bala & Sthala as father and son. B.P. specifically states : *Balasya Sthala-nāmā putro' bhavad ityarthaḥ.*

2. Can this be the author of the Sūtras of Pūrvamīmāṁsā or the pupil of Vyāsa as Hiraṇyanābha's 14th descendant Bṛhadbala was a contemporary of Pāṇḍavas ? He is probably some ancient sage of the same name.

3. *Kalāpa-grāma* : A village situated near Badarikāśrama vide *Bh. P.* 10.87.7. From *Nārada* P. II. 67.6 it appears that Nārada and other sages were residents of this place. Here Maru and Devāpi, the last kings of the Solar and Lunar races, perform penance and wait to re-establish their dynasties at Ayodhyā and Hastināpura after Kalki, the tenth incarnation of Viṣṇu, has established social and religious order. According to the

7. Maru's son was Pra-Suśruta (or Suśruta), whose son was Sandhi, his son Amarṣaṇa, who gave birth to Mahasvān, from whom was born Viśvasāhva.

8. Viśvasāhva's son was Prasenajit whose son was Takṣaka; his son was Bṛhadbala who was killed in the battle by your father (Abhimanyu).

9. These are the kings of the Ikṣvāku race in the past. Now listen to the names of kings who are yet to come in future. Bṛhadbala will have (?) a son by name Bṛhadraṇa[1].

10. Bṛhadraṇa's son will be Urukriya, whose son will be Vatsa-vṛddha; from him will spring Prativyoma whose son will be Bhānu; Bhānu's son will be Divāka the leader of the celestial army.

11. Divāka's son will be the great hero Sahadeva whose son will be Bṛhadaśva of whom will be born Bhānumān. Bhānumān's son will be Pratīkāśva whose son will be Supratīka.

12. From him will be born Marudeva, whose son will be Sunakṣatra. Thence will be Puṣkara whose son will be Antarikṣa; his son will be Sutapas, the father of Amitrajit.

13. From him will be born Bṛhadraja, whose son will be Barhis; thence Kṛtañjaya, whose son will be Raṇañjaya; thence will be born Sañjaya.

14. From him will be born Śākya; of him Śuddhoda from whom in turn will spring Lāṅgala; thence will be Prasenajit from whom will be born Kṣudraka.

15. From Kṣudraka will spring Raṇaka who will have a son called Suratha. Suratha's son Sumitra will be the last scion—These will be the kings descended in the race of Bṛhadbala.

16. The race of Ikṣvākus will end up with Sumitra for when he ascends the throne, the race of Ikṣvāku will be terminated and extinct in the Kali age.

Vāyu P. 91.7, Kalāpa is near Meru where Purūravas and Ūrvaśī honeymooned. N.L. De on the authority of Col. Raper locates it near the source of Sarasvatī—a tributary of the Alakanandā, in Badrīnath in Garhwal—*GDAMI* P 84.

1. If Bṛhadbala is killed by Abhimanyu, Bṛhadraṇa must have been born after the Bhārata war at the most, while Śuka is narrating these two generations after the Bhārata war—The Translator.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN[1]

The Description of the Race of Nimi[2]

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. After commencing the session of a sacrifice, Nimi, the son of Ikṣvāku invited Vasiṣṭha to officiate as a sacrificial priest (*ṛtvij*). He, on his part, replied, "Oh king ! I have been already requested by Indra (to conduct his sacrifice).

2. After completing his sacrifice, I shall return (to look after your sacrifice). Wait till then for me". The house-

1. This chapter gives the genealogy of Nimi, the second son of Ikṣvāku, the original founder of the Janaka dynasty of Mithilā. The genealogy is practically the same as in *Vāyu P.* 91 and *Viṣṇu P.* 4.5.1-34. It is as follows :

Nimi→Janaka alias Mithi (*Vāyu* P.89.5)→Udāvasu→Nandivardhana →Suketu→Devarāta→Bṛhadratha→Mahāvīrya→ Sudhṛti→ Dhṛṣṭaketu→Haryaśva→Maru → Pratīpaka → Kṛtiratha → Devamīḍha→ Viṣṛta → Mahādhṛti → Kṛtirāta → Mahāromā → Svarṇaromā→ Hrasvaromā → *Sīradhvaja* (Sītā's father)→ Kuśadhvaja → Dharmadhvaja→



Bhānumān→Śatadyumna→Śuci→Sanadvāja → Urdhvaketu →Aja →Purujit → Ariṣṭanemi → Śrutāyu → Supārśvaka → Citraratha → Kṣemardhi→ Samaratha → Satyaratha → Upaguru →Upagupta→ Vasvananta→Yuyudha→Subhāṣaṇa→Śruta Jaya → Vijaya →Ṛta→ Śunaka → Vītahavya→Dhṛti→Bahulāśva→Kṛti→Mahāvaśī.

2. Nimi (v.l.Nemi) is a famous philosopher-king more popular with non-Brahmanical sects which are anti-sacrifice and pro-recluse types of life. Restricting ourselves to the Brahmanical *purāṇas*, we find the Nimi-legend in *Matsya.* P. 61.32-34, *Vāyu* P. 89.1-4. (The whole chapter tallies with the Bh.P.), *Viṣṇu p.* 4.5.1-15 (the whole prose chapter seems to be the basis of this ch. in the Bh.P.), *Vālmīki Rām. Uttara.* 55-4-21 and canto 57. The curse-episode whereby Nimi left off his physical body and refused to return seems to be an effort at popular etymologies of the capital town "Mithilā" of the country 'Videha', and the word 'Nimiṣa' (winking of the eyes). The special feature of the Mithilā kings was their expertise in philosophy and *yoga* which as *Viṣnu P.* 4.5.34 puts it : *prāyeṇaite ātma-vidyāśrayino bhūpālā bhavanti.* Generally these kings resorted to the science of the Soul (spiritual lore).' The Bh. P. in the last verse of this ch. endorses the same view, though it gives the credit to the grace of Yājñavalkya, the expert yogin.

holder (Nimi, the performer of the sacrifice) kept silent. He (Vasiṣṭha) finished the sacrifice of Indra.

3. Nimi, himself a thoughtful philosopher, knew how life is transitory and proceeded with the sacrifice with the help of other sacrificial priests, while his preceptor did not return (was absent).

4. The preceptor returned after concluding Indra's sacrifice. Perceiving this disobedience on the part of his disciple, he cursed : 'Let the body of Nimi who conceitedly regards himself as a learned man, fall'.

5. Nimi reciprocated the imprecation of his preceptor who violated the path of righteousness : "May your body fall, as you do not know what is *dharma* due to covetousness".

6. With these words Nimi, who was proficient in spiritual lore cast off his body. My great grand-father[1] Vasiṣṭha was born of Urvaśī from Mitra and Varuṇa.

7. Preserving Nimi's body in fragrant balms, the great sages, at the conclusion of the sacrificial session, spoke to the celestials who assembled there for the sacrifice.

8. "If ye Lords are (propitiated and) pleased, the body of the king be resuscitated". "Amen ! Be it so", said the gods. The soul of Nimi resorted to his *liṅga-Śarīra* and spoke loudly, "Let me have no bondage of the physical body".

9. Being afraid of separation from it, sages do not wish to have any contact (or union) with the body, but they devote themselves to the lotus-like feet of Hari (to escape from *Saṁsāra*).

10. I am not desirous of re-entering into the body which brings misery, grief and fear. It is because of the physical body that the death threatens the *jīva* on all sides and the peril of death is everywhere, as the fish have water on all sides.

Gods said :

11. "Oh incorporal Nimi ! May you live at your free will in the eyes of embodied beings." Nimi thus took his

1. Actually 'great-great-grandfather'. The genealogy being—Vasiṣṭha→Śakti→Parāśara→Vyāśa→Śuka.

place in the bodies of creatures, and is indicated by the opening and closing of eyelids.

12. Considering the fearful consequences of anarchy on the human beings, the great sages churned the body of Nimi and a son was born of him.

13. On account of this miraculous birth (or by being the founder of a dynasty), he became known as *Janaka* and was called "Vaideha" as he was produced from a life-less body or an incorporal being, and 'Mithila' ('Mithi' in other *Purāṇas*) as he got his birth out of churning (of Nimi's body). And the city of Mithilā was built up by him.[1]

14. Janaka's son was Udāvasu of whom was born Nandivardhana; his son was Suketu (Sukeśa) who gave birth to Devarāta, Oh King !

15. From him was born Bṛhadratha, whose son was Mahāvīrya, the father of Sudhṛt; from him sprang up Dhṛṣṭaketu; his son was Haryaśva, whose son was Maru.

16. Maru's son was Pratīpaka whence was born Kṛti; his son was Devamīḍha whose son was Viśruta, the father of Mahādhṛti.

17. His son was Kṛtirāta whose son was Mahāromā; his son was Svarṇaromā from whom was born Hrasvaromā.

18. From him sprang up Sīradhvaja, who while ploughing the earth for sacrifice, Sītā (the consort of Rāma) was born (discovered) at the point of the ploughshare. He is hence remembered as Sīra-dhvaja[2] (one whose plough gave him celebrity like a flag).

19. From him was born Kuśadhvaja, whose son was Dharmadhvaja. He (Dharma) had two sons called Kṛtadhvaja and Mitadhvaja.

20. From Kṛtadhvaja, Keśidhvaja, and from Mitadhvaja, Khāṇḍikya were born. The son of Kṛtadhvaja was expert in the spiritual lore, Oh King.

1. Cf. *Vālmīki Rām.—Uttara* 57. 19 & 20.
mathanān Mithir ityāhur jananāj Janako'bhavat /19
yasmād Videhāt sambhūto Vaidehas tu tataḥ smṛtaḥ /20

2. VD. quotes a legend from *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa*, according to which Sītā was originally in the womb of Mandodarī who deposited the foetus in the Kurukṣetra (?) and was discovered by Hrasvaromā.

21. Khāṇḍikya was proficient in the path of action (*karma-mārga*), but being afraid of Keśidhvaja, he ran away (leaving his country), Keśidhvaja had a son called Bhānumān whose son was Sudyumna.

22. His son was Śuci, whose son was Sanadvāja; from Sanadvāja was born Ūrdhvaketu whose son was Aja, who had Purujit as his son.

23. His son was Ariṣṭanemi whose son was Śrutāyu; his son Supārśvaka gave birth to Citraratha, whose son Kṣemardhi was the king of Mithilā.

24. From him Samaratha whose son was Satyaratha; from him sprang Vpaguru whose son was Upagupta who was an *aṁśa* of the Fire-god.

25. His son was Vasvananta, whose son was Yuyudha, from whom was born Subhāṣaṇa; his son was Śruta whose son was Jaya, the father of Vijaya. His son was Ṛta.

26. From him was born Śunaka, whose son was Vītahavya, from whom was born Dhṛti. From Dhṛti was born Bahulāśva, whose son was Kṛti noted for great self-control.

27. These are verily the kings of Mithilā who were all proficient in the Science of the Soul (Spiritual lore) through the grace of Yājñavalkya the master of *yoga*. Even though they led the life of householders, they were above the conflicting pairs like pleasure and pain, etc.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Description of the Lunar Race

Śrī Śuka Said :

1. After this (description of Mithilā kings), now listen to the hallowing race of Soma (the moon-god), in which will be glorified celebrated kings of auspicious fame, like Purūravas, the son of Ilā (*Aila*),[1] Oh King.

1. Although *Purūravas* is regarded as the son of Ilā, Manu's daughter, it is probable that this human founder of the Lunar race hailed from Ilāvṛta, the region round-about mount Meru.

Madhye tvilāvṛtaṁ nāma mahā-Meroḥ samantataḥ /—*Matsya P.* 113.19.

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2. The creator (god Brahmā), born out of the lotus which was grown out of the deep pool-like navel of the Supreme Person of innumerable (lit. thousands of) heads, had a son called Atri, who was equal to his father in excellent qualities.

3. Wonderfully enough a Son called Soma was born out of his tears of joy, and hence he became an embodiment of nectar. He was appointed as the protector (or king) of Brāhmaṇas, (medicinal)plants and herbs and hosts of constellations and stars, by god Brahmā.

4. After conquering the three worlds, he worshipped Lord Viṣṇu by performing a Rājasūya sacrifice. Out of high notions about self-importance, he forcibly abducted Tārā,[1] the wife of Bṛhaspati.

5. Even though he was repeatedly and earnestly requested by Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods, out of arrogance, he refused to restore her (to Bṛhaspati). On this issue was fought a battle between gods and demons.

6. Out of hatred against Bṛhaspati, Śukra along with Asuras, espoused the cause of Soma, the Lord of stars, while god Śiva surrounded by his hosts of goblins took the side of Bṛhaspati, his preceptor's son.[2]

7. The great Indra, accompanied by all the hosts of gods, followed his preceptor (Bṛhaspati). Thus, for the sake of Tārā, a great battle was fought, resulting in the destruction of gods and demons.

8. The Creator of the Universe (god Brahmā) was then appealed to in this matter by Aṅgiras (Bṛhaspati's father). Brahmā threatened Soma and made him restore Tārā to her husband who found her to be pregnant.

9. (Bṛhaspati ordered Tārā): "Cast off, uproot from my field (i.e. get aborted) what has been sown there by others

Roughly this corresponds to the region round modern Pamirs. Purūravas and his descendants had contacts with 'gods' who are now identified as Aryans who inhabited the northern part of *Pamirs* or Uttara Kuru—vide D.P.Miśra—*Proto. Hist. of India*, ch.I.

1. This is a symbolism, rooted in the vedic doctrine of Soma. For details vide Agrawal—*M.P. A study*, pp. 130-31.

2. God Śiva's preceptor was sage Aṅgiras, the father of Bṛhaspati —ŚR.

(or enemies), oh wicked-minded woman. I shall not reduce you to ashes as you are a woman, and I am desirous of having an issue (through you)[1], oh good lady !"

9A. To her was born a son of golden complexion, the destroyer of Dasyus (or evil beings).

10. Overwhelmed with shame, Tārā delivered a son who was lustrous like gold in complexion.[2] And both Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, and Soma desired to have the son as his own (as a *kṣetraja* son—born of his field, viz. wife in the case of the former, and as a *vīryaja* son—born of his own semen—in the case of the latter)[3]

11. While they (Bṛhaspati and Soma) were wrangling vociferously, "This (son) is mine and not yours", sages and gods enquired (of Tārā), but through sense of shame, she kept mum.

12. Enraged at the sham modesty of his mother (Tārā), the son exploded, "Why don't you speak, you woman of immoral behaviour ? Confess to me immediately your sin".

12A.* (Although you deserve that punishment) I shall not burn you to ashes (with a curse) for concealing your sinful act (as after all you are my mother). But god Brahmā censured the audacious reviler in her presence.

13. God Brahmā then invited her aside, and consoling her in camera, he (sympathetically) enquired. With great hesitation and slowly, she confessed in a low tone, "Soma's." And immediately Soma took possession of the child.

14. The self-born god (Brahmā) gave the child the name Budha (the intelligent and wise). By the penetrating intelligence and deep wisdom of his son Budha, the moon-god, the king of stars, became highly delighted.

15-16. As already narrated (vide Supra 9.1.35) 'Purūravas was born of Budha and Ilā. On hearing of the personal charms, excellences, generosity, nobility of character, affluence

1. And as there is no son to ensure the continuity of my family—VR.
2. v.l. *janaka-prabham*—was like his father in complexion and beauty.
3. With due respect to these annotators, I fail to understand why god Brahmā took Tārā into confidence to ascertain who was the real father of the child.—The Translator.

* This verse is noted by VR also.

and deeds of valour as extolled by the celestial sage Nārada in the palace of Indra (the king of gods), the celestial nymph Ūrvaśī was afflicted by shafts of the god of love, and she approached Purūravas.[1]

17. Being reduced to the status of human beings due to the curse of Mitra and Varuṇa, and hearing (the report that) that great personage was beautiful like the god of Love incarnate, she mustered sufficient courage, and presented herself to his presence.

18. With his eyes fully blooming with great joy at her sight, and with his hair standing on their end (with ecstatic delight), the king spoke to her softly in winsome words.

The King said :

19. Welcome is your arrival, Oh beautiful lady. Be pleased to take a (comfortable) seat. What can we do for you ? Enjoy yourself fully with me. Let our mutual enjoyment of love last for innumerable years.

Ūrvaśī replied :

20. "Whose mind and eye will not be attracted by and fixed on you, oh charming Prince? Having caught a glimpse of

1. This story (of Purūravas and Ūrvaśī) is an elaboration of the dialogue between Purūravas and Ūrvaśī recorded in RV. 10.95. Many verses from that *Sūkta* are assimilated *verbatim* in the Bh.P. e.g. RV. 10.95. 1, 14, 15. The textual similarity has been noted by all commentators. VJ. however is more elaborate in this respect. Even an ordinary reader will hear the echo of RV.10.95.1 (repeated in *Śatapatha Br.* 11.5.1-6)

haye jāye manasā tiṣṭha ghore |
vacāṁsi miśrā kṛṇavāvahai nu ||

in *Bh.P.*9.14.34

aho jāye tiṣṭha tiṣṭha ghore na tyaktum arhasi |
māṁ tvam adyāpyanivṛtya vacāṁsi kṛṇavāvahai ||

If we accept the hypothesis of Rajaram Shastri Bhagawat who, in 1907, showed in his *Key to Interpret Veda*, that Devas were a race of men and Indra their leader's designation (and there is no reason to disbelieve it as scholars like R.N.Dandekar, D.D.Kosambi endorsed it independently), and M.Ali's identification of Kirghizia, Samarkand (Sogdiana of the Greeks) and Turkemenistan with *Deva-loka* (*The Geography of the Purāṇas, pp.* 63-83), the contract marriage between a lady from Ur (Ūr-vaśī) and a king hailing from Ilāvṛta—Aila Purūravas, appears quite a human episode with historical basis. The geographical vicinity of his kingdom to Deva-loka made it possible for him and his descendants to fight as allies of Indra.

your bosom (lit. having approached your bosom) I become overpowered with the desire of enjoying life with you, and lose the control over my mind.

21. Oh King ! Be pleased to protect the two lambs as my pledges. Oh respector of the respectable ! I shall enjoy life fully with you. For he who (by his qualities of beauty etc.) appears praise-worthy (to a woman) is remembered (ordained in the *Smṛti* texts) as acceptable to women.

22. Oh warrior King ! My food will consist of ghee only. And I shall not see you without clothes except on the occasion of sexual intercourse." The noble-minded king agreed to the conditions.

23. "Oh what elegant form ! How noble sentiment, that enchants the entire humanity ! What man will not attend upon a goddess who presents herself of her own accord."

24. In her company she offered him all pleasures worthy of him. The eminent person (king Purūravas) enjoyed with her at will, and to the full, in the pleasure gardens of gods such as Caitraratha (the garden of Kubera).

25. Enjoying amorous pleasures with the goddess (or the queen) whose person was fragrant like lotus-filaments, and being enraptured by the sweet smell of her mouth, he revelled many years delightfully with her.

26. Not seeing Ūrvaśī (in his court) and feeling, "My assembly does not look very charming without Ūrvaśī," Indra directed Gandharvas (to bring her).

27. Approaching at dead of night when the world was steeped in darkness, and through their Māyā, they stole the two rams which were pledged for safe custody with the king, by his queen Ūrvaśī.

28. Hearing the bleating of her son-like rams, as they were being carried away, queen Ūrvaśī lamented loudly, "I am undone by this sheepish husband, lacking in manliness but posing vaingloriously as a hero.

29. Trusting in him, I am ruined and despoiled of my children (—like lambs) by robbers. Like a woman who is full of fear at night, he sleeps terror-stricken at night, and poses himself as a man when it is (broad) day (—light).

29A. Let me be free ! Leave me immediately ! Take away your arm that clasps around me. He is too timid to leave me, and cunning, and addicted to licentious sexual pleasure only."

30. Being pierced with these verbal shafts, and like an elephant pricked with goads, he caught hold of his sword and sallied forth in rage, in the dead of night, even though he was naked.

31. The Gandharvas let go the two rams, but flashed out light like lightning, when she caught a glimpse of her husband in a nude state, coming with the two rams (and thus left him).

32. Not finding his wife in the bed, Purūravas, the son of *Ilā*, became despondent. His heart being fixed on her, he was beside himself (with affliction). He ranged over the world (in search of her), like a mad man.

33. (In the course of his wanderings, one day) he happened to see her along with her five female companions with their countenances blooming with delight, on the bank of the Sarasvatī, in Kurukṣetra. Purūravas addressed her the following (persuasive) charming words (recorded in the *Sūkta*, RV 10.95 which is adapted here as follows) :

34. "Oh my beloved wife ! Do stop awhile, wait. Oh cruelhearted one ! It does not behove you to abandon me without giving me pleasure of your company to my satisfaction (*or* unsated as I am of the pleasures of your company, you ought not to relegate me to terrible misery). Let us (at least) have some (heart to heart) talk.[1]

35. If this beautiful body of mine[2] which has been drawn away to such a far off distance by you, be not the recipient of your favours, it will fall down dead here only,

1. Cf. RV. 10.95.1.

2. Cf. RV.10.95.14. VJ. reads 'Sudevo'yam' for *Sudeho'yam*, which opens RV 10.95.14 (*Sudevo atra prapatet*). VJ. explains the Ṛk rather than this verse *Sudeva*—This human body which is the tool or means of getting knowledge (*gati-lakṣaṇa-jñāna-sādhanam*).

VR. explains the v.l. *Sudevo'yam* : Here Purūravas addresses his own soul—the Inner Controller. He construes *gṛdhra* (greedy, voracious) as the adj. qualifying *Vṛkas*—wolves in the form of sense-organs which afflict the individual soul.

and wolves and vultures will prey upon it, Oh my queen (Oh goddess).

Urvaśī replied :

36. Do not die. You are a man (as such you must be courageous). Let not these wolves (in the form of passionately craving senses) devour you today (Control your senses). The heart of women like the heart of wolves is friendly to none.[1]

37. Women are merciless, cruel, jealous and mind no risk for the object of their love. Even for a trifling matter, they will kill their trustful husband or unsuspecting brother.

38. After inspiring confidence in gullible persons (through deceitful behaviour), they snap asunder all friendly relations. The unchaste women, being wantonly wayward in behaviour, hunt (long) after a new lover (every now and then).

39. My lord, at the end of the year, you will stay with me for one night. You will have other children also, (in addition to the one I carry).

40. Noticing that the queen was pregnant, he returned to his capital. At the end of the year, he came back again to find Urvaśī, as the mother of a hero.

41. Full of delight to have her again, he spent that night with her. Then finding him disheartened at the prospect of impending separation, Urvaśī advised him :

42. "You propitiate these Gandharvas (by praise), and they will be pleased to give me unto you."

Being pleased with his laudatory prayer, the Gandharvas donated him a fire-vase (for fire-worship which will lead him to the region of Urvaśī) Oh King. (Being blinded with passion) he believed that fire-vessel to be (the means of securing) Urvaśī, and roved in the forest with it, only to discover it to be a vase for carrying fire, and not Urvaśī.

43. Depositing the vase in the forest, he returned to his palace, and contemplated throughout the night on Urvaśī. In

1. The veres echoes the text of RV. 10.95.15 while VV. 36-39 explain it. Cf.

Purū-ravo mā mṛthā, mā pra papto
mā tvā vṛkāso aśivāsa u kṣan /
na vai straiṇāni sakhyāni santi
sālāvṛkāṇām hṛdayāneyatā //—RV. 10.95.15

the meanwhile (the Kṛta age ended and) the Tretā Age set in, and the knowledge of trinity of Vedas which contained prescriptions, for the ritualistic performance of sacrifices, revealed itself in his mind.

44. Returning to the spot (in the forest) where the firevase was kept (by him), he noticed an *aśvattha* (Peepal) tree grown out from the 'womb' of the *Śamī* tree. With a desire to attain to the region of Ūrvaśī, he made two *araṇis* (churning sticks) out of them (with a view to enkindle fire by friction).

45. Reciting the *mantra* 'Ūrvaśyām urasi Purūravāḥ' (Purūravas is on Ūrvaśī), the powerful king contemplated the lower piece of *araṇi* (churning stick) as Ūrvaśī and the upper *araṇi* to be himself, and the intermediate piece between them as their issue (son), (the king churned out the fire while saying the *mantra* prescribed for such frictional fire).

46. By that friction of churning was enkindled a fire (flame) which is called *Jātaveda* (that from which wealth and every enjoyable object is produced). It was consecrated by the method prescribed in the three Vedas. It assumed three forms[1]—*āhavanīya*, *gārhapatya* and *dakṣiṇāgni*. As it, with its three forms, leads to the celestial regions, it was adopted as his son by the king Purūravas.

47. Wishing to attain to the region of Ūrvaśī he, (Purūravas), worshipped with that sacrificial fire (produced by attrition from *araṇis*) the glorious Lord Hari, who is the presiding Deity of sacrifices and is Supra-sensuous and who represents all gods in His Person.

48. Formerly (in the Kṛta Age), there was only one Veda viz. the sacred syllable *OM* which formed the basis of all speech; there was but one God Nārāyaṇa and no other; there was only one Fire (and not three) and only one caste viz. *Haṁsa*.

49. (In the Kṛta Age), all people had the predominance

1. These are the three forms of householder's perpetual sacrificial fires : The *āhavanīya* is the eastern. The *Gārhapatya* is another perpetual fire transmitted from one generation to another and from this, fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted; the *dakṣiṇāgni* is the sacred fire placed to the south.

of *Sattva* and hence were devoted to spiritual meditation. In the Tretā Age, *rajas* being the dominant quality, the path of ritualistic acts based on the three Vedas became evolved. Since the time of Purūravas, when the Tretā Age dawned, there came into existence the trinity of the Vedas (and the path of ritualistic action based on them), Oh King. As the King accepted the Fire-god as his son (i.e. maintained the sacrificial fire like unto his son), the king attained to the realm of Gandharvas.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Story of Paraśurāma. Sahasrārjuna Slain

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Purūravas, the son of Ilā, had six sons by Ūrvaśī, Oh King. They were Āyu, Śrutāyu, Satyāyu, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya.

2. Śrutāyu's son was Vasumān; Śrutañjaya was Satya's son. Raya's son was Eka, and Jaya's son was Amita.

3. Vijaya had a son called Bhīma whose son was Kañcana from whom was born Hotraka. His son was Jahnu who took all the waters of the Gaṅgā in his folded palms, and drank up the whole river. Jahnu's son was Puru, whose son was Balāka and his son was Ajaka.

4. From him (Ajaka) was born Kuśa who had four sons viz. Kuśāmbu, Tanaya (v. l. Mūrtaya), Vasu and Kuśanābha. Kuśāmbu's son was Gādhi.

5. A Brāhmaṇa called Ṛcīka sought Gādhi's daughter, princess Satyavatī in marriage. Considering that the bride-groom was unworthy of her, king Gādhi spoke to Ṛcīka of the Bhṛgu clan :

6. "We belong to the race of Kuśa, and as such one thousand horses white and bright like the moon, but with one black ear be given as the dowry for the girl."

7. When he was thus replied, he understood the intention of Gādhi. Having approached Varuṇa, he brought and delivered the required horses of the said description and married that lovely princess.

8. The sage Ṛcīka was solicited by his wife and by his mother-in-law both of whom were desirous of having a son. He prepared *Caru*—an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled in butter and milk for presentations to gods—consecrated them severally—the one, for his wife, with *Brāhma mantras*, and the other, for his mother-in-law, consecrated with *Kṣātra mantras*. And then the sage went for having his bath.

9. In the meanwhile (during his absence), Satyavatī, was requested by her mother (to give her) the *Caru* (sacrificial boiled rice) meant for Satyavatī herself, considering that to be superior. She gave that *Caru* (meant for herself) to her mother, and ate the one apportioned for her mother.

10. On learning of this (exchange of *Carus*), the sage told his wife, "Alas ! What grievous mistake you have committed ! Your son will be a terrible chastiser (like god of death), and your brother will be a prominent knower of *Brahman* (the Vedas or the Supreme Deity).

11. Propitiated by persuasive prayer that such eventuality should not materialise, sage Ṛcīka of the Bhṛgu clan said, "If so, your grandson will be of that nature". Then Jamadagni was born.

12. Then Satyavatī was transformed into a very sacred river Kauśikī, the sanctifier of the world. The tradition goes that Jamadagni married Reṇukā, the daughter of (King) Reṇu.

13. They say that several sons like Vasumat and others were begotten on her by the sage Jamadagni of the Bhṛgu clan. The youngest of them born was the great celebrity Rāma (Paraśu-rāma).

14*. They say that he was a ray (*aṁśa*) of Vāsudeva (Lord Viṣṇu) and the exterminator of the Haihaya clan. He

*The Bh.P. contains two main legends from the life of Paraśurāma viz. 1. The slaying of Kārtavīrya or Sahasrārjuna and 2. Beheading his mother and brothers and reviving them.

The legends of Paraśurāma narrated here are found in *MBH Ādi*. 2.4-7 64.4; *Aśvamedhika* chs. 29 & 30 and in *Brahmāṇḍa P*. II.26-40.

is said to have rendered this earth devoid of Kṣatriyas twenty-one times.

15. He destroyed the wicked Kṣatriya race turned inimical to Brāhmaṇas, and constituted as if a burden to the earth. Even on the slightest provocation or commission of a slight offence, he killed the Kṣattriyas enveloped by (i.e. full of) *rajas* and *tamas*.

The king (*Parīkṣit*) *asked* :

16. What offence against that glorious sage (Paraśurāma) was committed by Kṣatriyas of uncontrolled nature that led to the repeated extermination of the entire Kṣatriya race (by him) ?

Śrī Śuka narrated :

17. Arjuna, a prominent Kṣatriya and the ruler of Haihayas (a branch of Yādavas) propitiated Datta (Dattātreya), a partial (*aṁśa*) incarnation of Lord Nārāyaṇa, by rendering to him various acts of service (and worship).

18-19. Through him (Datta's grace), he secured a thousand arms, unassailable formidability against the enemies, uninterrupted and insuperable power of senses and organs, splendour, affluence, glory, prowess, fame, physical strength, mastery over *yoga* including supreme spiritual powers characterised by the capacity to assume atomic size etc. His movements and speed being thus unimpeded, he moved about the world free as a wind.

20. While sporting in the waters of the Narmadā, in company of (lit. surrounded by) jewel-like (charming) women, and wearing the Vaijayantī wreath (of nine well-known gems) he, being intoxicated with pride, obstructed the course of the river with his one thousand arms.

21. (Rāvaṇa was on his expedition of the world conquest and was camping on the bank of the Narmadā, near Māhiṣmatī, Sahasrārjuna's capital and was then engaged in worship). Finding his encampment flooded with the waters of the river flowing in the opposite direction, Rāvaṇa, the tenheaded demon, who regarded himself as the only hero in the world,

did not tolerate that (display of) prowess (by Sahasrārjuna).

22. When Rāvaṇa (tried to attack him during the water-sports and thus) offended Sahasrārjuna, he (Rāvaṇa) was sportively seized in the very presence of women, and was kept captive like a monkey at his capital Māhiṣmatī and was (ultimately) let off as a worthless fellow.

23. On one occasion, while Arjuna was on a hunting expedition in an impassable forest, he perchance, happened to come to the precincts of the hermitage of the sage Jamadagni.

24. Through the grace of his Kāmadhenu (wish-yielding cow), the sage whose wealth was (nothing but his) penance, however, offered a warm reception (with due formalities) to the king, his ministers, men in his army and even the animals that carried them.

25. Finding the affluence of the sage far surpassing his own, the warrior who was accompanied by his Haihaya clansmen, cherished covetousness for the wish-yielding cow which was essential for maintaining sacrificial fires (*agni-hotra*), and did not appreciate the warm hospitality.

26. Out of arrogance and pride, he commanded his men to take away the sage's cow of plenty (which yielded milk, ghee etc. as oblations to sacrificial fires), and they forcibly carried off the screaming cow and her calf to (the king's capital) Māhiṣmatī.

27. After the king's departure, (Paraśu)-Rāma arrived at the hermitage. Being informed of the act of wickedness of the king, he got enraged like a serpent that is hit.

28. Equipping himself with his formidable axe, a bow with quivers and a shield, the irresistible hero rushed after him like a lion chasing a king elephant of a herd.

29. As Arjuna was entering his capital, he noticed the prominent Bhṛgu, Paraśurāma bearing a bow and armed with arrows and an axe, wearing a black deer-skin and with matted hair resplendent like the sun, rushing (after him) with an irresistible force.

30. (To oppose him) Arjuna directed seventeen very formidable divisions (*akṣauhiṇī*)[1] consisting of elephants, chari-

1. For the details of the strength of an *akṣauhiṇī* vide Bh.P.VII.I.P. 71 ftn. No. 271.

ots, cavalry and infantry equipped with maces, swords, arrows, javelins, *Śataghnīs* (a rocket-like missile or a cylindrical block of wood studded with iron pikes) and darts or lances (*Śaktis*). But the glorious Lord Rāma singlehandedly slaughtered them all.

31. In whatever direction, Rāma, the destroyer of hostile forces, moved with the velocity of the wind and mind, striking down with his axe, there fell down on the ground enemies with their arms, thighs and necks chopped off and their charioteers and animals slain.

32. Perceiving that his army is laid low on the battlefield in the mire caused by streams of blood, with their shields, flags, bows and bodies minced down by the axe and shafts of Rāma, the Haihaya King Arjuna, rushed forward in rage.

33. Now Arjuna (being thousand-armed) simultaneously fitted shafts on five hundred bows in order to discharge them at Rāma. But Rāma, the undisputed leader of all whoever wielded missiles, with one bow in his hand at once—synchronously—cut down all Arjuna's bow and arrows with his shafts.

34. In that fight, while Arjuna was rushing towards Rāma uprooting rocks and trees with his (numerous) hands (to hurl them at Rāma), Rāma forestalled him and quickly cut down his arms like the hoods of serpents, with his axe of a hard and sharp edge.

35. After lopping off all his arms, Rāma chopped off Arjuna's head like the peak of a mountain. When their father was thus killed, Arjuna's ten thousand sons ran away in panic.

36. Rāma, the subduer of hostile forces, restored the cow (essential for the maintenance of *Agnihotra*) along with her calf. Returning to his hermitage, he duly presented the afflicted cow to his father.

37. Rāma, described to his father and brothers (Arjuna's moves) and his exploits; but the sage Jamadagni (disapprovingly) remarked :

38. "(Dear) Rāma ! Oh Rāma of mighty arms ! You have committed a sin. You have unnecessarily killed a king (a god among men) who represents all gods in his person.

39. Oh dear child ! We are Brāhmaṇas ! We have become objects of veneration and worship through forbearance,

just as god Brahmā, the creator of the world, has attained to the status of Parameṣṭhī (the supreme ruler of the world) through forgiveness.

40. It is on account of forgiveness and patience that the Brāhmanic glory shines like the splendour of the sun. Even glorious Lord Hari, the Ruler of the Universe, become seasily pleased with persons of forgiving spirits.

41. Slaying of a king whose head is consecrated in coronation, is more heinous than that of killing a Brāhmaṇa. Oh child ! Now expiate your sin by bathing in holy waters, devoting your mind (all the while) to Lord Viṣṇu (*Acyuta*)."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Story of Paraśurāma[1] (*concluded*)

Śrī Śuka continued:

1. Rāma who was thus admonished by his father, consented (with words) "Be it so". After spending one year in visiting holy places, he returned to his hermitage, Oh princes of the Kuru race !

1. The legend of Paraśurāma ends in this chapter. The Bh.P., like the MBH, seems to be composed under the influence of Bhṛgus and this legend may be called the Bhṛgu version of the feud between the Bhṛgus and Haihayas. Bhṛgus (Greek: Phrugus) as the name of the clan suggests, probably hailed from Phrygia in Western Asia Minor. From the Purāṇic accounts, they seem to have settled on the Western Coast in India and Bhṛgukaccha (Broach, Gujrat), Śūrpāraka (Sopārā, Thana District, Maharashtra) appear to be the centres of their settlement. They were a sea power. Till the time of Kṛtavīrya (Arjuna's father), Bhṛgus and Haihayas seemed to be on good terms. But the Haihayas' policy of expansion had long back alerted Bhṛgus, and their leaders contracted matrimonial alliances with the royal houses of Kānyakubja and Ayodhyā by the marriage of Rcika and Jamadagni with the princesses thereof. Arjuna, Kṛtavīrya's son was an able, ambitious ruler. He seems to have raided Jamadagni's 'hermitage' (!)—if a centre which can receive and feed a king and his army in a royal way, and if its affluence surpasses a sovereign emperor's palace, can be called so—probably to forestall Bhṛgu

2. On one occasion, when Reṇukā went to the Gaṅgā (for bringing water), she happened to see Citraratha, the king of Gandharvas, adorned with a wreath of lotuses, sporting with celestial nymphs (in the water).

3. Reṇukā who came to the river to fetch water, conceived just a passing longing for Citraratha, and forgot the time fixed for the *Homa* (sacrificial worship) while gazing at the sporting king.

4. Realizing the delay caused thereby, and being afraid of the sage's (Jamadagni's) curse, she hastened back, kept the pitcher of water before him, and remained standing with folded palms.

5. Gathering the faithlessness of his wife, the sage got enraged and commanded, "Oh sons ! Kill this sinful woman". Despite this order, none obeyed.

6. Rāma who was fully aware of the powers of the sage through his spiritual meditation and penance, promptly despatched his brothers along with his mother, when directed to do so by his father.

7. Jamadagni, the son of Satyavatī, was pleased with him (Paraśurāma) and asked him to seek a boon. Rāma re-

designs just on the borders of his kingdom. Though under the able leadership of Rāma, the northern allies of Bhṛgus including kings of Vaiśālī, Videha, Kānyakubja and Ayodhyā defeated Haihayas probably in twenty-one battles, and though Rāma was able to kill Arjuna in a surprise attack while the latter was returning from his hunting expedition, the Bhṛgus had ultimately to migrate to the north India and spread along the southern part of the western coast of India. Whatever may be the actual historical facts of this traditional feud, it was *not* a contest between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas on caste basis, as some misrepresent it. For, right from the days of Cyavana Bhārgava, Bhṛgus had marriage alliances with Kṣattriyas, and Rāma's mother, Rama's grandmother (Ṛcīka's wife) were Kṣattriya princesses. The real cause was economic and political rivalry, and attempts of Haihayas to spread their kingdom to the Doab and other parts of northern India. After Paraśurāma's retirement, Haihayas consolidated their position in Malwa, Rajasthan and Western India and carried their raids against Ayodhyā, Kānyakubja, Kosal and Kāśī. As irony of fate would have it, the last Haihaya prince Vītihotra on the throne of Benares, had to seek refuge with a Bhārgava sage and Vīti-hotra became a Brāhmaṇa. [illegible] him little is heard about Haihayas—*Vedic Age*, pp.283-87 (History and Culture of Indian People Vol.I).

quested the boon that all those who had been killed, should be restored to life, and should not remember who slew them.

8. Immediately they got up hale and hearty as if from a sound sleep. Rāma had killed his kith and kin (mother and brothers), as he had known the spiritual power of his father.

9. Oh king ! The sons of Arjuna who, being vanquished by the valour of Rāma, had fled, continued to brood over the killing of their father (by Rāma) and found no mental peace anywhere.

10. On one occasion, when Paraśurāma along with his brothers had left for the forest, they (the sons of Arjuna), desirous of avenging (for the killing of their father by Rāma), found a (favourable) opportunity, and entered the hermitage.

11. Determined to murder Jamadagni, they saw the sage sitting with his mind concentrated upon the glorious Lord of excellent renown, in the sacrificial hall, and killed him.

12. Though piteously entreated by the helpless mother of Paraśurāma, those hard-hearted dregs of the Kṣatriya community, forcibly severed his head and carried it away.

13. Overwhelmed with grief and deep anguish, and beating herself with her own hands, the chaste lady Reṇukā screamed loudly, "Oh Rāma ! Rāma ! come (quickly) Oh child".

14. Hearing from afar, a distressful call "Oh Rāma", Rāma hastened to the hermitage to find his father killed.

15. Overwhelmed and confounded with sorrow, rage, impetuosity, affliction and intense grief, Rāma bewailed "Oh saintly father ! Oh righteous-most sire ! Leaving us behind here, you proceeded to heaven."

16. After lamenting thus, Paraśurāma entrusted the body of his father to his brothers. Taking his axe with him, he determined to exterminate the Kṣatriya race entirely.

17. Sallying forth to the city of Māhiṣmatī, the splendour of which was already lost due to the murder of a Brāhmaṇa (Jamadagni), he built up (as it were) a huge mountain of the heads of the sons of Sahasrārjuna in the heart of the city.

18-19. With the blood of those (Haihayas), he created a terrible river which aroused fear in the heart of the enemies

of Brāmaṇas. When the Kṣatriyas had taken to wicked (inauspicious) ways, he made the murder of his father as a cause of action and completely annihilated the Ksatriyas thrice seven times[1] from the earth, and caused (the creation of) pools of blood[2] in Samantapañcaka(Kurukṣetra) Oh King.

20. Recovering the head of his father (taken away by the sons of Arjuna), he joined it to the trunk of his father's body. Keeping it on the Kuśa grass, he worshipped by performing sacrifices, the Deity, his own Soul, who represents all gods in his person.

21. (It is verily reported that) as *dakṣiṇā* (gift for performance of sacrifices), he gave the eastern quarter (the eastern part of the earth) to the *Hotṛ*, the southern quarter to the *Brahmā*, the western direction to the *Adhvaryu* and the northern direction to the *Udgātṛ*.

22. To others he donated (lands in) the intermediate quarters, and the central portion of the earth to sage Kaśyapa, Āryāvarta (region between the Himalayas and the Vindhya mountain) to the sacrificial supervisors (*upadraṣṭas*) and the land lying beyond that to *Sadasyas* (judges or superintendents of sacrifices.).

23. Having washed off all his sins in the conclusive ablution at the end of the sacrifice in the river Sarasvatī, the embodiment of the Veda, he shone resplendent like the sun with clouds dispelled.

24. Having regained his (spiritual) body characterised by pure consciousness, Jamadagni became the seventh star[3] in the sphere of sages in the sky (*Ursa Major*), and was worshipped by Rāma.

25. (It is said that) verily this son of Jamadagni, the glorious Rāma of lotus-like eyes, will be the propagator of the

1. ŚR informs us that according to tradition, Reṇukā beat her breast twenty one times, and hence Rāma destroyed Kṣatriyas as many times.

2. VR. states that the v.l *hradān nava* is wrong, as the place is called *S(y)amanta-pañcaka* and not *S-navaka* and the MBH. *Ādi.* records *S-pañcaka* as the name 2.4-11.

3. VC. gives the list of seven sages presiding over the seven stars in the constellation *Ursa Major* as follows : Kāśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Bharadvāja and Jamadagni.

Vedas—one of the seven sages, the authorities over the Vedas —in the coming *Manvantara*.

26. Even today he resides on the Mahendra mountain. He has laid down the rod of punishment, and is now perfectly serene in mind. His deeds are being sung by Siddhas, Gandharvas and Cāraṇas.

27. In this way, the glorious Lord Hari, the Ruler of the world, the very Soul of (all beings in) the Universe incarnated Himself in the Bhṛgu clan, and lightened the burden of the earth by killing several times the *Kṣatriyas* (or lords of men).

28. Gādhi (the King of Kānyakubja) begot a son (Viśvāmitra) whose superb majestic personality was brilliant like a blazing fire. By virtue of his asceticism and austere penance, he transcended his *Kṣatriya* status and attained the glory of Brahmanism.

29. Viśvāmitra had a hundred sons. Out of them Madhucchandas was the middle, but all of them are known by the same (group) name Madhucchandas, Oh King !

30. Having adopted as his son Śunaḥśepa, the son of Ajīgarta of the Bhṛgu clan, who was given to him by gods and hence named as *Devarāta*, he told his sons, "Let this (Śunaḥśepa) be regarded by you as your eldest (brother).[1]

31. It was verily the same person who was sold as a human 'sacrificial beast' (victim) for the sacrifice of Hariścandra[2] and who through his prayer[3] to gods and Lords of creation (like Varuṇa) was released from the bondage of cords (that tied him to the sacrificial post).

32. He who was protected and given by gods in the sacrifice offered to Varuṇa, came to be known as *Devarāta* among the Gādhi family and that ascetic was known as Śunḥśepa in the family of Bhṛgus.

33. The brothers who were elder than Madhucchandas did not approve of it (the order of Viśvāmitra to recognize

1. As ŚR. points out, this explains why Devarāta is one of the *Pravara*'s of the Kauśika *Gotra*, even though as a rule a *Pravara* belongs to the same *Gotra*.

2. Vide Supra 9.7. 20-21.

3. e.g. Sūktas like RV. 1.25.

Devarāta as their eldest brother). The enraged sage cursed them, "Ye wicked fellows! Be ye all *mlecchas* (outcast barbarians)".

34. It is reported that, thereupon Madhucchandas along with his fifty brothers submitted, "we shall accept the status and abide by whatever you command us."

35. To the seer of Vedic *mantras* (Śunaḥśepa) they told him, "We are all your younger brothers." And thus they recognized him as their eldest brother. Viśvāmitra (being highly pleased) said to his sons, "As you have maintained my respect as your father, and have made me worthy as a father with heroic sons, may you all be blessed with progeny".

36. "Oh descendents of Kauśika family, this Devarāta is one of you (as a scion of your family); obey his orders." Viśvāmitra had also other sons viz. Aṣṭaka, Hārīta, Jaya, Kratumat and others.

37. In this way the Kauśika family came to be divided into different branches through the sons of Viśvāmitra, and it had another different *Pravara* due to the adoption of Devarāta.[1]

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Lunar Dynasty—The Descendants of Āyu, the Son of Purūravas[2]

Śrī Śuka said :

1-3. Āyu who was the son of Purūravas, had the following (five) sons—Nahuṣa, Kṣattravṛddha, the valiant Raji, Rambha and Anenas. Now, Oh emperor, listen to the

1. It appears that there had been different Viśvāmitras in widely distant ages. e.g. Viśvāmitra, the father of Śakuntalā, Viśvāmitra the teacher of Daśaratha's son Rāma, Viśvāmitra the contemporary of Hariścandra, Jamadagni and Śunaḥśepa, and Viśvāmitra and the Dāśarājña. The Purāṇas, however, have rolled these distinct personalities into one, and have caused confusion and chaos among the students of Purāṇas. It is true that there was some rivalry between the Viśvāmitras and Vasiṣṭhas in the RV, but the Purāṇas have added a lot of new material unknown to the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas.

2. This chapter gives the genealogy of Purū-ravas—especially of the minor branches from Āyu, the son of Purūravas. The history of the descendants of the following four sons of Āyu viz. Kṣattravṛddha, Rambha, Raji and Anenas is given in this chapter. The history of the main line from Nahuṣa is detailed in the following chapters.

genealogy of Kṣattravṛddha : He had a son Suhotra, who had three sons—Kāśya, Kuśa and Gṛtsamada. From Gṛtsamada was born Śunaka whose son sage Śaunaka was the most prominent authority on the *Ṛgveda* (among its followers).

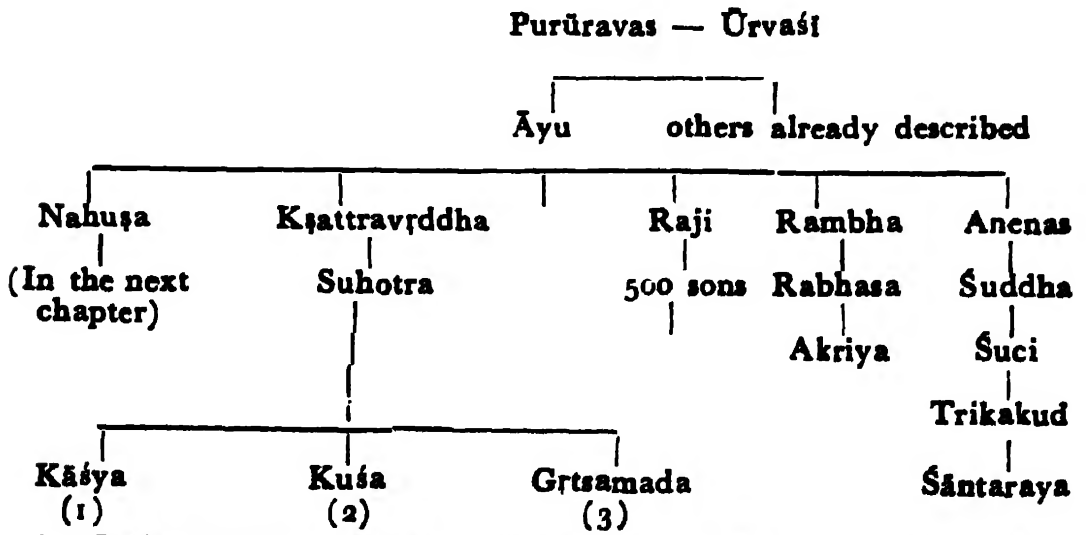
4. Kāśya begot Kāśī, whose son Rāṣṭra was the father of Dīrghatamas. Dhanvantari, the founder of the science of Medicine (*Āyurveda*) was the son of Dīrghatamas.

5. He was a ray (*aṃśa*) of Lord Vāsudeva, the receiver of offerings in sacrifices. His son was Ketumān who gave birth to Bhīmaratha.

6. From him (Bhīmaratha) was born Divodāsa whose son Dyuman was also remembered as Pratardana. He is also called Śatrujit, Vatsa and Ṛtadhvaja. He is celebrated as Kuvalayāśva as well. Of him were born Alarka and others.

7. No king other than Alarka enjoyed (the sovereignty over) this earth for sixty-six thousand years and still preserved his youthfulness (throughout this period).

8. To Alarka was born Santati whose son was Sunītha. From Sunītha sprang up Suketana whose son was Dharmaketu; of him was born Satyaketu.



(1) Kāśya→Kāśi→Rāṣṭra→Dīrghatamas→Dhanvantari→Ketumān→Bhīmaratha→ Divodāsa→ Pratardana → Alarka→ Santati→ Sunitha → Suketana→Dharmaketu→Satyaketu→Dhṛṣṭaketu→Sukumāra→ Vītihotra →Bharga→Bhārga-bhūmi.

(2) Kuśa→Prati (Kṣatra)→Sañjaya→Jaya → Kṛta→ Haryaśva → Sahadeva→Jaya (-sena) → Sankṛti→Jaya→Kṣātradharmā

(3) Gṛtsamada→Śunaka→Śaunaka.

9. Satyaketu's son was Dhṛṣṭaketu of whom was born Sukumāra, the lord of the earth; his son was Vītihotra whose son was Bharga; his son Bhārgabhūmi became a king.

10. The above-mentioned kings are the descendants of Kāśi in the lineage of Kṣattravṛddha.

(Now the genealogy of Rambha, the fourth son of Āyu). The son of Rambha was Rabhasa whose son was Gambhīra from whom was born Akriya.

11. Through Akriya's queen started the line of Brāhmaṇas. Now listen to the line of Anenas (the fifth son of Āyu). Anenas' son was Śuddha of whom was born Śuci. His son was Trikakud, also known as Dharma-sārathi.

12. Of him was born Śānta-rayas who being selfcontrolled (or knower of the Soul) had almost accomplished his objective (viz. Final beatitude and was not interested in continuing his race). Raji (the third son of Āyu) had five hundred sons, endowed with immense prowess.

13-16. Entreated by gods, Raji slaughtered the demons and restored the celestial kingdom to Indra. But Indra being afraid of Prahlāda and others, again returned the kingdom of heaven to Raji, clasped his feet and placed himself under Raji's protection (as his son). When the father (Raji) died, his sons, even though solicited (by Indra), refused to return the celestial kingdom to him. (On the contrary) they appropriated to themselves shares oblated in sacrifice (for Indra). Bṛhaspati, then offered oblations to fire (with malevolent purpose against the sons of Raji and made them stray from the path of religion) and Indra slew them one and all as they swerved from the path (of righteousness) and not a single son (of Raji) survived.[1]

From Kuśa, the grandson of Kṣattravṛddha, was born Prati, of whom sprang up Sañjaya whose son was Jaya.

17. Jaya's son was Kṛta, of whom was born the king Haryavana. His son was Sahadeva, who begot Hīna, whose son was Jayasena.

18. Jayasena's son was Saṅkṛti whose son Jaya, who, himself a great (chariot-) warrior, followed religiously ordained

1. This episode is confirmed in the *Vāyu P.*92.76-99; *Matsya P.* 24. 34-48.

path of Kṣattriyas. The kings belonging to the line of Kṣattravṛddha have been described. Now listen to the genealogy of Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The History of Nahuṣa's Line—The Story of Yayāti[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Just as an embodied being is endowed with six senses (five senses *plus* the inner organ, the mind) King Nahuṣa had the following six sons—Yati, Yayāti, Saṁyāti, Āyati, Viyati and Kṛti.

2. Being aware of the consequences of the acceptance of the rulership of a kingdom, Yati did not desire sovereignty offered to him by his father, for (he knew that) by shouldering kingship, a person does not realize his own self.

3. When, due to his misdemeanour towards Indra's queen, Indrāṇī, Nahuṣa was dethroned from his position (as the ruler of the celestial world) and was converted verily into a boa-constrictor by the Brāhmaṇa-sages, Yayāti became a king.

4. Appointing his four younger brothers to govern over the kingdom in four directions (each in one direction), he married the daughter of Śukra (the preceptor of Asuras) and

1. The Yayāti legend—the exchange of Yayāti's age with the youth of his son and his memorable words at the return of the youth and reacceptance of his age at the time of renunciation :

na jātu kāmaḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati /
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate //

have been immortalized in *MBH. Adi*, chs. 76-81, *Matsya P.* chs. 30-35 *Padma P. Bhūmi.* chs. 76-83 (with a Vaiṣṇavite colouring), the *Vāyu P.* ch. 93. The legend in its modern garb is still very popular and a Marāṭhī novel on this legend received a Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha Award—the most honoured and coveted prize in India, this year.

of Vṛṣaparvā, the king of Asuras and thus protected the earth (from his capital).

King Parīkṣit enquired :

5. The venerable Śukra was a Brāhmaṇa sage while Yayāti, the son of king Nahuṣa, was a Kṣattriya by caste. Why and how could such an irregular marriage against the caste-order between a Kṣatriya man and a Brāhmaṇa girl come about ?

Śrī Śuka replied :

6-7. On one occasion, in the company of a thousand lady-friends and Devayānī, the preceptor's daughter, Śarmiṣṭhā, the princess of the great Dānava king Vṛṣaparvā who, though of the weaker sex was imperious by nature, was promenading in the pleasure garden of her capital which was full of blooming flower-trees, and charming with pools, the sandy banks and lotus beds of which were full of sweet humming of bees.

8. Arriving at a pool of water, those lotus-eyed girls left their silken garments on its bank and engaged themselves in water sports sprinkling each other with water.

9. Perceiving that god Śiva accompanied by his Consort Pārvatī, was riding that way on his bull, the ladies forthwith rushed out of the water, and hastened to put on their garments, out of bashfulness.

10. Not knowing that the garments belonged to the preceptor's daughter, Śarmiṣṭhā wore it, thinking it to be her own. Getting enraged thereby, Devayānī spoke as follows :

11. "Oh ! Behold the impropriety of this slave-girl in that, like a bitch carrying away the oblation (meant for gods) in a sacrifice, she wore the garment which was to be put on by us.

12. By us Brāhmaṇas (like god Brahmā, Prajāpatis like Marīci) has been created this universe through the power of our asceticism and penance; we constitute the mouth of the Supreme Person (i.e. we are born from god's mouth and as such are superior to all, as he gets propitiated when we are feasted to our satisfaction). By us the light of the Supreme

Brahman is conserved (as an object of adoration) in our hearts, and the blessed path of Vedic religion is shown by us.

13. To us (Brāhmaṇas) the Lords of gods, protectors of the world, and even the most purifying, glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Soul of the Universe and the abode of goddess Śrī, pay homage and praise.

14. And among such Brāhmaṇas, we are the descendants of Bhṛgu. Her father, a demon, is our disciple. This unchaste girl has put on the dress meant for us like a Śūdra bearing (reciting) the Veda—(a privilege of the twice-born castes).

15. Thus attacked, Śarmiṣṭhā who angrily sighed heavily like a hissing female serpent, bit her lips and retorted to the spiritual preceptor's daughter who was reproaching her with words of abuse.

16. "Oh ! Beggar-maid, ignoring your own (menial) position, you are vainly boasting yourself. Do you not wait at our house-(door) like a crow or a dog (for crumbs of food) ?"

17. Having reproached the good daughter of her preceptor with such and other harsh words, Śarmiṣṭhā snatched away all her cloths and pushed her into a well.

18. It is traditionally told that when Śarmiṣṭhā returned home, Yayāti who was on the hunting expedition, wanted to drink water, and happened, by chance, to come to that well where he saw her (Devayānī).

19. The merciful king gave his upper garment to the girl who was stark naked, and holding her hand by his own, he lifted her out of water.

20. Devayānī, the daughter of Uśanas (i. e. Śukra) spoke to the king in words steeped in genuine love : "Oh King ! You have accepted my hand, Oh conqueror of inimical cities !"

21. "As my hand has now been accepted by you once, let no one else now take it. This relation of ours is ordained providentially and not through human agency, Oh valiant warrior. It is hence that I could have this sight of yours while clinging to the (walls of the) well.

22. Oh King of powerful arms ! No Brāhmaṇa is destined to accept my hand due to the (reciprocal curse of Kaca the son of Bṛhaspati whom I imprecated initially".[1]

23. Yayāti found that the unexpected event was brought about by his destiny and being conscious that now his heart was attached to her, accepted her proposal.

24. When the valiant king departed, Devayānī went to her father crying (all the while) and reported to him all that was said and done by Śarmiṣṭhā.

25. The glorious sage Śukra was deeply agitated at heart. Disparaging the profession of a priest and commending the way of life of a pigeon (which freely gathers its food in the forest—technically known as *Uñccha-vṛtti*—"maintenance by gleaning), he went out of the city (Vṛṣaparvā's capital) along with his daughter.

26. Knowing that his intention is to conspire and bring victory to the enemies viz. gods, Vṛṣaparvā propitiated his preceptor by falling prostrate at his feet on the way.

27. The glorious Śukra, the descendent of Bhṛgu whose anger lasts hardly for half a moment, spoke to his disciple Vṛṣaparvā, "Oh King ! Let the desire of her (Devayānī) be satisfied because I cannot brook to let her alone."

28. When Vṛṣaparvā agreed with the words, "Be it so", and awaited (to hear Devayānī's desire), Devayānī disclosed what was in her mind. "Wherever I shall go after being given away by my father in marriage, let her (Śarmiṣṭhā) follow me along with her companions (as attendants)."

29. Realizing the peril (involved in the departure of Śukra) to her people, and the importance of the matter, she (Śarmiṣṭhā) along with her thousand lady-compąnions, attended upon Devayānī like a menial.

1. According to *MBH. Ādi.* chs. 76-77 Kaca, the son of Bṛhaspati could successfully learn the *Saṅjīvanī Vidyā* from Śukra through the special favour of Devayānī. At the time of departure Devayānī proposed to marry him. But he rejected her on the ground that being his preceptor's daughter she is like a sister to him. Enraged at this, Devayānī cursed him that his *vidyā* will be futile. Kaca reciprocated the curse (that no Brāhmaṇa would marry her).

30. Having given in marriage his daughter along with Śarmiṣṭhā to Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, Śukra warned him, "Oh king ! Never take Śarmiṣṭhā to share the bed with you."

31. On one occasion, seeing Devayānī blessed with a son, the chaste lady Śarmiṣṭhā, at the period proper for conception, courted her friend's (Devayānī's) husband secretly (for children).

32. The king, being well-versed in *Dharma-śāstra*, realized it to be his sacred duty to comply with the request of the princess (Śarmiṣṭhā) who solicited him for progeny, and he followed the course ordained for him by Destiny, though he remembered the warning of Śukra.

33. Devayānī gave birth to Yadu and Turvasu, while Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā, had three sons—Druhyu, Anu, and Pūru.

34. Learning about the pregnancy of the Asura princess from her husband, proud Devayānī, being offended with her husband (through jealousy and pride), was overwhelmed with rage and proceeded to her father's house.

35. The passionate king followed his beloved to reconcile her with words of appeasement and winsome promises, but was not able to please her, even by shampooing her feet.

36. Flying in rage, Śukra cursed him, "You liar ! Woman-addict ! Let the decrepitude of old age which disfigures men overtake you, you stupid fellow !"

37. Yayāti urged, "Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ! I am not till today sated with enjoyment of pleasure with your daughter". (Śukra replied) "In that case, you may exchange it (your old age) with the (youth of) anyone else who is willing to accept it."

38-39. Having secured this arrangement (as a way out of the curse), Yayāti addressed to his eldest son : "Oh my child Yadu ! Please accept this decrepitude of age caused by your maternal grand-father, and give me your youth in exchange. Dear child ! I am not yet satisfied with enjoyment of pleasures. I would like to enjoy for a few more years, with your youth."

Yadu replied :

40* "I dare not accept and live with the old age which overtook you in the middle of life, (for) a man cannot attain to desirelessness without an actual experience of the worldly pleasures first."

41. Turvasu, Anu, and Druhyu were then requested (one by one) by the father. But they did not know what was righteousness and regarded transient things (like youth) as eternal, and refused his proposal, Oh scion of Bharata.

42. He requested his son Pūru who was the youngest in age but seniormost in virtues. "Oh child ! It does not behove you to refuse my request as was done by your elder brothers".

Pūru said :

43. "Oh lord of men ! What man on earth is capable of repaying fully the obligations of his father, the procreator of his body, and through whose grace one can attain the highest (objective in life) ?

44. The best son is he who accomplishes the task in anticipation of the expectation of his father. The mediocre is one who complies when expressly told by his father. The lowest type is he who obeys but with irreverence. And he who disobeys is the excretion of his father."

45. In this way, Pūru gladly accepted the old age of his father. With his youth, Yayāti also enjoyed pleasures at his sweet will.

46. As a lord of the seven continents of the earth, he protected his subjects well like a father, and with his senses unimpaired, he gratified his desires (by enjoying pleasures) to his heart's content.

47. His beloved Devayāni every day heightened his love by affording pleasures to him by her thought, word and deed, and by offering objects of enjoyment in privacy.

* Yadu was very pious (*infra* 10.1.2). VC defends Yadu's disobedience thus: Yadu wanted to devote himself to the services of the Lord at the earliest. That mental stage is possible only after actual experience of worldly pleasures for some days. Acceptance of Yayāti's age would postpone that mental stage and consequently the life devoted to the services of the Lord. Between Service to the Lord and disobedience to father, the former is preferable according to Dharma. Marvellous defence !

48. By performance of sacrifices with profusely liberal gifts, Yayāti worshipped Lord Hari (Destroyer of all miseries and sins) the Presiding Deity of sacrifices, the God who represents all gods in Himself, and is an embodiment of all Vedas.

49. On Hari is superimposed this universe as a row of clouds on the sky and which, like a dream or an illusion or a fancy now appears to be different (in names, forms etc.) and now ceases to be (in dreamless sleep or after the deluge of the world).

50. Enthroning in his heart the Almighty Lord Vāsudeva who is abiding in the hearts of all as the Indweller, he (Yayāti) worshipped the subtlemost Nārāyaṇa without cherishing any desire for blessings.

51. Yayāti, the emperor of the entire earth, did not feel sated even though he enjoyed pleasures for thousands of years thrōugh his (five) wicked senses of which his mind was the sixth.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Yayāti's Retirement and Final Emancipation

Śrī Śuka said :

1. (While) Yayāti, the woman-dominated addict, was enjoying the pleasures of senses in this way, he became aware of his spiritual fall (negligence of the Self) and being disenchanted (with worldly pleasures), narrated the following parable to his beloved Devayānī.

2. "Oh Devayānī ! Please listen to this history of a passionate person on this earth, whose life and conduct were just like mine, and whose lot was deplored by self-controlled people residing in forests.

3. A certain goat, while seeking all alone for an object dear to him, in a jungle, happened to see a goat fallen into a well as a result of her fate.

4. Cherishing lust for her, the goat thought out a way to lift her up and digging out the earth on the bank with the tips of his horns, he made a way out for her.

5-6. It is said that after getting out of the well, the beautiful she-goat loved him (as her husband). Observing that she had selected a stout, finely bearded, lovable he-goat possessing great venereal strength and expert in the art of sexual intercourse, a number of other she-goats desirous of having a mate, wooed him. That he-goat possessed as he was by the devil of sexual passion, excited the passion of that flock of she-goats and revelled with them all alone, and thus failed to realize and think about his own self.

7. Seeing him enjoying himself with another most beautiful she-goat, the female-goat that formerly suffered a fall in the well, did not tolerate that act of the he-goat.

8. Being distressed, she left her mate who was wicked-hearted, a false lover posing as a friend, and professing love only for a moment, but really given to the gratification of his senses, and went to her master.

9. Even that goat too, being a woman-addict, felt aggrieved and followed her to reconcile her, but in spite of his bleating with erotic eloquence he failed to win her over on the way.

10. There, her master, a certain Brāhmaṇa, castrated the dangling scrotum of that goat. But in the interest (of the she-goat), he, being a master of (such) expedients sewed back the amputated limb.

11. Having got his testicles (along with his capacity of sexual enjoyment) restored, the goat, though enjoyed pleasures for a long time with the she-goat found in the well, does not feel satiated with sexual pleasures even today.

12. In the same way, Oh lady with beautiful eyebrows, I, a person of poor intellect, am chained down by your love, Oh gracious lady. Being infatuated by your charms, I do not know (the nature of) my Self.

13. All the food-grains, all gold, animals and women cannot yield satisfaction (to the degree of satiation) to the mind of a person subjected to cravings and passions.

14. Never, never does passion get satiated with the en-

joyment of its sense-objects. (On the contrary) like a fire fed with oblations of ghee, it grows again in intensity.

15. When one does not cherish inauspicious attitudes (e. g. of hatred, partiality) to living beings, and looks upon all with equality, all the directions are full of bliss to him (i.e. he is blessed with happiness from all quarters).

16. A person desirous of happiness (untarnished by misery), should instantly give up thirst (for happiness) which is difficult to get rid of by evil-minded persons, and which does not get worn out even if one's body gets withered with age, and which is a source of endless misery.

17. A person should not sit very close in privacy (lit. share the same seat in private) to his mother, sister or daughter. For the senses (as a whole) are so powerful that they lead astray even a wise (learned) man.

18. It is for complete one thousand years that I have been enjoying repeatedly and incessantly the objects of pleasures. Still every time (I enjoy them), the hankering after them grows (apace).

19. Therefore giving up this (thirst for enjoyment) and concentrating my mind on the *Brahman* and freeing myself from the pairs of opposites (pleasure-pain etc.) and the notion of egotism (I and mine), I shall lead a life in forest.

20. Knowing the unreality (momentariness) of what is seen (the kingdom or pleasures in this world) and what is heard (from the *Vedas* about the pleasures and positions promised in the next world), one should not brood over them or enjoy them. For, in that lies the transmigration of the soul, and the loss of (the real knowledge of) the soul. Such a knower realizes the Ātman".

21. Having addressed thus to his wife (Devayānī), Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, returned his youth to Pūru, and becoming free from desires, accepted the decrepitude of his old age from him.

22. He appointed Druhyu to rule over the South-eastern region (of his kingdom), Yadu in the South, Turvasu in the west and Anu in the north.

23. Having consecrated Pūru, the worthiest of them all, as the sovereign ruler of the earth and the subjects, he placed

the elder brothers under his control and then repaired to the forest.

24. Just as a bird leaves its nest as soon as it gets full-fledged, he instantly shed off the six-fold objects of pleasures enjoyed through his senses and mind, for a considerable number of years (or) controlled his senses and mind.

25*. Freeing himself completely from all attachments and shedding off his subtle body constituted of three *guṇas* by virtue of his spiritual power of self realization, the celebrated king Yayāti became absorbed[1] in the Supreme Brahman unsoiled by Māyā (or any impurity) and designated as Vāsudeva—a state attained by the devotees of the Supreme Lord.

26. Hearing that parable, Devayānī regarded it as an incentive to follow a path of renunciation, and a jocular story told out of agony of separation between a man and his wife.

27-28. Realizing that the association of friends and relatives is brought about by *Māyā* (according to their *karma*)[1] and is controlled by the Almighty Lord, and thus is as temporary as those of travellers attending a watering place (to drink water on the way), Devayānī, the scion of the Bhṛgu race, gave up attachment to everything and everywhere regarding it as unreal as dreams. She concentrated her mind on Kṛṣṇa (i. e. Lord Viṣṇu) and shuffled off her (subtle) body (and became liberated).

29. I bow to you the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the cause of the Universe, the abode of all beings (or the Inner Controller of all) perfectly serene and all-pervading. Salutations to you.

* VJ. By his direct perception of the Self, he shed off his egotism caused by three *guṇas* or the threefold misery caused by them and became liberated—a stage reached by following the *Bhāgavata dharma*.

1. VR. He approached the stage of Mokṣa, for according to the *Mahābhārata*, he spent some period in the celestial world.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The History of Pūru's race—Birth of Bharata[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. I shall now narrate to you the history of Pūru's line wherein you are born, Oh descendant of Bharata. In this family sprang up many royal sages and Brāhmaṇas who propagated their own lines.

2. Janamejaya was born of Pūru; Janamejaya's son was Pracinvān. His son was Pravīra who begot Namasyu. To him was born Cārupada.

3. Sudyu sprang from Cārupada; Sudyu had a son Bahugava; thence was born Saṁyāti; his son was Ahaṁyāti whose son was Raudrāśva.

4-5. Raudrāśva begot on a celestial nymph Ghṛtāci ten sons viz. Ṛteyu, Kukṣeyu, Sthaṇḍileyu, Kṛteyu, Jaleyu, Santateyu, Dharmeyu, Satyeyu, Vrateyu and the youngest known as Vaneyu—even as ten sense organs (both conative and cognitive) are evolved from the chief vital air, the Soul of the world.

6. From Ṛteyu was born Rantibhāra. He had the following three sons viz. Sumati, Dhruva and Apratiratha. Kaṇva was the son of Apratiratha, Oh King !

7. Kaṇva's son was Medhātithi. From him were originated Praskaṇva and other Brāhmaṇa clans. Sumati had a son called Raibhya, and Duṣyanta was regarded as his son.

8-9. While on a hunting excursion, (king) Duṣyanta happened to visit the hermitage of Kaṇva. Having seen a beautiful damsel beautifying the surroundings with her effulgence, and enchanting like the Māyā of the Lord, he instantaneously got infatuated. And though surrounded by some of his soldiers, he spoke to that charming lady.

1. This chapter gives the following descendants of Pūru up to Vitatha as follows :

Pūru→Janamejaya→ Pracinvān → Pravīra → Namasyu →Cārupada → Sudyu → Bahugava→ Saṁyāti→Ahaṁyāti→Raudrāśva→Ṛteyu→Rantibhāra→Sumati→Raibhya→Duṣyanta→Bharata→Bharadvāja→Vitatha.

The story of Duṣyanta, Śakuntalā and the birth of Bharata is given in details in *MBH Ādi*. Chs. 69-74.

10. Overjoyed at her very sight, he felt all his fatigue relieved. Tormented by sexual passion, he smilingly asked her, in soft words.

11. "Who are you, Oh beautiful lady (with eyes like lotus-petals)? Whose daughter are you, Oh charming damsel? what is your object in staying in a tenantless forest?

12. Oh lady of a beautiful waist! As I perceive it, you are obviously a girl from a royal family. For the mind of the descendants of Pūru, hardly finds delight in unrighteous paths."

Śakuntalā replied :

13. "As the venerable sage Kaṇva knows it, I am the daughter of Viśvāmitra, abandoned by my mother Menakā in the forest. What should we do for you, Oh warrior?

14. Be pleased to take a seat, Oh lotus-eyed one, and accept our hospitality. Enjoy the boiled rice of wild paddy. You may stay here, if it pleases you."

Duṣyanta said :

15. "Oh lady of beautiful eyebrows! Born as you are in the line of Kuśika, all this (hospitality) is quite proper and natural. Maidens of royal families select of their own accord, their life-mates".

16. When she consented to it, he married Śakuntalā duly according to Gāndharva custom prescribed (for Kṣatriyas) in *Dharmaśāstra*, as the king was expert in the knowledge of what should be done at particular time and place according to Dharma.

17. The royal sage of unfailing procreative capacity, deposited his semen in his queen. Next morning he returned to his capital. In due course, she was delivered of a son.

18. Kaṇva carried out the appropriate religious rites of the boy, in the forest. With his tremendous strength, the child used to catch hold of lions and played with them.

19. Taking with her, her son who was born of a portion of Lord Hari, and was of invincible prowess, the excellent lady sought the audience of her royal consort.

20. When the king did not accept his wife and child, though both of them were blameless and irreproachable, an

incorporal voice from heaven announced, while all beings were listening.

21. "The mother is simply a receptacle. The son belongs to his father alone, of whom he is born. Nay, the father is himself (no other than) the son. Therefore, Oh Duṣyanta, bring up your son. Do not neglect Śakuntalā.

22. Oh King, a son who propagates the line of the family takes away his father out of the abode of Yama.[1] You have deposited Bharata in the foetus (i.e. you are the real father). What Śakuntalā stated is the truth.[2]

22A. Bring up your son Bharata who is imbued with a ray of Vāsudeva. He is friendly towards Brāhmins, true to his promise, capable of knowing and appreciating virtues and excellences and enhancing your reputation.

22B. He is possessed of superior energy, is generous, grateful and ready to wait upon the elders." Hearing this incorporal voice from the heaven, the king accepted his son.

23. When the father (Duṣyanta) expired, he (Bharata) became an emperor of great renown. The great glory of Bharata who was born from the ray of Lord Hari, is still eulogised on the earth.

24. He had the sign of discus on right palm and that of a lotus on the soles of his feet. That powerful king, the sole emperor of the earth was consecrated (on the throne) by the performance of *Mahābhiṣeka*. He performed many sacrifices.

25. With fifty-five sacrificial horses he performed (horse) sacrifices along the course of the Gaṅgā (from its source to the sea) with Dīrgha-tamas (the son of Mamatā) as his sacrificial priest.

26. Along the course of the Yamunā, he tied seventy-eight sacrificial horses (i. e. performed seventyeight horse-sacrifices on the bank of the river as it flows to join the Gaṅgā), liberally distributing wealth (among the Brāhmaṇas).

1. v.l. : In case of dispute between the father and the mother both claiming the child, the father's claim is upheld by Yama (Dharmaśāstra).

2. Cf. *MBH Ādi*. 74. 110-111. is *verbatim* the same.

bhastrā mātā pituḥ putro yena jātaḥ sa eva saḥ /
bharasva putraṁ Duṣyanta māvamaṁsthāḥ Śakuntalām //
rtodhāḥ putra unnayati naradeva Yamakṣayāt /

The sacred fire of Bharata, the son of Duṣyanta was set up on an exceedingly excellent place where the thousand Brāhmaṇas (engaged in the sacrifice) divided among themselves cows (gifted by Bharata), each receiving his share of thirteen thousand eightyfour (*Badva*[1]) cows.

27. Having thus tied to the sacrificial post one hundred and thirtythree horses, he sprang a surprise on the earthly kings. The son of Duṣyanta surpassed gods with his affluence, and he became one with Viṣṇu who is adorable to gods.

28. At the conclusion of the sacrificial ritual *maṣṇāra*[2] (or at a sacred place called Maṣṇāra), he donated as gift, fourteen lakhs of elephants of the *mṛga* type[3] black in colour, with their white tusk plated with gold.[4]

29. No king of the past could accomplish the great eminence of Bharata. Nor can kings of the future do so any more than one can reach the celestial world by hands.

30. During his expedition for the conquest of the world, he defeated the tribes Kirātas, Hūṇas, Yavanas, Āndhras, Kaṅkas, Khaśas and Śakas and killed the Mleccha kings who were inimical to Brahmins or Vedas.

31*. By sending messengers, he restored to the gods, the celestial damsels who were formerly abducted to Rasātala by Asuras, after vanquishing the gods and occupying various parts of that region.

32. While he ruled, both heaven and earth supplied desires and needs of his subjects. His sovereignty extended all over the world for thrice nine thousand (27000) years.

1. ŚR quotes the definition of *badva* : *iyaṁ ca badva-saṅkhyā ślokena saṅgṛhyate* :

catur-daśānāṁ lakṣāṇāṁ saptādhika-śatāṁśakaḥ /
badvaṁ caturaśītyagra-sahasrāṇi trayodaśa //

2. No commentator from ŚR to BP is sure of the exact significance of the word *maṣṇāra*. VJ : 'At the conclusion of a particular observance (*vrata*) called *Maṣṇāra*.' All of them state that (alternatively) Maṣṇāra is the name of a holy place.

3. The elephants are of the three types : *bhadra*, *mandra* and *mṛga*.

4. Cf. *Ait. Br.* 8.23.3. VD. regards these elephant-types as belonging to the region of the Himalayas, Vindhya and Sahyādri respectively.

* Vanquishing the Asuras, he repatriated gods to their respective regions and restored to their husbands the celestial damsels who were carried away by demons celled Panis—VJ.

33. The tradition goes that the emperor realized that his sovereignty the fame of which had spread over all the worlds, his imperial glory and affluence, his unchallenged authority and implicit obedience to commands, nay even his life and sense-organs were unreal and so he renounced the world.

34. He had three queens all from the state of Vidarbha. When he remarked that his sons did not look like him, they, being afraid of being abandoned by him (suspecting their character), killed them all.

35. When his family line was (in the danger of being) extinct, the Marut gods gave him Bharadvāja as a son, when the emperor was propitiating them with sacrifice *Marutstoma* (for getting a son).

36. When Mamatā, the wife of his brother (Utathya), was pregnant, Bṛhaspati attempted to have a sexual intercourse with her, and was prevented (by the child in the womb with strong loud protests). He (Bṛhaspati) cursed the child in the womb (to become blind). He discharged per force his semen (in her), but the blind child in the womb prevented its entry by his foot. The seed that fell out on the ground assumed the form of a child.

37. To Mamatā who wanted to give away that child as she was terribly afraid of being abandoned by her husband, gods spoke the following verse which contains the etymology of the name of the child (which is nothing but the quarrel between Bṛhaspati and Mamatā each throwing the responsibility of bringing up that child on the other).

38. (SR. records this controversy between Mamatā and Bṛhaspati as follows) :

(Said Bṛhaspati :) "Oh foolish woman ! Nourish (this child). (If you say that you are afraid of your husband that is baseless as) this child is born of us two brothers (by me through the *Kṣetra* viz. the wife of my brother)!" (Replied Mamatā) "Bṛhaspati ! You nourish this child because he is born of us two (when you raped me)". Saying these words (*bhara dvājam*) both the parents went away (abandoning the child). Hence he is called *Bhara-dvāja*.

39. Though urged by gods (to bring up the child), they thought him as a useless son and abandoned him. The Maruts nourished the child and it was given to Bharata when his family was going to be extinct. (*Vitatha* should be regarded as the name of Bharadvāja, after his adoption by Bharata).

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Race of Bharata[1]. *The History of Rantideva*[2]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Vitatha (Bharadvāja) had a son Mąnyu who begot (five sons) viz. Bṛhatkṣatra, Jaya, Mahāvīrya, Nara, Garga. Nara's son was Saṅkṛti.

2. Saṅkṛti had two sons—Guru and Rantideva, Oh delight of the Pāṇḍu family ! The glory of Rantideva is eulogised in this world as well as in heaven.

3-4. By giving away wealth which came his way without efforts (like the sky) thinking it to be momentary, he became hungry and destitute of everything (including provision even for the evening). While the hero suffered hardships along with his family, fortyeight days passed during which he could not get even water to drink. In the morning (of the fortyninth day), he happened to get by chance ghee, rice cooked in milk, (*saṁyāva*) (an article of food consisting of wheat-flour, raw-sugar, ghee and milk) along with water.

5. He whose family was distressed and trembling due to utter starvation and parched with thirst, was about to partake of it (the food) when a Brāhmaṇa guest arrived, just at the time of their breaking the fast.

1. As ŚR points out, although Bharadvāja was originally a Brāhmaṇa, he became Kṣattriya after his adoption by Bharata. He is thenceforth known as Vitatha and he continued Bharata's race.

2. The Rantideva episode and especially his refusal to attain to Mokṣa but wish to live here in order to relieve the misery of all beings (vv 12, 13 below) are similar to the Bodhisattva ideal of Buddhists.

6. As he visualized Hari everywhere (and in everybody), he received the Brāhmaṇa with reverence and faith, gave him his share of food. The Brāhmaṇa took his meal and went his way.

7. While he was about to partake of the remaining food which was distributed among themselves, another stranger—now a Śūdra—arrived. He gave him the portion of the food so distributed, contemplating all the while on Lord Hari, Oh king of the earth.

8. When the Śūdra departed, another stranger surrounded by a pack of hounds approached him and requested, "Oh King ! May food be served to me alongwith my dogs, who are hungry".

9. The king received them kindly and gave to him respectfully whatever food that remained with him, and bowed to the dogs and the master of those hounds.

10-11. Now some water, just sufficient to quench the thirst of one person, remained. While he was about to drink it, a Cāṇḍāla came up and requested, "Give water to me who am a low caste person". Hearing his pitiful request uttered with great pains and exhaustion, the king who was deeply moved and tormented with compassion, uttered the following nectar-like speech.

12. "I do not seek from the Almighty Lord the highest position attended with eight spiritual powers (e. g. *Aṇimā*, *Laghimā*, etc. detailed in the *Yogasūtras*), nor emancipation from *saṁsāra*; I would rather prefer to dwell in all beings and undergo sufferings for them, whereby they may be free from miseries.

13. By offering water which was essential to save the life of an unfortunate creature who craved for life, my personal hunger, thirst, exhaustion of limbs, distress, languor, grief, despondency and delusion—all have disappeared."

14. Expressing such nobility of heart, the king who was compassionate by nature and full of fortitude, gave that water to the Cāṇḍāla, though he himself was on the point of death through thirst.

15. To him, the Lords of the Three worlds (e. g. God Brahmā and others) who bestow fruits on those who seek them,

and who visited him in those illusory forms (a short while ago) under instructions from Lord Viṣṇu, revealed themselves to him.

16. The king being entirely free from attachments, cherished no desires. Bowing down to them all, he concentrated his mind on glorious Lord Vāsudeva with utmost devotion, and sought no boons from them.

17. Concentrating his mind on the Almighty Lord as the only support, and cherishing no desire for any fruit (in return) therefrom, *Māyā* the deluding potency of the Lord constituted of three *guṇas* (automatically) dissolved (disappeared altogether) like a dream, in the case of Rantideva, Oh king.

18. By virtue of close association with him, all *yogins* who followed closely Rantideva (i. e. his path of intense, selfless devotion) became absolutely devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa.

19-20. From Garga was born Śini who begot Gārgya. In this way, a Brāhmaṇa family-line started from a Ksatriya race. From Mahāvīrya sprang Duritakṣaya whose sons were Trayyāruṇi, Kavi and Puṣkarāruṇi. They attained to the state of Brāhmaṇahood. Bṛhat-ksattra had a son, who built the city of Hastināpura.

21. Hastin begot Ajamīḍha, Dvimīḍha and Purumīḍha. The descendants of Ajamīḍha were Brāhmaṇas like Priyamedha and others.

22. From Ajamīḍha was born (another son) Bṛhadiṣu whose son was Bṛhad-dhanu. His son was Bṛhatkāya whose son was Jayadratha.

23. He (Jayadratha) begot Viśada from whom sprang up Senajit. His sons were Rucirāśva, Dṛḍhahanu, Kāśya and Vatsa.

24. Rucirāśva's son was Pāra whose son was Pṛthuṣeṇa. Pāra's son was Nīpa to whom were born a hundred sons.

24A. Among them one was Aṇuha, the eldest was Satyaka, Oh King.

25. That Nīpa begot on Kṛtvī, the daughter of Śuka[1],

1. ŚR. VR. VC. BP. quote from HV (*Harivaṁśa*) ch. 18 and explain that when Śuka left home even before his *upanayana* (investiture of the sacred thread) ceremony, to lead a perpetually celibate life, he left

Brahmadatta. That *yogī* procreated through his wife Gau (Sarasvatī) a son called Viśvaksena.

26. According to the advice and guidance of sage Jaigīṣavya, he wrote a work on the *yoga*-system. He begot Udaksvan from whom sprang Bhallāda. These are the descendants of Bṛhadiṣu.

27. Dvimīḍha had a son called Yavīnara whose son was Kṛtimān by name. His son was Satyadhṛti whose son Dṛḍhanemi was the progenitor of Supārśva.

28-29. From Supārśva was born Sumati whose son was Sannati. His son was Kṛti who learnt yoga under Hiraṇyanābha, and sang the six earlier *saṁhitās* of the *Sāma-veda*[1] (divided them separately). He begot Nīpa from whom was born Ugrāyudha. His son was Kṣemya; his son Suvīra from whom was born Ripuñjaya.

30. His son was Bahuratha. Purumīḍha (Dvimīḍha's younger brother) had no child. Ajamīḍha begot on Nalinī, a son called Nīla whose son was Śānti.

31. From Śānti was born Suśānti, whose son was Puruja, from whom Arka was born. His son was Bharmyāśva who had five sons beginning with Mudgala.

32-33. Yavīnara, Bṛhadiṣu, Kāmpilya and Sañjaya were the (remaining four) sons (of Bharmyāśva). Bharmyāśva said, "These five sons of mine are capable (and enough) to

behind his shadow for the consolation of his father who married and had five sons and one daughter. The daughter is named *Kīrti-matī* and not Kṛtvī as here. *Devī Bhāgavata* I.19.39-43 rejects the shadow theory and states that as per Janaka's advice Śuka married pīvarī, a daughter of Pitṛs and had four sons (names differ from the HV), and a daughter Kīrti who was married to Anu, the son of king Vibhrāj. I think JG is correct in regarding this Śuka as a different person, not so much because JG quotes the authority of the *Brahmavaivarta P.* where Śuka is said to have been born as a boy of twelve years, who, renouncing the world, straightway walked out of home, but the tenor of the text of the Bh.P., shows that according to Śuka the narrator of the Bh. P. this Śuka, father of Kṛtvī, is altogether different, merely a name-sake.

1. v.l. *jagan ḍvi-śat*—Twelve earlier *saṁhitās* of the Sāma Veda (BP) and BP quotes VP. which credits him with saying (mastering and teaching) twenty-four *saṁhitās* :

Hiraṇya-nābho yogam adhyāpayāmāsa |
yaścaturviṁśatim prācya-sāmnāṁ cakāra saṁhitām ||

protect five countries. And hence they came to be known as Pāñcālas. From Mudgala originated a clan of Brāhmaṇas named Maudgalya.

34. A twin was born of Mudgala, the son of Bharmyāśva; (out of the twin) the male child was Divodāsa and the female child, Ahalyā. She had from (her husband) Gautama, a son called Śatānanda.

35-36. Śatānanda's son Satyadhṛti was expert in Military Science. His son was Śaradvān. They say that at the sight of Urvaśī, the seed of Śaradvān (emanated and) fell on a clump of reeds. From the semen was produced an auspicious twin. Finding the twin children during the course of hunting, Śantanu picked them out of compassion. The male child came to be known as Kṛpa, while the female child Kṛpī became the wife of Droṇa.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The History of the Lunar Race.[1] *The Royal Dynasties of Pāñcāla, Magadha and Kuru*

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. From Divodāsa was born Mitreyu, whose sons were Cyavana, Sudāsa, Sahadeva and Somaka. Somaka had a hundred sons of whom Jantu was the eldest, and Pṛṣata, the youngest. His son was Drupada whose daughter was Draupadī, and sons were Dhṛṣṭadyumna and others.

1. This chapter gives the genealogies of the following branches of the lunar race :

i. *Pāñcālas* A. *South Pāñcālas*

Ajamīḍha→Bṛhadiṣu→Bṛhad-dhanus → Bṛhatkāya→Jayadratha Viśada←Senajit→Rucirāśva→Pṛthuṣena→Para→Nīpa→ Brahmadatta→ Viṣvaksena→Udaksvana→Bhallāda.

B. *North Pāñcālas*

Ajamīḍha→Nalini→Nīla→Śānti→ Suśānti→Puruja → Arka→ Bharmyāśva→Mudgala→ Divodāsa → Mitreyu → Cyavana → Sudās→ Sahadeva→Somaka→Jantu→Pṛṣata→Drupada

3. From Dhṛṣṭadyumna appeared Dhṛṣṭaketu. These are the descendants of Bharmyāśva, also known as Pāñcālakas or Pāñcāla. Ajamīḍha had another son Ṛkṣa from whom was born Saṁvaraṇa.

4. Saṁvaraṇa begot on Tapatī, the daughter of the Sun-god, Kuru, the Lord of the Kurukṣetra. Kuru had Parīkṣit (the first, an ancestor of the hearer of the Bh. P.) Sudhanu, Jahnu and Niṣadhāśva as his sons.

5. From Sudhanu was born Suhotra whose son was Cyavana, his son was Kṛti, the father of Uparicara Vasu. From him were born Bṛhadratha and other sons.

6. (Out of them) Kuśāmba, Matsya, Pratyagra, Cedipa and others were the rulers of the Cedi country (Modern Bundelkhand and the region roundabout). From Bṛhadratha was born Kuśāgra whose son was Ṛṣabha.

7. Ṛṣabha begot Satyahita, whose son was Puṣpavān. His son was Jahu. Bṛhadratha had two parts (of a child) born by another wife.

8. Those parts were thrown away by the mother. A demoness Jarā, out of sport had joined them muttering the words 'Live ! Live. And lo ! A son called Jarāsandha (one joined by Jarā) appeared.

9. Of him was born Sahadeva whose son was Somāpī, who begot Śrutaśravas. (Out of the sons of Kuru) Parīkṣit was childless. The son of Jahnu was Suratha.

2. *Magadha*

Vasu Uparicara→Bṛhadratha→Kuśāgra → Ṛṣabha → Puṣpavān → Satyahita→Jahu→Jarāsandha→Sahadeva→Somāpi

3. *Pauravas*

Bharata adopted Bharadvāja and named him 'Vitatha' → Manyu→ Bṛhatkṣatra→Hastin→Ajamīḍha→Ṛkṣa→Saṁvaraṇa→Kuru→

Dvimīḍha

Parīkṣit I→

Jahnu → Suratha → Vidūratha → Sārvabhauma→Jayasena→Rādhika→ Ayuta → Krodhana → Devātithi → Ṛṣya→ Dilīpa→Pratīpa→Śantanu→ Vicitravīrya → Dhṛtarāṣṭra → Yudhiṣṭhira→ (Abhimanyu)→Parīkṣit II (the remaining line is a prediction).

4. **Dvimīḍhas**

Dvimīḍha→ Yavīnara→Kṛtimān → Satyadhṛti → Dṛḍha-nemi→ Supārśva→Sumati→Sannatimān→Kṛti→Nīpa→Ugrāyudha→Kṣemya→ Suvīra→Ripuñjaya→Bahuratha.

10. Suratha's son was Vidūratha, from whom was born Sārvabhauma. His son was Jayasena, whose son was Rādhika; from whom appeared Ayuta.

11. From him sprang up Krodhana whose son was Devātithi. His son was Ṛṣya, from whom was born Dilīpa. He had a son Pratīpa.

12. He (Pratīpa) had three sons—Devāpi, Śantanu and Bālhīka. Devāpi abdicated his ancestral throne and repaired to forest (for his spiritual advancement).

13-14. (After Devāpi's departure to forest) Śantanu who was formerly designated as Mahābhiṣa (a great physician), came to the throne. Whomsoever he touched with his hand—even if he be old—got rejuvenated again. And the old man got immediate and complete relief (from all ailments). By virtue of this (miraculous) gift, he was called Śantanu. When the rain-god did not rain for twelve years in his kingdom,

15. Śantanu was advised by Brāhmaṇas that inasmuch as he, though a younger brother, enjoyed the kingship (superseding his elder brother) and had become a *parivettā*[1] (a usurper), and for the prosperity of the capital and the kingdom, he should immediately restore the kingdom to his elder brother, Devāpi (when alone it will rain).

16. When thus addressed (advised) by Brāhmaṇas, he conciliated him (Devāpi) and persuaded him to accept the kingdom. Devāpi, however, was made to go astray from the path of Vedas by the words of Brāhmaṇas who were deputed by his ministers (especially by his minister (Aśma-rāva).

17. When Devāpi spoke blasphemously about the Vedas (and their teachings), the god Indra released the showers (as Devāpi proved apostate to the Vedic religion, and ceased to have a right to rule). Devāpi (realized his mistake and adopted the path of *yoga* and resorted to Kalāpagrāma.

1. ŚR quotes the following definition of *Parivettā* from a *Smṛti* text :

dārā'gnihotra-saṃyogaṃ kurute yo' graje sthite /
parivettā sa vijñeyaḥ, parivittis tu pūrvajaḥ //

He who accepts a wife or *Agni-hotra* (fire-worship) before his elder brother does so, is called *parivettā* and the brother so superseded *Parivitti*.

18-20. When Lunar race gets extinct in the Kali age, he will (re-) establish it at the advent of the next age. From Bāhlīka was born Somadatta who had three sons viz. Bhūri, Bhūriśravas and Śala. Śantanu's son by Gaṅgā was the self-controlled Bhīṣma who was the most eminent among all the experts in *dharma-śāstra*, a great devotee of the Lord, a wise and learned person, a leader of a battalion of warriors by whom even Parśurāma (his preceptor in the science of arms) was pleased with his art and skill in fighting. Śantanu begot on Satyavatī[1], the daughter of the chief of Dāśas, a son called Citrāṅgada.

21. Her younger son was Vicitra-vīrya. Citrāṅgada was killed (in a duel with a Gandharva, called Citrāṅgada). Through her, from Parāśara, descended directly a digit or a ray of Lord Hari as her son (in the person of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana).

22-24. The sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana is the protector of the Vedas from whom I learnt this *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. In supersession of his own disciples such as Paila and others (vide Supra 1. 4. 21-22), the venerable sage Bādarāyaṇa preferred me, his son, as I was very serene by nature and recited (taught) to me this esoteric and sacred text (viz. the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Then Vicitravīrya married two princesses of Kāśī, Ambā and Ambālikā both of whom were taken away by force (by Bhīṣma) from their *svayaṁvara*. Vicitravīrya was too much attached to them, and caught pthysis and died (in his youth).

25. When requested by his mother[2] (Satyavatī), Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa) procreated from the fields (i. e. wives) of his childless brother (Vicitravīrya)—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu and Vidura[3]

1. According to *MBH Adi* 63.50-69 she was the daughter of king Uparicara Vasu (vide V.5 above) developed in the womb of a celestial nymph Ārdrikā, cursed to be a female fish. She was brought up by the chief of fishermen and known as 'Satyavatī' due to her uprightness and moral virtues.

2. ŚR. quotes a religious injunction that one has to comply with such requests when instructed by elders.

3. Vidura's mother was not Vicitravīrya's wife, but a maid servant of the widowed queen Ambikā who deputed her as her substitute to Vyāsa —*MBH Adi* 1.94-96.

26. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had a hundred sons by his wife Gāndhārī. Of them, Duryodhana was the eldest. They had also a daughter, by name Duḥśalā.

27. To Pāṇḍu who was prohibited from sexual intercourse by a curse, three great (chariot-) warriors, the eldest of whom was Yudhiṣṭhira (Bhīma and Arjuna being the next two) were procreated on Kuntī from Dharma (the god Yamadharma), the wind-god and Indra.

28. Nakula and Sahadeva were born from (the loins of Aśvinī-kumāras) through Mādrī (Pāṇḍu's second wife). Draupadī had five sons,) one from each of her five husbands)—all of them your uncles (or who were the manes in their former life).

29-31. (Through Draupadī) Prativindhya was born from Yudhiṣṭhira; Śrutasena, from Bhīma; Śrutakīrti from Arjuna, Śatānīka from Nakula. Śrutakarmā was the son of Sahadeva. The other sons of the Pāṇḍavas were as follows : Yudhiṣṭhira begot Devaka on Pauravī; Bhīma had Ghaṭotkaca by Hiḍimbā and Sarvagata by Kālī. Vijayā, the daughter of Parvata, gave birth to a son Suhotra from Sahadeva.

32. Nakula begot Nirāmitra on Kareṇumatī. So also Arjuna had Irāvān from Ulūpī and Babhruvāhana by (Citrāṅgadā) the princess of the Maṇipura king. But he was adopted as a son by his (maternal) grandfather (as that was the condition precedent of the marriage, technically called *putrikāsuta*) [1]

33. Your father Abhimanyu was born of Subhadrā. He was a hero who vanquished all *ati-rathis* (a chariot-warrior who defeats innumerable enemies on the battlefield). You are born of Uttarā from him.

34. When all the Kauravas were slain, (Aśvatthāman) the son of Droṇa discharged the missile called *Brahmāstra*.

1. VR., GD., BP.VD. quote the condition:

abhrātṛkām pradāsyāmi tubhyaṁ kanyām alaṁkṛtām /
asyāṁ yo jāyate putraḥ sa me putro bhaviṣyati //

'I give in marriage my daughter duly decorated with ornaments, on condition that, as she has no brother, the son that will be born to her will be my son.

You were rescued alive from the god of death by the spiritual prowess of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

35. Oh child ! You have the following four sons, the eldest of whom is Janamejaya, the rest being Śrutasena, Bhīmasena and Ugrasena—all of whom are valiant.

36. Knowing that you have met death from Takṣaka's bite, he (Janamejaya) will get enraged, and will commit as oblations to fire, serpents in the serpent-sacrifice.

37. Having conquered the earth on all sides, and appointing Tura, the son of Kavaṣa, as the sacrificial priest, Janamejaya, the performer of *aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice), will worship the Lord by performance of many sacrifices.

38. Janamejaya's son Śatānīka will learn the three Vedas as well as the knowledge of religious rites from Yājñavalkya, the technique of the use of missiles (from Kṛpa), and the knowledge about the self (the spiritual science) from Śaunaka.

39. His son will be Sahasrānīka whose son will be Aśvamedhaja; his son will be Asīma-Kṛṣṇa, whose son will be Nemi-cakra.

40. When Hastināpura will be washed away by the floods of the river (Gaṅgā), he will settle down at Kauśāmbī (Kosam, near Allahabad). He will have Citraratha as his son, of whom a son Kaviratha will be born.

41. From Kaviratha will appear Vṛṣṭimān (as the son) from whom will be born king Mahīpati. Sunītha will be his son. He will have a son Nṛcakṣus whose son will be Sukhīnala.

42. His son will be Pariplava, whose son will be Medhāvī who will have Sunaya as his son. Thence will be born Nṛpañjaya, from whom will be Dūrva, who will beget Timi.

43. From Timi will be born Bṛhadratha whose son will be Sudāsa, the father of Śatānīka. From Śatānīka will spring Durdamana whose son will be Bahīnara.

44. His son will be Daṇḍapāṇi who will beget Nimi. From him will be born king Kṣemaka. In this way the lineage of Brāhmaṇa-cum-Kṣatriya (Lunar race from which Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya races started) which has been honoured and praised by gods and sages has been described to you.

45. When the lunar race reaches king Kṣemaka, it will

be extinct in the Kali age. Now I shall describe to you the future kings of the Magadha country.

46. The son of Sahadeva (Jarāsandha's successor—son) will be Mārjāri whose son will be Śrutaśravas. Thence will be Ayutāyu, whose son will be Niramitra.

47. His son will be Sunakṣatra, from whom will be born Bṛhatsena—his son will be Karmajit. Thence will be Sṛtañjaya, from whom will appear Vipra, the father of Śuci.

48. Then will follow Kṣema whose son will be Suvrata. His son will be born Dharmasūtra whose son will be Śama. Thence will be Dyumatsena from whom will be born Sumati, whose son will be Subala.

49. Thence will be Sunītha of whom Satyajit, the father of Viśvajit will be born. From Viśvajit will be born Ripuñjaya. The kings of Bṛhadratha dynasty will reign for one thousand years.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The History of the Dynasties of Anu, Druhyu, Turvasu and Yadu[1]

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Anu (the son of Yayāti) had three sons—Sabhānara, Cakṣu and Parokṣa. From Sabhānara was born Kālanara, whose son was then Sṛñjaya.

1. For the clear understanding of the Purāṇic history the genealogies of different branches of the Lunar race are given below : These names indicate Successors to the thrones—not necessarily sons.

Anu-s —I *Branch*

Anu→Sabhānara→Kālanara→Sṛñjaya→Janamejaya→ Mahāśīla→ Mahāmanas→Uśīnara→Śibi→Kaikeya

— *II Branch*

Titikṣu→Ruṣadratha→Hema→Sutapas→ Sutapā-Bali → Aṅga → Khanapāna→Diviratha→Dharmaratha →Romapāda→ Caturaṅga→Pṛthulākṣa Campa → Bṛhatkarman → Bṛhadratha → Bṛhadbhānu → Bṛhanmanas→

2. His son was Janamejaya, who begot Mahāśīla and his son was Mahāmanas. Uśīnara and Titikṣu were the sons of Mahāmanas.

3-4. Uśīnara had four sons—Śibi, Vana, Śami and Dakṣa. Śibi's four sons were Vṛṣādarbha, Suvīra, Madra and Kaikeya. Titikṣu's son was Ruśadratha, and his son, Hema. Hema's son was Sutapas from whom Bali was born.

5. On the wife of king Bali (who was childless), the sage Dīrghatamas begot six sons beginning with Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and also those called by the names Suhma, Puṇḍra and Āndhra.

6. These six established principalities in eastern provinces were known after their names (respectively). From Aṅga was born Khanapāna whose son was Diviratha.

7. His son was Dharmaratha whose son Citraratha had no issue. He was also known as Romapāda and was a friend of Daśaratha (king of Ayodhyā).

8-10. Daśaratha gave his daughter Śāntā (in adoption) whom Ṛṣyaśṛṅga married. When Indra did not release showers of rain, beautiful courtesans enticed away that son of a female deer, by means of dancing, vocal and instrumental music, coquettish behaviour, embraces and presents and brought him (to the king). By conducting a sacrifice (Iṣṭi) in honour of Indra, he (propitiated Indra and) secured progeny

Jayadratha → Vijaya → Dhṛti → Dhṛtavrata→Satkarman→Adhiratha→ Karṇa→Vṛṣasena

Druhyu-s

Druhyu→Babhru→Setu→Ārabdha→Gāndhāra→Dharma→Dhṛta→ Durmanas→Pracetas→Prācetas

Turvasu-s

Turvasu→Vahni→Bharga→Bhānumān→Tribhānu → Karandhama →Maruta→Duṣyanta.

Yadus: *Haihaya Branch*

Yadu→Sahasrajit→ Śatajit → Haihaya → Dharmanetra → Kunti→ Sohañji→Mahiṣman→Bhadrasena-ka→Durmada→ Dhanaka→Kṛtavīrya →Arjuna→Jayadhvaja→Tālajaṅgha→Vītihotra

Yadu : Main Branch

Yadu→Kroṣṭā→Vṛjinvan→Svāhi → Ruśeku → Citraratha → Śaśabindu → Pṛthuśravas → Dharma → Uśanas → Rucaka →Jyāmagha→ Vidarbha

to Romapāda (who was childless). Daśaratha who was issueless was also blessed with children by a similar sacrifice. Caturaṅga was born from Romapāda, whose son was Pṛthulākṣa.

11. Pṛthulākṣa had (three) sons viz. Bṛhadratha, Bṛhatkarmā and Bṛhadbhānu. From the first (Bṛhadratha), was born Bṛhan-manas, from whom Jayadratha appeared.

12. He begot on Sambhūti (a son called) Vijaya from whom appeared Dhṛti. Thence Dhṛtavrata whose son was Satkarmā, from whom was born Adhiratha.

13. While playing on the bank of the Gaṅgā the king found a son encased in a (floating) box, abandoned by Kuntī, as he was born before her marriage. Being issueless, he brought him up as his son.

14. Vṛṣasena was the son of Karṇa who became a king. Druhyu (another son of Yayāti) had a son called Babhru, whose son was Setu.

15. His son was Ārabdha; his son, Gāndhāra, whose son was Dharma. Dharma's son was Dhṛta of whom Durmanas was the son. His son was Pracetas who had a hundred sons.

16. They became the rulers of the Mlecchas, and established themselves in the northern region. Turvasu (another son of Yayāti) had a son called Vahni of whom Bhaga was born. His son was Bhānumān.

17. His (Bhānumān's) son was Tribhānu whose son was the noble-hearted Karandhama. His son was Marut. He was childless and adopted Duṣyanta of the Pūru line, as his son.

18-19. That Duṣyanta, being desirous of (one more) kingdom, returned again to his family (as Pūru's descendant). I shall now describe to you the dynasty of Yadu, the eldest son of Yayāti—a dynasty of great religious merits and capable of removing sins. A man who listens to the account of the (family-line of) Yadu is absolved of all sins.

20-21. It was in this dynasty that the Supreme Soul incarnated, assuming a human form. It is reported that Yadu had four sons—Sahasrajit, Kroṣṭṛ, Nala and Ripu. The son of the first (Sahasrajit) was Śatajit. He had (three) sons—Mahāhaya, Veṇuhaya and Haihaya.

22. Haihaya's son was Dharma, whose son was Netra,

the father of Kunti. From Kunti was born Sohañji whose son was Mahiṣmān; his son was Bhadrasenaka.

23. Bhadrasena's sons were Durmada and Dhanaka, the father of Kṛtavīrya. Kṛtāgni, Kṛtavarmā and Kṛtaujāḥ also were the sons of Dhanaka.

24. Arjuna, the son of Kṛtavīrya became the lord of seven continents. He became extremely proficient in Yoga through the grace of Dattātreya, himself a ray of Lord Hari.

25. Other rulers of the earth cannot definitely reach the status of Kārtavīrya, in point of performance of sacrifices, munificent donations, asceticism, spiritual (*yogic*) powers, scholarship, valour, victories etc.

26. For eighty five thousand years, with unabated strength . . .

26A. Arjuna ruled his kingdom always remembering Lord Hari. . .with no dimunition in wealth of memory[1], he enjoyed the inexhaustible (fund) of objects of six senses (including the mind, as the sixth).

27. Out of his thousand sons, only five survived the battle (with Paraśurāma). They were Jayadhavja, Śūrasena, Vṛṣabha, Madhu and Ūrjita.

28. From Jayadhvaja was born Tālajaṅgha, who had hundred sons. The family of Tālajaṅghas was destroyed by the prowess of Sagara (the Aurva).

29. Vītihotra was the eldest of Tālajaṅgha's sons. Of Madhu (the son of Kārtavīrya Arjuna) was born Vṛṣṇi[2]. Madhu had hundred sons of whom Vṛṣṇi was the eldest. Hence the family came to be known after Vṛṣṇi.

30. Hence they came to be designated as Mādhavas, Vṛṣṇis and Yādavas, Oh king. Of Kroṣṭṛ, the son of Yadu, appeared Vṛjinavān.

31. He had a son Svāhi whose son was Ruśeku.[3] His son was Citraratha from whom was born a great *yogin* Śaśabindu

1. v.l. *anaṣṭa-Viṣṇu-smaraṇaḥ* — who never forgot to remember Hari any time.

2. VR. notes a v.l. according to which 'Vītihotra's son was Madhu from whom Vṛṣṇi was born'. The text here creates some confusion, in this half line.

3. Uruśaṅku, according to V.R. He notes 'Kuśeku' as a v.l.

of great affluence and luxurious life, as well as endowed with great moral virtues.

32. He was the master (possessor) of fourteen great jewels[1] and the sole sovereign ruler of the entire globe of the earth and of very great renown. He had ten thousand wives.[2]

33-34. By them he procreated a million sons. Of these, six were very prominent. Out of them, the son of Pṛthuśravas was known as Dharma. His son was Uśanas, a performer of one hundred horse-sacrifices (*aśvamedhas*). His son was Rucaka who had five sons. Listen (to their account).

35-36. They were called Purujit, Rukma, Rukmeṣu, Pṛthu and Jyāmagha. Jyāmagha who married Śaibyā, was childless, but he dared not take another wife through the fear (of Śaibyā). Once he brought from the enemy's house a girl for enjoyment. Seeing her in (her husband's) chariot, Śaibyā got enraged with her husband.

37. 'Who is this girl made to occupy my place in the chariot, you deceitful rogue'? (demanded Śaibyā). When he replied, "Your daughter-in-law", she smiled and spoke.

38. "I am a barren woman. How can a co-wife be my daughter-in-law?" "Oh queen! She will be suitable for marriage to the son who is to be born of you".

39. (ŚR gives a dramatic description of the situation). 'The king was perspiring and quaking through the fear of his wife. But he had all the while propitiated the fraternity of gods—*Viśvedevas*—and his manes, who approvingly blessed him) 'Amen', said the Viśvedevas and manes. After some time Śaibyā became pregnant (even after her menopause), and was

1. SR. quotes from *Mārkaṇḍeya purāna* the following list of jewels (i.e., excellent things) : An elephant, a horse, a chariot, women, an arrow, treasury, a garland of flowers, dress, wish-yielding tree, a Śakti (javelin), a noose, a gem (i.e. Ruby diamond), an umbrella and an aerial car.

2. VD. accepts this v.l. of ŚR :

tasya patnī-sahasrasya daśāsan sumahāyaśāḥ /

I accepted it as it is more clear than *patnīsahasrāṇāṁ daśānām /*

delivered of an auspicious son called 'Vidarbha', and he married the chaste girl who was already accepted as a daughter-in-law.[1]

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The History of the Race of Yadu[2]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Vidarbha begot on her (Bhojyā) two sons by name Kuśa and Kratha, and the third one Romapāda who was the delight of the Vidarbha family.

1. All commentators quote Parāśara who declared Jyāmagha as the most hen-pecked husband. But even Parāśara in VP.4.12.12 remarks · 'About Jyāmagha (his henpeckedness) the following verse is recited', so the verse :

bhāryāvaśyās tu ye kecid bhaviṣyantyathavā mṛtāḥ !
teṣāṁ tu Jyāmaghaḥ śreṣṭhaś Śaibyāpatir abhūn nṛpaḥ//

—VP.4.12.13 seems to be a traditional quotation.

2. The genealogies of the royal houses described in this chapter are given in order to clarify their mutual relations : They are the successors to the throne, not necessarily the sons of the predecessor

(1) *CEDI* (Vaidarbhas or Kaiśikas)

Vidarbha→Kuśa→Romapāda→Babhru→Kṛti→Uśika→ Cedi → Caidya etc.

(2) *CEDI-PA-S* (Vāsavas or Cedipas)

Vasu-Uparicara→Cedipa or Pratyagra→Damaghoṣa→Śiśupāla→Dhṛṣṭaketu.

(3) *YĀDAVAS*

Vidarbha→Kratha→Kunti→Dhṛṣṭi→Nivṛti→Daśārha→Vyoman→ Jīmūta → Vikṛti → Bhīmaratha → Navaratha → Daśaratha →Śakuni → Karambi→Devarāta→Devakṣatra→Madhu→ Kuruvaśa → Puruhotra → Anu I—Āyu→Sātvata.

(4) *SĀTVATAS*

Sātvata→Andhaka I→ Kukura→Vahni→Kapotaroman → Viloman →Anu II→Andhaka II→Dundubhi→ Aridyota → Punarvasu→Āhuka—Ugrasena→Kaṁsa

2. Romapāda's son was Babhru, from whom was born Kṛti. His son was Uśika from whom proceeded (the line of) kings like Caidya and others (i.e. Damaghoṣa etc.)

3. Kratha (the second son of Vidarbha) had a son called Kunti, from whom was born Dhṛṣṭi (Vṛṣṇi) whose son was Nirvṛti (Vidhṛti). From him sprang a son named Daśārha, whose son was Vyoma.

4. His son was Jīmūta whose son was Vikṛti, the father of Bhīmaratha. His son was Navaratha, from whom was born Daśaratha.

5. From his son Śakuni was born Kerambhi from whose loins appeared Devarāta. His son was Devakṣatra. From him was born Madhu, whose son was Kuruvaśa of whom was born Anu.

6-8. Anu's son was Puruhotrá whose son was Āyu from whom Sātvata was born. Sātvata had seven sons—Bhajamāna, Bhaji, Dīpta, Vṛṣṇi, Devavṛdha, Andhaka, Mahābhoja, Oh noble king! Bhajamāna's sons were Nimloci, Kiṅkiṇī and Dhṛṣṭi, through one wife, while by another wife, he had three sons viz. Śatājit, Sahasrājit and Ayutājit, Oh Lord.

9-11. Babhru was the son of Devāvṛdha in eulogizing whom the following couplet is recited :

(5) *SATVATAS*

Sātvata → Mahābhoja → Bhajamāna II → Vidūratha → Śūra I→ Śini→Svayambhoja→Hṛdika—Devamīḍha→Śūra II→Vasudeva→Kṛṣṇa

(6) *VṚṢṆIS*

Vṛṣṇi I married to Gāndhārī :→Sumitra→Nimna—Satrājit—
|
Prasena

Bhaṅgakāra→Sabhākṣa.

Vṛṣṇi I married to Mādrī :→Yudhājit→Vṛṣṇi II (Pṛṣṇi)
| |
Śvaphalka Citraka
| |
Akrūra etc. Pṛthu etc.

Vṛṣṇi I→Devamīḍha→Śūra II→Vasudeva→ Kṛṣṇa → Sāmba→ Vajra.

Vṛṣṇi→Śini II→Satyaka→Yuyudhāna→Jaya→ Kuṇi → Asaṅga → Yugandhara.

Vṛṣni I — Śini I.

"Just as we hear from far afar, so we see (them) from near. Babhru is the greatest among human beings while Devāvṛdha is just like gods (lit. equal in comparison with gods). Through the spiritual guidance of Babhru and Devāvṛdha fourteen thousand and sixty-five men attained immortality (liberation from *saṁsāra*.)."

Mahābhoja (the seventh son of Sātvata) was pious, and religious-minded. Kings born in his family-line were (known as) Bhojas.

12. Vṛṣṇi's son was Sumitra, whose son was Yudhājit, Oh chastiser of enemies. His son was Śini who had Anamitra as his son. From Anamitra appeared Nimna.

13. Satrājit and Prasena were the two sons of Nimna. Another Śini, a son of Anamitra had a son Satyaka.

14. Satyaka's son was Yuyudhāna whose son was Jaya from whom was born Kuṇi. His son was Yugandhara. Anamitra had another son named Vṛṣṇi.

15. Vṛṣṇi had two sons—Śva-phalka and Citraratha. Śva-phalka begot on Gandinī twelve famous sons (in addition to Akrūra), but Akrūra was the foremost of them all.

16-17. (The names of those sons are :) Āsaṅga, Sārameya, Mṛdura, Mṛduvid, Giri, Dharmavṛddha, Sukarmā, Kṣetropekṣa, Arimardana, Śatrughna, Gandhamāda and Pratibāhu. They had a sister called Sucīrā. Akrūra also had two sons—

18. Viz. Devavān and Upadeva. Citraratha had sons such as Pṛthu, Vidūra and many others—all descendants of Vṛṣṇi.

19. Andhaka[1] had four sons : Kukura, Bhajamāna, Śuci and Kambalabarhiṣa. Kukura's son was Vahni, whose son was Viloma.

20. He had a son Kapotaroma whose son was Anu. His friend was Tumbaru (the famous celestial musician. From Anu was born Andhaka, from whom was born Dundubhi. His son was Aridyota, the father of Punarvasu.

21. Punarvasu had a son called Āhuka, and a daugh-

1. On the strength of VP.4.14.12 ŚR gives the name Andhaka, though Bh.P. does not mention his name.

ter named Āhukī. Āhuka's sons were Devaka and Ugrasena. Devaka had four sons :

22. Viz. Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva, Deva-vardhana. They had seven sisters such as Dhṛtadevā and others, Oh King !

23. (In addition to Dhṛtadevā) the sisters were Śāntidevā, Upadevā, Śrīdevā, Devarakṣitā, Sahadevā and Devakī all of whom Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa's father) married.

24. Kaṁsa, Sunāma, Nyagrodha, Kaṅka, Śaṅku, Suhū, Rāṣṭrapāla, Śṛṣṭi and Tuṣṭimān were the sons of Ugrasena.

25. The daughters of Ugrasena were Kaṁsā, Kaṁsāvatī, Kaṅkā, Śarabhū, Rāṣṭrapālikā, and they were the wives of Vasudeva's younger brothers.

26. Śūra was born of Vidūratha (the son of Citraratha). His son was Bhajamāna of whom was born Śini. From him was born Svayambhoja whose son was Hṛdika.

27. Hṛdika's sons were Devabāhu, Śatadhanu, and Kṛtavarmā. Śūra (sena) was the son of Devamīḍha (who, as explained by ŚR on the strength of Parāśara i. e. VP to be the fourth son of Hṛdika[1]). Māriṣā was Śūra's wife.

28-30. He begot on her ten sons of spotless character viz. Vasudeva, Devabhāga, Devaśravas, Anaka, Sṛñjaya, Śyāmaka, Kaṅka, Śamīka, Vatsaka, Vṛka. They call Vasudeva, the father of Hari (lit. the source of Hari's birth), as Ānakadundubhi, as the celestial kettledrums (*dundubhis*) and still bigger drums (Ānakas) were sounded at his (auspicious) birth. And their five sisters Pṛthā, Śrutadevā, Śrutakīrti, Śrutaśravas.

31. And Rājādhidevī were his five daughters. (Pṛthā's) father Śūra gave her in adoption to his friend Kunti who was childless,

32. From the sage Durvāsas whom she pleased (by her services), she obtained the lore (*mantras*) of invoking gods (*Devahutī Vidyā*). For testing the efficacy of that lore, she invoked the lustrous sun.

1. The name however does not appear in the text of the VP.4.14.24 in the Gita Press edition. Saṁvat 2026. But ŚR clearly states :

Devamīḍhasya yaḥ Śūro nāma Putras tasya Devamīḍho Hṛdikasyaiva sutas tathā'ha Parāśaraḥ / and quotes VP. 4.14.24 etc.

33. She was astounded to see the (sun)-god appearing instantly in her presence. (Being embarrassed, apologetically) she said, "It is just for testing the efficacy of the lore that the *mantra* was used. Excuse me, Oh god, and (kindly) go your way."

34. 'The sight of gods is never fruitless, Oh lady! I shall beget a son for you, and see to it that your virginity is unimpaired, Oh girl of beautiful waist!'

35. Assuring her thus, the sun-god impregnated her and returned to the firmament. She instantly gave birth to a son who was (brilliant) like another sun.

36. Being afraid of a public censure, she abandoned him (in a box) in the river. Your really valorous great grandfather Pāṇḍu married her.

37. Vṛddhaśarmā of Kāruṣa dynasty married Śrutadevā of whom was born Dantavakra, one of the Diti's sons (viz. Hiraṇyākṣa) who was formerly attendant of god Viṣṇu, called Vijaya but cursed by the sage (Sanaka).

38. Dhṛṣṭaketu of Kekaya family wedded Śrutakīrti and had five sons in the Kekaya family.

39. Jayasena begot by Rājādhidevī two sons viz. Vinda and Anuvinda. Damaghoṣa, the king of Cedi, married Śrutaśravā.

40. Śiśupāla was her (Śrutaśravā's) son. Thus the (account of his) birth is narrated. By Kaṁsā, Devabhāga had two sons, Citraketu and Bṛhadbala.

41. Devaśravas had by Kaṁsavatī two sons—Suvīra and Iṣumān, while Ānaka begot on Kaṅkā (two sons viz.) Satyajit and Purujit.

42. Sṛñjaya procreated from Rāṣṭrapālī, Vṛṣa, Durmarṣaṇa and other sons, while Śyāmaka had Harikeśa and Hiraṇyākṣa by Śūrabhūmī.

43. Vatsaka begot on a celestial nymph Miśrakeśī, Vṛka and other sons, while Vṛka had by his wife Durvākṣī sons such as Takṣa, Puṣkara, Śāla and others.

44. By Sudāminī, Śamīka had Sumitra, Arjunapāla and other sons, while Kaṅka begot on Karṇikā, Ṛtadhāman and Jaya.

45. Ānakadundubhi (Vasudeva) had Pauravī, Rohiṇī, Bhadrā, Madirā, Rocanā, Ilā and Devakī (and others) as wives. Out of them Devakī was prominent.

46. By Rohiṇī, Vasudeva procreated Bala, Gada, Sāraṇa, Durmada, Vipula, Dhruva, as well as Kṛta and others.

47. Vasudeva's sons by Pauravī were Subhadra, Bhadravāha, Durmada, Bhadra as well as others beginning with Bhūta, all together being twelve (in number).

48. Nanda, Upananda, Kṛtaka, Śūra and others were the chidren of (Vasudeva's wife) Madirā, while Kausalyā gave birth to one son Keśin, the delight of his family.

49. Rocanā bore (to Vasudeva) Hasta, Hemāṅgada and other sons. He begot on Ilā, Uruvalka and other chiefs of Yadus.

50. Ānakadundubhi (Vasudeva) had only one son Vipṛṣṭha from Dhṛtadevā, while the sons of Sāntidevā were Śrama, Pratiśruta and others, Oh king !

51. Ten kings beginning with Kalpavarṣa were the sons of Upadevā; while Śridevā had six sons viz. Vasu, Haṁsa, Suvaṁśa and (three) others.

52-53. By Devarakṣitā, he got nine sons such as Gada and others. While he begot eight sons on Sahadevā. Of them, Puruviśruta was most prominent. Just as God Dharma procreated eight Vasus, the noble-minded Vasudeva begot on Devakī eight sons.

54. They were Kīrtimat, Suṣeṇa, Bhadrasena, Ṛju, Sammardana, Bhadra and Saṅkarṣaṇa who was Śeṣa, the Lord of Serpents.

55. Their eighth son was verily Lord Hari himself. And the highly fortunate Subhadrā, your grand mother was their daughter, Oh King !

56. Whenever there is deterioration in righteousness and waxing of sinfulness, the glorious Lord Hari incarnates himself.[1]

57. Oh King ! No cause except his will-power (*Māyā*) can be attributed for the appearance or deeds of the Lord

1. Cf. *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati Bhārata /*
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmyaham // *Bh. GĪTĀ*

who is the all-pervading Lord of the universe, the Supreme-most, detached and impartial Witness.

58. The activity of the Lord through his Māyā brings about the birth, continuation and destruction of the *jīva* (an embodied soul). The recession of Māyā is his Grace, which leads to self-realization.

59. He endeavoured to lighten the burden of the earth which was being over-run by Asuras in the guise of kings leading Akṣauhiṇīs of army.

60. The glorious Lord Viṣṇu (Slayer of demon Madhu) accompanied by Saṅkarṣaṇa (Balarāma) achieved feats which the Lords of gods could not comprehend, even by thought or imagination.

61. For conferring grace on his devotees, he spread his hallowing glory which will also remove the misery, sorrow and ignorance of those who will be born in (the impending) Kali age.

62. Having but once slightly tasted with the joined palms in the form of ears, from the sacredmost stream of his glory, which is sweet like nectar to the ears of the righteous people, a person shakes himself free from tendencies to *Karmas*.

63-64. Lord Kṛṣṇa whose sportive acts were ever eulogised by (the members of the clans like) Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Madhus, Śūrasenas and Daśārhas as well as Kauravas, Sṛñjayas and Pāṇḍavas, delighted the entire humanity with his affectionate smiles and glances, with his sublime speech and his valorous sportive actions and personality, charming in every respect.

65. Drinking (as it were) with their eyes, his countenance appearing most beautiful with ears ornamented with alligator-shaped ear-rings and with brilliant cheeks, a face beaming with graceful sportive smiles, an eternal seat of ecstasy—men and women[1] steeped in delight, are never satiated but grow angry with Nimi (who causes winking and thus deprives them of their happiness and joy).

1. VC. insists that these were cowherd women of Vṛndāvana and not others, and men were Kṛṣṇa's mates like Subala and quotes *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* as an authority on this.

66. He manifested himself with his own form, but later on assuming the human form, he went from his father's house to Vraja. He enhanced its prosperity. He killed all the enemies; he married a number of wives and begot hundreds of sons through them. He worshipped the Supreme person (who is himself) by performing numerous sacrifices, and promulgated thereby the Vedic path that leads to him, amongst the people.

67. Desiring to reduce the heavy burden of the earth, he struck down with his glance the legions of kings in the battle resulting from the internal feuds of the Kuru clans, but (gave credit of victory to Arjuna) by proclaiming the victory (as if) won by Arjuna; he then enlightened Uddhava in the secrets of the highest Truth, and retired to his Supreme Abode.

THE
BHĀGAVATA PURĀṆA

PART IV

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APPENDIX—Additional verses in VJ's Text 1851

SKANDHA TENTH

CHAPTER ONE

The King (Parikṣit) said :

1. Your worship has been pleased to narrate the detailed account of the Lunar and Solar dynasties and also the extremely wonderful exploits of kings, born in both these families.

2. (You have also described) especially the race of Yadu, of extremely pious nature. Oh the best of Sages ! Do you now be pleased to describe to us the great deeds of Lord Viṣṇu who incarnated in his family, along with his part-manifestation (*aṁśa* viz. Balarāma).

3. Please recount to us in details all those deeds that the Almighty Lord, the Maker (Protector) and the Soul of all beings, performed after incarnating in Yadu's race.

4. What man other than a slaughterer will desist from (listening to) the recital of the excellent attributes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, of auspicious glory—glory constantly sung by those who are freed from the influence of desires (and are liberated), a specific remedy for (release from) *saṁsāra*, and extremely pleasant to the ears and the mind.

5. Using Him (Kṛṣṇa) as a raft, my grandfathers (i.e. grandfather Arjuna and granduncles such as Yudhiṣṭhira), crossed the ocean in the form of the Kaurava army, so difficult to tide over, due to its being infested with monstrous whales in the form of unrivalled (chariot-riding) warriors like Bhīṣma and others, the vanquishers of even celestials in battles, contemptuously treating it (the ocean-like army) like a (shallow) depression caused by a calf's hoof.

6. And armed with a discus (*Sudarśana*), He entered the womb of my mother (Uttarā) who sought his refuge and protected this body of mine—the seed for the continuity of the races of Kurus and Pāṇḍavas—while it (my body) was being scorched by the missile (*Brahmāstra*) discharged by Aśvatthāman, Droṇā's son.

7. Oh learned sage, be pleased to recount to me (for my benefit), the glorious exploits of him (Kṛṣṇa) who has assumed human form through his Māyā-power, and who pervades all embodied beings internally and externally, and who, as an Inner Controller and as a Destroyer (Time-Spirit)—severally dispenses Liberation to the spiritually-minded ("inner-seers") and death, i.e. *saṁsāra*, to those with worldly propensities.

8. Balarāma alias Saṅkarṣaṇa was (first) stated by you to be the son of Rohiṇī (vide *supra* 9.24.46). How could he be connected with the womb of Devakī (vide *supra* 9.24.54) without assuming another body ?

9. Why for did glorious Mukunda (Lord Kṛṣṇa) migrate from his father's residence to Vraja ? Where (in what places) did the Lord of Sātvatas (gods or a clan of Yadus) settle down with his kinsmen ?

10. What were the activities (lit. did he do) of Keśava while residing at Vraja, as well as in Mathurā, the city founded by demon Madhu ? Why did he personally kill Kaṁsa, his mother's brother who, as such, did not deserve it.

11. After assuming human body, for how many years did he stay at Dvārakā along with Vṛṣṇis (Yādavas)? How many were the consorts of the Lord ?

12. Oh Omniscient Sage ! It behoves you to describe in details to me, a faithful devotee, this and every other deed performed by Kṛṣṇa.

13. Though I have given up even drinking of water in this (life-long) fast, this extremely unbearable hunger does not torment me, as I drink the nectar of Hari's stories flowing from the moon-lotus in the form of your mouth.

Sūta said :

14. Oh Śaunaka, having listened to the laudable inquiry, the worshipful son of Vyāsa (Śuka) who was the foremost among the votaries of viṣṇu, complimented king Parīkṣit (one protected by Viṣṇu) and commenced to extol the life and episodes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which destroy the sins and impurities of Kali (Or which remove the miseries of *saṁsāra.*)

Śrī Śuka said :

15. Oh foremost among saintly kings ! Your mind has been properly directed, inasmuch as the utmost and firmest devotion to the stories of Vāsudeva has been engendered in you.

16. Inquiries about the stories of Vāsudeva certainly purify all the three persons concerned, namely, the reciter, the inquirer and the members of the audience, just as water washing his feet i.e. the Gaṅgā (Or the water washing Śālagrāma) purifies all.

17. Mother Earth which was overburdened with the crushing weight of millions and millions of the hosts of Daityas who assumed the guise of arrogant kings, sought refuge to god Brahmā.

18. Taking the form of a depressed and piteously lowing cow and with her face overflowing with tears, she approached god Brahmā's presence and represented to him her grievous plight.

19. Realizing the piteous condition of the earth, god Brahmā accompanied by the three-eyed god Śiva and other gods, came to the shore of the milky ocean, along with her.

20. After reaching there, he with perfect concentration of mind, praised in terms of the Puruṣa-Śūkta the Supreme Person, the Lord of the world, the god of gods, the absolutely blissful Enjoyer of sacrifices.

21. Listening to the voice uttered in the sky while he was meditating (upon the Lord), god Brahmā spoke out to the celestials, "Oh immortals, hear from me the words of the Supreme Person and comply immediately with them. Let there be no delay."

22. The affliction of Mother Earth was already understood by the Supreme Person before we appealed to him. You should now take birth in the Yadu Clan, in your part-manifestation, while the Lord of gods will walk over the earth, reducing its burden through his potency called Time.

23. The glorious Supreme Lord will directly manifest Himself in the house of Vasudeva. Let the heavenly damsels be born (on the earth) to minister to his pleasures.

23—A. VR's text adds :

As commanded by him, let the sages be made, to assume the form of cattle for the purpose of propitiating Lord Viṣṇu by yielding him milk, Oh gods.

24. The self-effulgent thousand-faced Lord Śeṣa imbued with a part of Vāsudeva, will be born as the elder brother, with a view to catering to his pleasures.

25. The divine Yoga-Māyā of Viṣṇu who has deluded the world, has been commanded to take birth in part-manifestation for fulfilling his mission."

Śrī Śuka said :

26. Having directed the hosts of gods in this way, and consoling the Earth in reassuring words, god Brahmā, the Ruler of Prajāpatis, repaired to his exalted region.

27. In former times, Śūrasena, the chief of the Yadu clan, ruled over the territories of Mathurā and Śūrasena, while residing in the city of Mathurā.

28. Thenceforth, Mathurā became the metropolis of all kings of the Yādava dynasty. In that city, the glorious Lord Hari ever exhibits his presence in a special way.

29. In that city, on one occasion, Vasudeva, son of Śūra, whose marriage with Devakī was celebrated, ascended the chariot with his newly wedded wife, to proceed to his place after marriage.

30. Kaṁsa, the son of Ugrasena, being desirous of pleasing his sister (cousin), took over the reins of the horses, surrounded by hundreds of gold-plated chariots.

31-32. At the time of departure, Devaka who was fond of his daughter, gave, as wedding presents, four hundred elephants caparisoned with gold chains, fifteen thousand horses, eighteen hundred chariots and two hundred comely maidservants, adorned with gold ornaments.

33. As the procession of the bride and the bridegroom started, conchs, clarionets, drums and kettle-drums were sounded simultaneously in the most auspicious manner.

34. On the way, an incorporeal voice from the sky addressed Kaṁsa who was holding the reins: "Oh foolish fellow, the eighth son from the womb of her whom you are conducting, shall slay you".

35. Being thus warned, the wicked sinful fellow, who was a disgrace to the Bhoja family, with a sword in hand, seized his sister by her braids of hair and proceeded to kill her.

36. The great-souled Vasudeva pleaded in conciliatory terms with the cruel, shameless perpetrator of disgraceful deeds.

Vasudeva urged :

37. You possess virtues extolled by the brave and are the glory to the Bhoja family. As such how is it that you (attempt to) kill your sister on the festive occasion of her marriage.

38. (If you say that you are doing so as a precautionary measure), death is born along with the body of all creatures, Oh warrior ! Death is inevitable to all creatures, whether it may be today or at the end of hundred years.

39. When the body is on the point of dissolving in five component-Elements (i.e. at the time of death), the Soul residing in it automatically, under the force of his *karmas* (as good as) obtains another body and quits his previous frame.

40. Just as a man while walking, stands with his one foot established on the earth, while the other paces forward, or just as a caterpillar leaves the (previous) blade of grass only when it catches the hold of another, similarly does an embodied being, caught in the current of *karmas*.

41. Just as a person whose mind is obsessed with a strong desire, and who is mentally brooding over the objects of his desires, with his mind deeply impressed by what he has seen or heard, seems to realize it in dreams, and identifies himself with it, for getting himself (his body in the waking state). So does the soul attain his new body quitting the old one.

42. To whatever modification of five *bhūtas* created by *Māyā* that the mind consisting of various emotions and passions feels impelled by destiny, and flows to it, and is attached at the time of death, the soul abiding in the body identifies itself with it and passes into that form along with the mind.

42a. Being impelled by Destiny, the mind, consisting of emotions and passions, feels impelled to, flows to and is attached to (at the time of death) whatever modifications of the five *Bhūtas* created by Māyā, the soul abiding in the body identifies itself with that form, and passes into it along with the mind.

43. Just as a luminous body (e.g. the Sun or the Moon) which, when reflected in water in an earthen container, appears to move or change according to the speed of the wind that ruffles the liquid reflecting medium (though actually—the original luminary—does not shake), so does the embodied soul, through attachment, enter the bodies or forms created by his own Māyā and is overcome with delusion.

44. Therefore, a person being so conditioned but seeking his own welfare, should not do wrong to anyone. For there is fear to the wrong-doers from others (such as god of death, the person wronged etc.).

45. This poor girl, your younger sister, is just like a daughter to you (or a lifeless doll). It does not become you who are kind to the helpless, to kill her who has just completed the marriage rites.

Śrī Śuka continued :

46. Oh descendant of Kuru ! Even though admonished with conciliatory words and words inspiring fear (of dire consequences), the relentless Kaṁsa, following the ways of demons, did not desist (from his determination).

47. Observing his firm determination (to kill Devakī), Vasudeva thought for a while how to avert this imminent danger for the time being, and devised the following expedient for it.

48. (He thought to himself :) "An intelligent person should try to avert death to the utmost limit of his intellectual and physical abilities. So if, despite these, it could not be warded off, no blame will be attached to him.

49. I shall rescue this helpless girl by promising in exchange handing over of her sons to Death (viz. Kaṁsa who is going to kill them), provided the sons are born or he (Kaṁsa) does not die in the meanwhile.

50. Or might not the contrary take place (i.e. my son might kill him), unscrutable are the ways of the Providence; for the imminent may be averted and what is averted may happen again.

51. Just as, in a forest conflagrations, there is no apparent cause (except Fate) for its coming in contact with a parti-

cular tree or remaining aloof from another, so also in the case of a created being, the cause of its being—associated or dissociated with a particular body is very difficult to be comprehended."

52. Having carefully considered (this problem) to the best of his intellectual capacity, Vasudeva respectfully addressed the wicked fellow, with (apparently) great esteem.

53. Simulating a blooming lotus-like (cheerful) countenance, in spite of his heart full of pain, he smilingly spoke to that hard-hearted and shameless fellow.

Vasudeva said:

54. Oh gentle-natured Kaṁsa ! There is certainly no fear to you from this girl as has been intimated to you by the incorporeal voice from the sky. I shall handover to you her sons from whom you apprehend danger.

Śrī Śuka said:

55. Kaṁsa, who properly understood the significance of Vasudeva's words, desisted from killing his sister (Devakī). Even Vasudeva who was pleased, extolled him and entered his palace.

56. After a lapse of time, in due course, Devakī who was devoted to the Lord who is the soul of all deities and was permeated with the divinities, gave birth to eight sons and a daughter, one every year.

57. Vasudeva who (by nature) was intensely agitated to act falsely, handed over with great pains his first born son, Kīrtimān, to Kaṁsa.

58. What is there which a truthful person (like Vasudeva) cannot endure ? Is there anything which the knowers of the truth (that the Lord alone is the reality) long for ? (Did Vasudeva think that Kaṁsa would spare his child when handed over personally ? No.). There is nothing which the wicked would not do. (How is it that Devakī parted with the child ?) What thing would they not sacrifice who cherish Hari in their hearts ?

59. Seeing the equanimity and firmness in truth of Vasudeva Kaṁsa was highly pleased with him and spoke to him smilingly : Oh King.

60. "Let this boy return (to his mother) as there is no danger from him to me, as my death has been ordained from your eighth child."

61. Taking back his son in compliance of Kaṁsa's words, Vasudeva returned home. He was however not happy over the words of that wicked Kaṁsa of uncontrolled mind.

61A. Additional verse in VJ.'s text :

Then the divine sage Nārada, the son of Brahmā, called upon Kaṁsa, and conferring with him privately spoke as follows.

62-63. "Whatever cowherds of whom Nanda is the chief, there are in Vraja and again all their women and all Vṛṣṇis headed by Vasudeva and Yādava women of whom Devakī is the foremost—all the kinsmen, relations and friends of both Nanda and Vasudeva who are loyal to Kaṁsa—are mostly gods. : (while) those who are the followers of Kaṁsa.

63—A. VR.'s text adds :

Are verily all *asuras* who trouble the world."

64. (Considering that the Lord would not incarnate earlier by Kaṁsa's such peaceful attitude) Nārada approached Kaṁsa and advised him as above, apprising him of the endeavours made (by god Brahmā and others) for the annihilation of Daityas who became a burden to the earth.

65. On the departure of the sage, Kaṁsa looked upon all Yadus as gods and every child born of Devakī as Viṣṇu intent upon slaying himself.

66. Fettering Devakī and Vasudeva in chains, he imprisoned them in their house and killed every new-born child, fearing him to be god Viṣṇu.

67. Generally, the kings on the earth who are covetous and thirsty after the lives of others, kill their mother, father, brothers and all friends as well.

68. Realising himself to be the great *asura* Kālanemi whom Viṣṇu had formerly killed, born here again, he commenced hostilities with Yādavas.

69. Being endowed with enormous power, he arrested his father Ugrasena, the king of Yādavas, Bhojas and Andhakas and took over the government of the Śūrasena region.

CHAPTER TWO

The Lord's descent in Devakī's womb

Śrī Śuka continued :

1-2. Aided by *asuras* like Pralamba, Baka, Cāṇūra, Tṛṇāvarta, Agha (the great devourer), Muṣṭika, Ariṣṭa, Dvivida, Pūtanā, Keśī, Dhenuka and forming an alliance with other *asura* kings like Bāṇa and Bhauma, and with the support of Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha, the mighty Kaṁsa began to harass Yadus.

3. Hard pressed by him, they migrated in disguise to different countries, viz. Kurus, Pāñcālas, Kekayas, Śālvas, Vidarbhas, Niṣadhas, Videhas and Kosalas as well.

4-5. Some of his relatives, however, continued to serve him obediently. When Kaṁsa, the son of Ugrasena, killed six sons of Devakī, a part of the lustre of Lord Viṣṇu, known as Ananta, became the seventh child entering Devakī's womb who enhanced her joy and grief at the same time.

6. Being cognisant of the fear caused by Kaṁsa to Yadus, his proteges, he commanded his Yoga-Māyā (as follows) :

7. "Oh auspicious goddess ! Do you go to Vraja adorned with residence of cowherds and cows (by their affluence)? There, in the settlement of cowherds headed by Nanda dwells Rohiṇī, the wife of Vāsudeva. His other wives too being apprehensive of Kaṁsa have gone underground (stay in secret places).

8. In the womb of Devakī lies my part-manifestation known as Śeṣa. Taking him from her womb, transfer him to Rohiṇīs womb.

9. I shall then become her son by my part-manifestation (with my full powers[1]) while you will be born of Yaśodā, the wife of Nanda.

10. Recognizing you as the supreme dispenser of boons to persons desirous of progeny and bestower of boons granting all

1. To substantiate the statement *Kṛṣṇastu bhagavān svayam* (Kṛṣṇa is the Almighty Lord himself) ŚR. gives different explanations of *aṁśa-bhāga*. VT. and others endorse ŚR. but Brahma Purāṇa accepts Kṛṣṇa as 'part-manifestation'.

desires, people will worship you with incense, offerings of food and other presents.

11-12. People will erect temples for you on the earth and will designate you with various names such as Durgā, Bhadrakālī, Vijayā, Vaiṣṇavī, Kumudā, Caṇḍikā, Kṛṣṇā, Mādhavī, Kanyakā, Māyā, Nārāyaṇī, Īśānī, Śāradā and Ambikā.

13. Due to his being taken out of the womb of Devakī (and transfer to that of Rohiṇī), he will be known as Saṅkarṣaṇa. As he would give delight to the world, he would be called Rāma, and Bala on account of his eminence among the mighty people.

14. When commanded by the Lord thus, she accepted it with the words, 'Yes ! That will be done'. After circumambulating him, she went down to the earth, and executed his orders.

15. When the child from the womb of Devakī was transferred to that of Rohiṇī by the goddess *Yoga-nidrā*, citizens of Mathurā sorrowfully talked about the miscarriage of Devakī.

16. And the Almighty Lord, who is the soul of the universe, and gives assurance of safety to his votaries, entered the mind of Vasudeva[1], with all his divine potencies in their fullness.

17. Being surcharged with (lit. bearing) the glorious presence of the Supreme Person (Lord Viṣṇu), Vasudeva resplendent like unto the Sun, became unapproachable and unassailable to all created beings.

18. Thereupon, like unto the (eastern) direction bearing the moon, the delighter of all, queen Devakī, refulgent with pure *sattva* conceived in her mind—when conveyed through psychological process (*vedha-dīkṣā*) by Vasudeva—the Lord, the auspiciousness of the world incarnate[2], whose potencies are undiminishing, and who as the indwelling Soul of all, was already present in her.

1. And not through usual physiological process—ŚR.

2. Or : The Lord who, though omnipresent, assumes a limited body for showing His grace to His devotees—ŚR.

19. Like unto the flame of a lamp enclosed by an earthen pot, or like deep scholarship of a narrow-minded person who refuses to impart it (to others), Devakī, though, now the abiding place of the Lord who is the abode of all the universe, did not shine superbly (failed to give delight to the world at large, though she herself enjoyed the ecstasy of the presence of the Lord), as she was (then) imprisoned in the palace of Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas.

20. When Kaṁsa perceived that Devakī, bearing in her womb the invincible Lord Viṣṇu and beaming with pure smiles, illuminated the whole (prison-) house with her effulgence, he said (to himself), "This is Hari who, intent on robbing me of my life, has certainly entered her (Devakī's) womb, like a lion entering a den, for never before did she appear so brilliant.

21. "What immediate remedy should I now adopt in this matter today? For determined as he is on accomplishing his purpose (viz. serving the interest of gods), he would not desist from his prowess (in killing me, when he is born. Should I finish with Devakī just now, before he is born?—But even a selfish person does not wreck his reputation and prowess by such a deed). For this murder of a woman, my own sister in pregnancy, will forthwith spoil my reputation, prosperity for all time to come and (will affect even) my life as well.

22. He who lives by perpetrating extreme atrocities is as good as dead even during his life-time. People at large pronounce curses upon him while alive. When his body falls dead, he will surely go to the hell of blinding darkness, the destination of those who identify their Souls with their bodies.[1]

23. Reasoning with himself thus, the mighty Kaṁsa desisted (of his own accord) from his darkest design (of killing Devakī). Cherishing inveterate enmity to Lord Hari, he continued to await his birth.

1. VJ.'s text reads :
dehe mṛte taṁ anu hy artha-kāmau
Yaśomalaṁ gaur abhimānino dhruvam /
When the body of the man who identifies with his Soul becomes defunct his objectives viz. *artha*, *kāma*, his pure reputation, knowledge and emancipation (*mokṣa*) are surely lost to him.

24. Pondering over Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the senses, (suspecting that he may manifest himself at any moment and kill him) while sitting, lying, standing, eating, moving about and drinking, Kaṁsa saw that the whole world was pervaded by Him.[1]

25. Gods Brahmā and Śiva accompanied by sages like Nārada and others (such as Sanaka, Sanandana) and gods along with their attendants arrived at that place, and glorified the Lord who showers all desired boons.

The gods said :

26.* We resort as a shelter to you who are of true resolve; to attain to whom, truthfulness is the only highest means; who exist and are the reality in the past, present and future (before the creation, during the subsistence and after the destruction of the universe); the cause and the source of the three elements—the earth, water and fire (aggregatively known as *sat*—) and the wind and the ether (collectively called *tyat* in Tait. Upa 2.6.1); who reside in them as *antaryāmin*; who are the truth of the truth (the highest Reality even after the dissolution of the universe); who are the promulgator of truthful speech and impartially equable vision (towards all) and the embodiment of truthfulness.

1. Kaṁsa was made to think of Him by Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of senses, in all states and actions in life for manifesting himself to Kaṁsa who thus perceived that the world is full of Kṛṣṇa—VB.

* VR. : We have sought shelter in You Who carry out what is avowed by you and are hence of real resolve; Who are distinct from the real world consisting of the sentient (*cid*) and non-sentient (*acid*); Whose body consists of three real entities--Prakṛti, Puruṣa and Time(*kāla*); Whose wish is carried out as you are the controller of the whole world comprising of Prakṛti (Puruṣa etc); Who are the source of the real *prapañca* consisting of the intelligent and non-intelligent (*cid* and *acid*); Who abide in the highest part of the sky; Who are the real of the reals; Who are the director of the Moon (the path of righteousness) and the Sun (truthfulness); Who are the embodiment of the unmodifiable reality.

VJ. : We sought refuge in You Who are the embodiment of perfect Bliss and Knowledge; absolutely distinct from the Earth and other elements; Who are the main gist of the three Vedas; the source of Prapañca which is a reality; abiding as *antaryāmin* in the world, a reality; the director and donor of the spiritual wisdom and happiness to the world—a reality; Whose blissful essential nature is unaffected.

27.* The primeval tree in the form of (visible) universe has on one base (viz. *Prakṛti*), two fruits (viz. pleasure and pain), three roots (viz. the *guṇas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), four kinds of secretions (viz. the objectives of human life, religion, property and wealth, sensual desires and liberation), five attributes (the sense organs), six folds or states (viz. birth, existence, growth, ripeness, decay and destruction or natural affections viz. hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, old age and death), seven kinds of barks (the constituents of the body viz skin, blood, flesh, albumen, bone, marrow and semen), eight branches (the five elements—*bhūtas*, the mind, the reason and the ego), nine hollows (the 'gates' of the body, viz. two sockets of eyes, two cavities of ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the organs of urination and defecation), ten leaves (the vital airs—*prāṇas*), two birds (the individual Soul and the Indwelling Supreme Soul).

28. You alone are the cause of the (above-mentioned tree in the from of) phenomenal universe; You are its resting place (after its dissolution), and You are its protector. Those whose minds (knowledge or wisdom) are clouded by Your Māyā (the deluding potency), look upon you as many, but not so those who possess spiritual wisdom.

29. You are essentially knowledge and consciousness (the internal controller of all). Repeatedly You assume forms for conferring happiness on the mobile and immobile creation. Your forms are purely *sāttvic* (unadulterated with *rajas* and *tamas*). They bring happiness to the righteous and mete out destruction to the wicked.

30. Oh lotus-eyed god, some persons who have fixed their minds through concentration on you, the embodiment of

* (1) VR. interprets *ādi-vṛkṣa* as 'the corporeal body' and its eight branches are hands, feet, neck, chest and stomach and the 'leaves' are ten objects of senses.

(2) VJ. regards the universe as 'the eternal' tree which has Hari as its one (the sole) support, two fruits (viz. *puṇya* and *pāpa*—merit and sin); the three roots are *vyāhṛtis*, *vedas* or states); four results are heaven, hell, darkness (*tamas*) and emancipation; five special roots are vital airs (*prāṇas*). The rest of details are like ŚR. Hari destroys this tree. Hence Hari's supremacy.

pure *sattva*, easily cross the ocean of *saṁsāra* (as is done by the great) by the raft in the form of your feet as if it (*saṁsāra*) were as insignificant as the shallow footprint of a calf.

31. Oh self-effulgent Lord ! Having themselves crossed the extremely impassable, terrible ocean of *saṁsāra*, those devotees of unbounded friendliness to all creatures have (however) gone to the other side (of *saṁsāra*) leaving behind them the boat in the form of your lotus-like feet (i.e. the path of devotion); for you are gracious unto the righteous.

32. Oh lotus-eyed god ! Those others who follow the path of knowledge and regard themselves as emancipated, get their minds and intellect corrupted due to their lack of devotion to you (or whose mind is clouded, though they are clever in disputations). These persons, attaining with great difficulty to a high state (e.g. birth in a noble family), fall down therefrom, as they feel no respect for your feet.

33. Never do your devotees who have cherished deep affection to you, deviate from the right path that way, Oh Lord of Lakṣmī ! Protected on every side by you, they dauntlessly move about trading over the heads of the commanders of armies of obstacles and impediment, Oh Lord.

34. For the sake of preservation of the world you assume an absolutely pure—*sāttvic*—body which bestows the desired boons (*puruṣārthas*) to embodied beings, and wherewith people (belonging to different *āśramas*—stages in life) worship you by studying the Vedas, performance of religious rituals, Yogic practices, austere penance and deep meditation (worship of the Lord is impossible in the absence of a corporeal form).

35. Oh creator of the universe ! Had you not assumed this absolutely pure *sāttvic* form of yours, the Supreme direct knowledge which thoroughly annihilates ignorance and the notion of difference resulting from it, could not be engendered at all. Your worship can only be inferred (and not realized directly) by the light shed by *guṇas* (or the cognitive senses) as a particular *guṇa* can become in a special way and with a particular person, a source of light or knowledge. (When you are worshipped through your pure *sāttvic* form and the mind becomes one with you, God realization takes place through your grace).

36. Your name and form along with your excellences, deeds and births cannot be comprehended fully and described (as they are divine and super-natural). You are the direct witness of everything, but your nature can only be inferred (and not directly perceived) by the mind and the Vedic words. But Oh self-effulgent Lord ! Your votaries, however, do realize you directly while they are engaged in their acts (of worship and meditation).

37. He who during the performance of his activities has his mind concentrated on your lotus-like feet by hearing, singing, reminding others and contemplating on your auspicious names and forms, does not deserve to be born again (in *saṁsāra*).

38. Fortunately, On Hari ! The heavy burden of this earth which represents your foot, has been removed by the birth (*avatāra*) of Your Lordship. It is our good luck that we shall now see the earth impressed with your auspiciously-marked beautiful foot-prints and the heavens showered with Your mercy.

39. Oh Lord ! Verily we cannot conceive any other reason, except your own pleasure, of assuming a form (birth) that You, the unborn are born. Oh Lord You are eternally free and a shelter from fear. Birth, continuation in life and death in the case of individual Souls are brought through *avidyā* (ignorance about you).

40. Oh Lord ! Now be pleased to protect us and the three worlds and relieve the earth of her heavy burden as you did (in the past) by incarnating Yourself in the form of a fish, a horse (*Hayagrīva*), a tortoise, a man-lion (Nṛsiṁha), a boar (Varāha), a swan, a Kṣattriya (Rāma), a Brāhmaṇa (Paraśurāma) and a god (Vāmana). Our salutations to You, Oh the best and foremost of Yadus.

41. (Addressing Devakī) :

"Oh mother (Devakī) ! It is really a good luck that the Supreme Person, the veritable Almighty Lord himself has entered your womb with his *aṁśa* (divine powers which are his parts), for the sake of our welfare. Let there be no more fear from Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas whose death is imminent. Your son will be the protector of Yadus".

Śri Śuka said :

42. Having thus eulogized the Supreme Person whose nature is distinct from the visible universe, the gods headed by Brahmā and Śiva returned to heaven.

CHAPTER THREE

Description of the Birth of Śrikṛṣṇa

Śri Śuka continued :

1. Now came the most auspicious time full of all blessings when the constellation Rohiṇī presided over by god Brahmā, the son of Viṣṇu, was at the ascendant and all constellations of stars (like *Aśvinī* and others), planets and stars assumed peaceful aspects.

2. All the directions became clear and propitious (despite the continuation of the rainy season in the month of Śrāvaṇa) the sky became illumined with innumerable clusters of stars shining unobscured; the earth with its towns, villages, settlements of cowherds and mines revelled in auspicious festivities.

3. The waters of the rivers became crystal clear; the lakes were blooming with lotuses; the rows of forest trees laden with bunches of flowers were resounded with swarms of the sweetly humming bees and cooing of birds.

4 A pure, cool breeze wafting sweet fragrance blew delighting in its touch; the sacred fires maintained in the houses of the twice-borns (automatically) burst into flames.

5. With the exception of demons like Kaṁsa, the minds of all the creatures and those of gods became filled with delight. When the birthless (Lord Viṣṇu) was about to incarnate, kettle-drums were being sounded in the celestial region.

6. At that time Kinnaras and Gandharvas burst forth singing, Siddhas and Cāraṇas sang prayers; ladies of the Vidyādhara clan danced along with celestial damsels.

7. Overwhelmed with joy the gods and sages showered (heaps of) flowers; following the roaring of the seas, clouds gave forth a low rumbling sound.

8. At midnight when the darkness tormenting the people was thickening, Lord Viṣṇu, the Indweller of the hearts of all, manifested himself in his own complete divine form, like the full moon rising in the East, through Devakī who was like unto a goddess.

9-10. Vasudeva saw that wonderful child of lotus-like eyes, endowed with four arms, bearing a conch and wielding aloft a mace and a discus (and a lotus); having (on his chest) the Śrīvatsa mark (of curl of golden hair), with the Kaustubha gem (hanging from his neck but) beautified by his neck; clad in yellow silken garments, possessing the charming complexion of rain-bearing cloud; his profuse locks of hair bathed in the lustre of his crown and ear-rings studded with invaluable *vaidūrya*-gems (lapis lazuli); resplendent with his exquisite and valuable zone, armlets, bracelets and other ornaments.

11. With eyes blooming wide open with amazement, Vasudeva beheld Lord Hari (born as) his son. With his mind confused with rapture on that happy and auspicious occasion of Kṛṣṇa's incarnation, he (Vasudeva) was overcome with (lit. bathed in) delight, and gave ten thousand cows as gift to Brāhmaṇas.

12. Now realizing the child who illuminated the lying-in-chamber with his splendour, was Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Person, Vasudeva of pure heart, who, due to his awareness of Viṣṇu's prowess completely lost his fear, began to praise him with folded palms, and body bent low in humility, Oh scion of Bharata.

(Having first embraced the Lord as his son)

Vasudeva said :

13. How blessed I am that I have seen you directly —you the Supreme Person, transcendental to and distinct from *Prakṛti*, absolute wisdom and supreme bliss incarnate, and (as inner controller) the witness of all minds and intellects.

14. (As a matter of fact you never entered the womb of Devakī for) you are factually of such absolute nature as is

described above. Having evolved this universe consisting of three *guṇas* through your creative potency called Māyā, at the beginning of creation, you have not really entered into it (for the Lord is infinite and the universe is limited); you are, however, presumed to have entered it (as a *Puruṣa* and the omnipresent Inner Controller).

15. Just as these unmodified elementary principles (such as *mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra*) are in existence at the beginning of the creation, and are severally incapable of creation though endowed with different properties and powers, they give rise to the universe after combining with their evolutes.

16. Having come together (synthesizing) with their (sixteen) evolutes, they create the universe and appear to have entered into it; but due to their existence prior to the creation (as its cause), their (later) entry is an impossibility. (Similarly, the Lord existed before Devakī and his appearance to have entered her womb is not a reality).

17.* In this way, even though your revered self exists along with the objects which are cognisable through senses (the true nature of which is) inferrable through perception of sense-objects you are not perceived along with those objects, directly (as the senses can perceive only their specific objects and God is not such an object); (for you, being unconditioned and all-pervading, the distinction of being inside or outside is inapplicable to you. You are everything and the indwelling Soul of all, the self-abiding real essence. (Hence your entry in the womb of Devakī is not a reality).

* (1) VR. : Though you abide in all creatures like gods, men—the products of *guṇas*—you are not affected by their limitations. You are above modifications, essentially of unlimited knowledge and blissful nature. You are un-enveloped i.e. of unlimited knowledge. Being all-pervading and the cause of all the distinction of being 'in' and 'out' is not applicable to you. As you are the independent Inner Controller, *antaryāmin*, the limitations of the body do not affect you.

(2) SD. emphasizes that the direct vision of God is due to His grace and He is beyond the ken of senses.

(3) VT. : As you are always loving to your devotees, you have come to us as a son which is the highest reward (of our devotion).

18.* He who presumes real independent existence—as distinct from the Soul—in the case of objects perceived by him (or by the Soul) is an ignorant person. For when these objects (i.e. the world) are subjected to investigation, they are (found to be) of verbal nature and essentially unreal. He who acknowledges the unreality as a distinct reality is (certainly) a dullard.

19. Oh all-pervading Lord ! They say that the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe proceeds from you who are above all *guṇas*, (and hence) desireless (and performing no acts), and subject to no modification. As you are both Brahman and the Supreme Ruler, there is no contradiction in transcendence to modifications and the creation etc. of the universe. For though the activity is carried out by *guṇas*, it is ascribed to you as *guṇas* (ultimately depend on you only).

20. You who are of such a nature (as described above) verily assume, through your Māyā potency, pure white complexion (Brahmā form) full of the principle of *rajas* for the creation of these worlds, and a dark complexion (Rudra form) through *tamas* for the destruction of the universe.

21. Oh all-pervading Lord, the supreme Ruler of all ! (how gracious of you it is that though Your *avatāra* is an impossibility in the real sense of the term), You have incarnated yourself in my house (despite its being a prison-cell), with a desire to protect this world. You will annihilate the hordes led by millions of Asura chiefs passing under the name of Kṣatriyas.

22. Oh Lord of gods ! Hearing (the prediction) of Your birth in our house, this villainous fellow (Kaṁsa) has (cold-bloodedly) killed your elder brothers. Learning your incarnation directly through the reports of his servants, he will just now rush here with uplifted weapons."

* VJ. : In the absence of the support of Vedic texts, it is untenable to admit the conclusion of the ignorant that you are identical with the body or the senses simply because of Your presence in them. For the Supreme Man (Lord Viṣṇu) has accepted (or revealed) the super-human faultless Vedic texts which dispel all doubts.

Śrī Śuka said :

23. Now, seeing that this son of hers bore the characteristics of the supreme person (Lord Viṣṇu), Devakī who was (erstwhile) afraid of Kaṁsa, (now) smiled happily and began to pray him :

Devakī said :

24. (How can there be any danger to you) who are verily the Lord Viṣṇu himself, the Illuminator of the aggregate of intelligence, senses and other psycho-physical organisms: and who are that indescribable Reality whom the Vedas declare as the unmanifest primordial cause, the Supreme Brahman, pure consciousness transcending all *guṇas* and modifications, absolute existence attributeless, and devoid of activity.

25. When at the end of the period of two *parārdhas* (which terminates the life-time of Brahmā), by the velocity of time, the universe dissolves and all the gross elements (*Mahābhūtas*) are absorbed into their primordial subtle form (viz. *ahaṁkāra* which in its turn is absorbed into the principle called *mahat*) and the principle *mahat* is merged in the unmanifest (*pradhāna* which is absorbed in you), You alone remain behind (remaining cognisant that the *Pradhāna* lying merged in You is to be re-awakened) and hence you are designated as the Residue (*Śeṣa*) or the complete whole (*aśeṣa*).

26. The wise say that this mighty time as described above which begins with a *nimeṣa* (twinkling of the eye) and extends (through cycle of years) to the end of *dviparārdha* (Brahmā's life) and which controls the cyclic course of the universe, is your own sportful activity, Oh Director of the *Prakṛti* ! I seek your protection—You who are the Supreme Ruler and the abode of security.

27. A mortal, being apprehensive of the serpent (in the form) of death, and running about all the world (for security against death), failed to find a place free from fear. Today having attained to your lotus-like feet through an unexpected stroke of good luck (and through your grace), he reposes in peace and security. It is (now) Death that runs away from him.

28. Of such nature as You are, protect us (your devotees) who are afraid of the terrible son of Ugrasena; for you are the rescuer of your devotees (servants) from fear. Let not this divine form of yours which is worthy of being the object of meditation, be manifest to the gross physical eyes of human beings.

29. Let not that wicked Kaṁsa know of your birth from me, Oh Madhusūdana (slayer of the demon Madhu). Being naturally timid, I am terribly afraid of Kaṁsa, for your sake.

30. Oh soul of the universe ! May you withdraw this Superhuman form with four arms furnished with the superb splendour of conch, discus, mace and lotus.

31. That your Lordship, the Supreme Person who contains within yourself all this universe *in extenso* at the end of the cosmic night (during *Pralaya*), should get himself accommodated in my womb is certainly a wonderful imitation of the human (ways of the) world."

The Lord said :

32. "Oh chaste lady ! In your previous birth in the age of Svāyambhuva Manu, you were Pṛśni and this sinless Vasudeva your husband, was then a Prajāpati named Sutapas.

33. When both of you were directed by god Brahmā to create progeny, you subdued all your senses and performed a very austere penance.

34. Enduring in due course, all the inclemencies of the seasons such as rains, storms, solar rays, snow-fall and heat, you completely washed off the impurities of the mind by breath-control.

35. Subsisting on withered leaves and merely on air and actuated with the desire to obtain your cherished objects from me, you were determined to propitiate Me with a serene mind.

36. Thus rolled by twelve thousand divine years, while both of you, with your heart fixed on Me, were performing a very difficult and austere penance.

37-38. Being continuously contemplated upon in the heart with faith, devotion and asceticism, I was highly pleased with you and manifested myself before you in this very form with a desire to fulfil your cherished objects, Oh sinless one,

When I, the foremost bestower of boons, told you to ask Me for a boon, the boon for having a son like Me was sought by you.

39. Though both of you had not tasted the conjugal and other pleasures of ordinary sensual objects and were childless, you did not seek for Emancipation (from the world) as you were deluded by My divine Māyā.

40. When I disappeared from your view and you, having secured the boon of getting a son like Me and thus accomplishing your cherished desire, you indulged in enjoying sensual pleasures.

41. Finding that nobody else in this world is comparable to Me in goodness of nature, generosity and other virtues in this world, I Myself was born as your son and became known as *Pṛśni-garbha*.

42. And again of you both (as Aditi and Kaśyapa) I was born of Aditi from Kaśyapa and was famous as Upendra and also as Vāmana due to shortness of stature.

43. Now even in this third incarnation, I am verily born with that very form again of you both (who are former Aditi and Kaśyapa). In this way, my word has been kept, Oh pious lady.

44. I have revealed this form of Mine to you in order to remind you of my previous births (from you); otherwise the knowledge about my real being is not possible through the semblance of human form. (Now as desired by you, I shall assume the form of a human baby).

45. Thinking of Me constantly as your son as well as contemplating upon Me as Supreme Brahman and loving me affectionately, both of you will attain to the highest state in relation to Me.

45-A. (*Vṛndāvana edition adds*)

If you are still afraid of Kaṁsa, quickly take me to Gokula and bring (as substitute) My Māyā who has been born from (the womb of) Yaśodā."

Śrī Śuka said :

46. Having spoken thus, Hari became silent. With his Māyā power, the Lord immediately became an ordinary

human babe, while the parents were simply looking on (with wonder).

47. Thereupon, when Vasudeva, the son of Śūra desired to go out of the lying-in-chamber taking his son with him (and was about to start) as directed by the Lord, Yoga-Māyā, though (herself) birthless, was born of Nanda's wife.

48-49. By Yoga-Māyā the gate-keepers were deprived of all their consciousness and functioning of their senses and even the citizens were steeped in deep sleep; all the gates (of the palace prison) which were closed by huge doors secured with iron chains and bolts automatically flung open at the approach of Vasudeva carrying Kṛṣṇa (on his head) like darkness dispersing at the appearance of the Sun. The rain cloud showered with a gentle rumbling and the serpent Śesa (closely) followed him, warding off the rain-water with his hoods spread over his head (like an umbrella).

50. While Indra, the god of rains, continuously poured showers of rain (and even though) the river Yamunā (the presiding deity of which was Yamunā, the younger sister of Yama—the god of death) covered with foam created by waves set up by the velocity of the swiftly-moving deep flood and was full of hundreds of fearful whirlpools, afforded passage (to Vasudeva and Kṛṣṇa) as the Sea did to the Lord of Lakṣmī (Lord Śrī Rāma) formerly.

51. Arriving at Nanda's Vraja, Vasudeva found that all the cowherds were deeply buried in sleep. Placing his son on the bed of Yaśodā, taking up her daughter (in exchange), Vasudeva returned home (his palace-prison).

52. Placing the daughter on the bed of Devakī, Vasudeva put the iron fetters on his feet and remained confined as before.

53. And Yaśodā, Nanda's wife was vaguely conscious of having delivered a child, but she was so exhausted and had her memory (so much) clouded under delusion, that she did not discern the sex of the baby.

CHAPTER FOUR

Yoga-Māyā's Prophecy and Kaṁsa's Order to Slaughter all Children

Śrī Śuka said :

1. (After the return of Vasudeva) all the gates of the outer and inner apartments became closed as before. Hearing the cry of the baby, the palace guards became wide-awake.

2. They, on their part, (promptly and) hastily approached Kaṁsa, the King of Bhojas, and reported (to him) Devakī's delivery of that (eighth) child which he was expecting anxiously.

3. Springing up hurriedly from the bed and bewildered at the thought that that (child) was his (veritable god of) death, he, with tottering steps and dishevelled hair, rushed hastily to (Devakī's) lying-in-room.

4. To her brother (Kaṁsa), the pious, divine, (yet) miserable lady piteously addressed. "This is your daughter-in-law, Oh blessed brother. She may be the eighth child (but) it is not proper that you should kill a female (child).

5. Dear Brother ! Impelled as you were by Destiny, a number of my children brilliant like fire, were killed by you. Be pleased to give (spare) this one daughter to me.

6. Oh mighty king ! Am I not your miserable younger sister who am bereaved of all my sons ? Unfortunate as I am, it behoves you, Oh dear brother, to spare this last child for me".

Śrī Śuka said :

7. (Although) he was thus implored by Devakī while hugging the child to her bosom and weeping piteously like a most helpless woman, the wicked fellow sternly rebuked her and snatched away the baby from her.

8. His affection (for the sister and niece) being uprooted (superseded) by his (vile) self-interest, he seized the new-born daughter of his sister by her feet and dashed her against the surface of a slab.

9. Flying off from (the grip of) of hands, she rose up to the sky and (stationing herself in the sky), the younger sister of Kṛṣṇa manifested herself as a goddess with eight mighty arms wielding weapons.

10. She was adorned with heavenly garlands, garments, pigments, jewelled ornaments and wielded (in her arms) a bow, a spear, an arrow, a shield, a sword, a conch, a discus and a mace.

11. She was being praised by Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Apsaras (divine damsels), Kinnaras and serpents who offered her rich, sumptuous presents. She spoke :

12. "You dunce ! What have you gained by killing me ? Your destroyer, your adversary in the former birth, is born somewhere (in an unknown place). Do not unnecessarily kill helpless, innocent children."

13. Having warned him thus, the goddess (disappeared). The venerable goddess Māyā is known under many names and is worshipped in many shrines, bearing different names.

14. Kaṁsa was extremely flabbergasted to hear her pronouncement. He set Vasudeva and Devakī at liberty and apologised in humility :

15. "Alas ! My sister ! Oh my brother-in-law ! Like a cannibal preying on his own child, many a son of yours has been killed by me, a wicked sinner.

16. For being so, (a sinner) bereft of mercy, for disowning my friends and relatives, for being virtually dead though breathing (merely alive), I do not know to what infernal region I shall be taken as in the case of a slayer of Brāhmaṇas.

17. Not only mortals but even the celestials also speak untruth. Putting faith in them, I, a wicked sinner, killed my sister's children.

18. Oh high-souled ones ! Do not lament for your sons who reaped the fruit of their previous deeds. Creatures are at the mercy of the Providence. They do not live or are not together (at the same place) for ever.

19. Just as in this world earthen articles are created out of and (after destruction) become one with the earth, but the earth itself persists (unmodified), similarly in the process of

creation and destruction of physical bodies the Soul undergoes no modifications.

20. Misapprehension about the nature of the Soul arises in him who does not understand the Reality as it is. That leads to the notion of difference (contrary to the real nature of the Soul). Thus there is no end to *saṁsāra* and to the union and separation from the body (i.e. the cycle of births and deaths).

21. Inasmuch as every creature has inevitably and helplessly to reap the fruit of his actions, Oh blessed sister, do not grieve over (the death of) your sons, even though they were killed by me.

22. So long as a person does not cognize the real nature of his Self and identifies his body with the Soul, and (wrongly) regards himself as being killed or being the killer, that ignorant fellow is subject to the role of being the subject or object of suffering.

23. Saintly persons are compassionate to the afflicted and the poor. Please do forgive me for my wickedness." With these words and with his face overflowing with tears, he clasped the feet of his sister and her husband.

24. Being reassured by the words of the daughter of Devakī, Kaṁsa, as a testimony of his personal affection to them, released Vasudeva and Devakī from chains (prison).

25. Due to the (sincere) regrets and repentance of her brother, the wrath of Devakī was pacified, and she gave him leave (to go). Vasudeva smiled and spoke to him :

26. "Oh highly fortunate Kaṁsa ! It is exactly as you say. The notion of creatures that they are identical with the body is born of ignorance, and that is the cause of the difference in regarding this as one's own and that as another's.

27. Persons possessing differentiating outlook and sense of distinction and suffering from grief, joy, fear, malice, covetousness, delusion and pride do not perceive the self-existent Reality (God) who brings about the destruction of beings through their mutual action (against each other), caused by their passions."

Śrī Śuka said :

28. Thus sincerely addressed by kindly disposed Devakī and Vasudeva, Kaṁsa took leave of them and returned to his palace.

29. When the night was over, Kaṁsa summoned his ministers and reported to them everything that had been said by *Yoganidrā* (the trance—sleep of Lord Viṣṇu).

30. Hearing the narration of their master, the demons (sons of Diti), the (sworn) enemies of gods, who cherished deep anger against the celestials, but were not foresighted spoke to him.

31. "If this be the case, Oh Lord of Bhojas, we shall verily massacre today all children of ten days or less (dwelling) in cities, towns, cowherds' camps and (such) other places.

32. What can the gods do with all their endeavours. They are cowards on the battlefield. They live in perpetual terror of the twanging of your bow-string.

33. Being beaten on all sides with volleys of arrows discharged by you, they, being anxious to save their lives, deserted the battlefield and took to their heels.

34. Some gods in their wretched plight laid down their arms and stood with folded palms, while others with their loin-cloth untucked and hair on the head untied and dishevelled announced, "We are afraid."

35. You do not strike at those (enemies) who have forgotten their arms and missiles or have lost their chariots or are terror-stricken or are attending to something else or have turned away (from the battlefield) or have their bows broken or have given up fighting.

36. What can gods, the warriors in peace times and boastful outside the battlefield, do (to harm us)? Of what account is Hari who lies in concealment or Śiva who dwells in a forest? Why care for Indra of poor strength or Brahmā (always) absorbed in penance?

37. We, however, think that gods due to their (inborn) enmity, should not be ignored. Therefore, deploy us, your obedient servants to dig out and destroy even their roots.

38. Just as a disease in the body, if neglected, strikes deep roots and becomes impossible to be cured or the senses if

uncontrolled and ignored (become unmanageable), so the enemy, if ignored, grows in strength and cannot be dislodged.

39. Viṣṇu is the root (the main stay) of all gods. Where there is Viṣṇu, there abides the eternal righteousness (*dharma*). The roots of the *dharma* are the Vedas, cows, Brāhmaṇas, asceticism and sacrifices with donation of liberal gifts.

40. Therefore, Oh King, we shall kill by all (possible) means Brāhmaṇas, the reciters of the Vedas, the ascetics performing penance and those continually engaged in sacrificial acts, and cows yielding all the materials for sacrificial oblations.

41. Brāhmaṇas, cows, the Vedas, penance, truthfulness, control of senses, serenity of mind, faith, mercy, endurance and the sacrifices constitute the body of Hari.

42. For he is the Supreme Ruler of all gods, the enemy of Asuras, the indweller in the hearts of all. All divinities including Lord Śiva and the four-faced god Brahmā depend on him as their support (root). Hence extirpation (through persecution) of sages is really the only means of killing him."

Śrī Śuka said :

43. Having thus conferred with his wicked ministers, the evil-minded Kaṁsa who was enmeshed in the snare of Death, considered massacre of Brāhmaṇas as conducive to his good.

44. Having commissioned Dānavas who were naturally disposed to persecute others and who could assume any form at will, for harassing the good people in all directions, Kaṁsa entered his palace.

45. Constituted as they were by predominantly *rājasic* nature, and with their minds deluded by *tamas*, they started their campaign of hatred of the good as their death was imminent.

46. Serious violations of the great destroy one's span of life, prosperity, glory, righteousness, (attainment of) heavenly regions, and all other blessings.

CHAPTER FIVE

Celebration of Kṛṣṇa's Birth : Meeting of Nanda and Vasudeva

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. Delighted at the birth of a son, the noble-minded Nanda too took a bath, got purified and adorned himself. He sent for Brāhmaṇas well versed in astrology and made them recite the *Svastyayana* (prescribed benedictory Vedic hymns) and got the *jāta-karma* ceremony of his child, as well as the worship of his forebears (*pitṛs*)and gods duly performed according to precepts.

3. As a gift (on this joyous occasion), he presented to Brāhmaṇas two-hundred thousands of richly adorned cows, and seven mountain-like heaps[1] of sesamum seeds covered with streams (large quantities) of precious stones and gold-cloth.

4.* Some material things become purified by passage of time (e.g. the earth), some by ablution (e.g. our body), or washing (e.g. things covered with dirt), some by special rites (e.g. the foetus), some by penance (e.g. senses), some by sacrificial performance (e.g. Brāhmaṇas), some by charitable gifts (wealth), some by contentment (mind), while the soul is purified by (meditation and) knowledge of the Self.

5. Brāhmaṇas, Sūtas[2], Māgadhas and Vandins uttered auspicious blessings; musicians sang; drums and kettle-drums were frequently sounded.

6. All the entrances, enclosures, and interiors of the houses of *Vraja* were well-swept and properly besprinkled (with

1. VC. quotes the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa* and states the best 'Sesamum mountain' consists of ten *droṇas*, medium of five, and the lowest of three *droṇas*.

* Examples in the bracket are supplied by ŚR.

2. Normally *sūtas* are the reciters of Purāṇas; Māgadhas are bards reciting the glories of royal dynasties; Vandins are clearheaded persons making observations suitable for the occasion.

sūtāḥ paurāṇikāḥ proktā, Māgadhā vaṁśa-śaṁsakāḥ /
Vandinas tvamala-prajñāḥ praśtāva-sadṛśoktayaḥ//

But VJ. states : *Sūtas* sing the eulogies composed by themselves, Māgadhas sing compositions of others, while Vandins read panygerics from books.

water). It (the *Vraja*) was decorated with flags and buntings of different colours, banners, wreaths, arches of (silken) raiments, and tender leaves.

7. The oxen, cows and heifers (grown up calves) were smeared with oil mixed with turmeric power. They were painted with various colours, and adorned with peacock feathers, wreaths, cloths and gold chains (round the neck).

8. Adorned with valuable garments, costly ornaments, coats and turbans, the cowherds came to visit (Nanda) with various kinds of presents in their hands.

9. On hearing the news of the birth of a son to Yaśodā, the cowherd women were delighted, and they beautified themselves with costly garments, ornaments and (the make-up of) collyrium etc.

10. The beauty of their lotus-like faces was enhanced with the decoration of saffron-paste like unto filaments heightening the beauty of a lotus. In spite of their heavy buttocks, they hastily went with presents (to Yaśodā) heaving their heavy breasts (while going).

11. Wearing ear-rings set with well-polished jewels, necklaces of gold-coins about their necks, and clad in wonderfully wrought garments of various colours the *gopa* damsels proceeded to the palace of Nanda showering on the way flowers dropped from the braids of their hair. They appeared (lit. shone) most beautiful with bangles round their wrists, their swaying ear-rings and dangling necklaces on heaving breasts.

12. Invoking blessings (of God) on the child, "May you protect the child for a long time"[1] they sprayed the (assembled) people with water mixed with oil and turmeric power and sang lustily. (Or : they sang in a high pitch the praise of the Unborn—Kṛṣṇa).

13. On the great festive occasion of the coming of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Infinite, the Supreme Lord of the universe, a variety of musical instruments were played on.

1. Or : May you protect us forever—VR and others.

This interpretation is obviously illogical and out of context with the sentence, "Invoking blessings on the child".

14. The merry cowherds joyously sprayed and besmeared one another with curds, milk, ghee and water and they threw (balls of) butter at each other.[1]

15-16* For the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu and for the well-being of his son, the noble-minded Nanda presented to the cowherds garments, ornaments and wealth in the form of cows (or kine, gold and silver). The generous-hearted Nanda respectfully worshipped Sūtas, Māgadhas, Vandins and others who lived by their arts, skills or crafts (e.g. astrologers, dancers etc.), and conferred upon them their (respective) desired objects.

17. Welcomed by Nanda, the chief of cowherds, Rohiṇī, who was highly fortunate (as she was to be witness to the sportive activities of Lòrd Kṛṣṇa from his childhood) was adorned with very costly (heavenly-type) Lower garment and other clothes, garland and necklace and was moving about in Nanda's palace (particularly in that reception).

18. Thence forward the *Vraja* of Nanda became blessed with prosperity in every respect as it was turned into a pleasure garden for the sporting of goddess Lakṣmī due to its becoming the abode of Hari, Oh King.

19. Having instructed the cowherds to take care of and protect the Gokula, Nanda went to Mathurā to pay his annual tribute to Kaṁsa, Oh Parīkṣit (the best of Kurus).

20. Having learnt (from the public) that his brotherly Nanda had come and having (reliably) known that Nanda's (official) work of payment of tributes was over, Vasudeva repaired to his lodging place (the parking ground of wagons).

21. Seeing him (Vasudeva) come, he promptly sprang to his feet as a body (in an unconscious stage) does on the return of life (or consciousness). Being overjoyed and over-

1. Or : Thickly besmearing one another with butter, they tried to throw each other on (the slippery) ground.—VT.

* ŚR : The nobleminded Nanda presented to cowherds as also to Sūtas, Māgadhas, Vandins and others who lived by their skill in arts, crafts, etc., garments, ornaments, kine and wealth.

For the propitiation of Lord Viṣṇu and the well-being of the child, the generous-minded Nanda honoured others (visitors, guests etc.) by bestowing on them their desired objects.

whelmed with affection, he flung his arms round his dearest friend to embrace him.

22. Oh Protector of the People ! When Vasudeva was respectfully received, comfortably seated and was honoured with the enquiry about his health, he, with his mind deeply attached to both of his sons, courteously addressed Nanda as follows :

23. "Brother ! It is indeed fortunate that a darling child has been born to you who were childless till this advanced age and had lost hopes of getting an issue.

24. It is due to sheer good luck that you have met me today like one born again in this whirling cycle of Saṁsāra. For the sight of dear ones is very rare.

25. Oh dear friend ! The staying together of intimate friends (howsoever dear but) following varied professions, is not possible like unto the coming together of floating logs of wood (etc.) in a stream of water but which are swept away by the current.

26. Is the Gokula (Vṛndāvana) where you are now dwelling accompanied (lit. surrounded) by your friends and relatives favourable to the cattle ? Does it abound in plenty of water, grass and plants ? Is it free from disease and epidemics ?

27. Oh brother ! Does my son (Balarāma) who regards you to be his father and is dearly fondled by you and your wife, doing well along with his mother, in your *Vraja* ?

28. For, the threefold objective of human life (viz. *dharma, artha* and *kāma*) is prescribed (as beneficial) insofar as they are shared with one's kith and kin. But if they suffer distress, that threefold purpose of life does not contribute to happiness."

Nanda said :

29. "Alas ! Many of your sons born of Devakī have been killed by Kaṁsa. And only the youngest daughter survived—even she flew to heaven.

30.* It is definite that people in this world have their end in the unseen (according to their destiny. When good

* VR : All people definitely find their end in the unseen (as destined along with happiness and misery). The destiny is the ultimate supreme controller. He who realises that pleasure and pain are always due to his destiny, is always equable and serene in prosperity and adversity.

fortune, blessing one with the pleasure of having sons etc., ceases to smile, one is bereaved of them). The destiny is supreme. (If one is separated from one's sons, the destiny reunites them). He who knows that the destiny is the reality about Ātman (and as such is the ever constant cause of pleasure and pain) does not get bewildered."

Vasudeva said :

31. "The annual tribute has been paid by you to the king, and we have seen (each other). You should not stay here any longer, for omens indicating calamities are seen at Gokula."

Śrī Śuka said :

32. Thus advised by Vasudeva, Nanda and other cowherds, taking leave of him, mounted on carts drawn by bullocks and returned to Gokula.

CHAPTER SIX

Pūtanā emancipated

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On his way (back to Gokula), Nanda pondered that the words of Vasudeva might not be untrue. Being apprehensive of impending calamities, (mentally) he sought refuge in Lord Hari.

2. Deputed by Kaṁsa, the terrible, infant-killer Pūtan moved about, killing babes and infants in cities, towns, cowherd-settlements (on her way).

3. Wherever, people, while attending to their duties, do not listen to (recite etc.) the names and deeds of the Lord of Sātvatas (Kṛṣṇa) which are capable of annihilating demons, there and there only, ogresses (and other evil spirits) prevail.

4. One day, that Pūtanā who was capable of coursing through the sky, flew (through the sky) to the Gokula ruled by Nanda. Assuming the form of a young beautiful woman

through her witchcraft, she entered the Gokula as the wantonness was capable of assuming any guise, and moving into any house she pleased.

5-6. On seeing that beautiful damsel the braids of whose hair were adorned with jasmine flowers (interwoven therein), whose slender waist was (as if) crushed between her big buttocks and heavy breasts, who was clad in rich garments, whose face was beautified with the locks of hair lustrous with the radiance of the brilliant swaying ear-rings, who with her charming smiles and sidelong glances captivated the hearts of the inhabitants of Vraja (who hence failed to extern her), and whom, due to her wearing a blooming lotus in hand, the Gopa women thought to be goddess Lakṣmī incarnate, who had come to see her Lord (and they kept silent in awe and respect, instead of barring her entrance).

7. Pūtanā, that infant-killer evil spirit, roving in search for babies, came by chance to the house of Nanda, and saw the child Kṛṣṇa who was the exterminator of the wicked, but was lying in bed with his immeasurable innate glory veiled, like fire covered under ashes.

8. Recognizing her to be the evil spirit which kills infants, the Lord of the mobile and immobile creation lay quiet with his eyes closed[1]. And she placed the Infinite Lord, her very death, on her lap, as a stupid person would do to a sleeping serpent, mistaking it for a rope.

8A. Even though he was the Supreme Ruler of the universe the Lord, playing the part of a child, spoke nothing. But the fiendess was unaware that he was the lord Hari who by his very nature knows directly all the activities of the world.

9. Finding suddenly within their house that superb accomplished lady behaving (externally) most affectionately and in a charming way, even though her heart was sharp (cruel like sword encased in a charming scabbard, both the mothers (Yaśodā and Rohiṇī) were stupefied with her effulgence and stood agazing (instead of preventing her).

10. The terrible demoness placed the child Kṛṣṇa on her lap and suckled him at her breast full of indigestible virulent

1. VJ.'s text interperses one verse here.

poison. Thereupon, with indignation, the Lord squeezed hard her breast with his hands and sucked it along with her life.

11. Being crushed in all her vital parts, she cried out "Let me go, enough of it, leave me". With her body drenched in perspiration and with her hands and feet thrown in convulsions and with distended eyes, she wailed loudly.

12. By her extremely loud and deep cry, the earth along with the mountains, and the heavens along with the planets, were shaken. The netherworld and all the cardinal points were reverberated with the Sound. People being afraid of the discharge of Vajra, fell down on the ground.

13. Oh King, the demoness who, being excruciatingly afflicted at the breast, thus fell dead, reverting to her original form with her mouth agape and her hair, hands and feet stretched near the cowpen even as Vṛtra fell when struck down with *Vajra* (thunderbolt).

14. Even while it fell, her (giant) body crushed to powder trees within an area of twelve miles. It was the most astonishing sight, Oh king of kings.

15-17. The cowherds—men and women—whose hearts, ears and heads were already rent asunder with the terrible roars and yells of the demoness, were struck with terror to see her fearful body with a mouth raged with a terrible set of tusks long like the poles of ploughs, with nostrils resembling mountain caverns; breasts huge like (a pair of hillocks, her reddish hair terribly dishevelled, her eyes deep like dark wells, her buttock terrifically big like sand dunes, her arms, legs and thighs resembling dams (around) her belly looking like a dried up, waterless pool.

18. Seeing the child playing fearlessly on her bosom, the cowherd-women, in their bewilderment, quickly came to him and picked him up.

19. They, also with Yaśodā and Rohiṇī ensured the (future) safety of the child on all sides, against evil spirits (and such other mishaps) by performing the ceremony of waving of the cow's tail round the child and other rites.

20. They bathed the child with the urine of a cow and besmeared it with dust raised by her hoofs. And by applying

cowdungs to twelve (different) parts of his body[1] pronouncing simultaneously twelve (different) names of the Lord, they ensured his safety (by this spiritual talisman).

21. (The *Gopa* women, being bewildered, forgot that they have to get themselves so consecrated before applying the talisman to the child. When they recovered....)

They performed the *ācamana* (sipping of water uttering the names of God for self-purification), made the *bija-nyāsa* (assignment of the various parts of the body to deities accompanied with the uttering of some 'seed-letters' and corresponding gesticulations) first on both of their hands and parts of their body, and then followed the same procedure of the 'placement of seed-letters' on the body of the child (as follows :).

(The Gopa women said)

22. "May Aja (the birthless Lord) protect your feet! May Maṇiman[2] (the Indweller of the *jīva.*) guard your knees;

1. VB. enumerates the parts of the body to be so daubed with cowdung, as follows :

Lalāṭam bāhumūle ca hṛdayam nābhi-pārśvakam /
kaṇṭhaḥ skandhau kaṭir mūrdhā stanau ceti vidur budhāḥ //

Forehead, arms, chest, navel, throat, shoulders, waist, head and the nipples on the chest. And names of god Viṣṇu to be uttered are the first twelve names out of the twenty-four names uttered at the beginning of *Sandhyā vandana.*

VT. quotes from the *Padma Purāṇa* the procedure which is as follows : The particular aspect of the Lord is visualized as consecrating and abiding in that particular part of the body.

Part of the body to be daubed.	*Name of the Lord to be uttered at this time*
Forehead	Keśava
Abdomen (but KD. : Navel)	Nārāyāṇa
Chest	Mādhava
Throat	Govinda
Right side (but KD. · right arm-pit)	Viṣṇu
Right arm	Madhusūdana
Neck (but KD. : right ear-bottom)	Trivikrama
Left side (but KD. : Left arm-pit)	Vāmana
Left arm	Śrīdhara
Neck (but KD. : Left ear bottom)	Hṛṣīkeśa
Back	Padmanābha
Waist (but KD. : near the neck)	Dāmodara

2. v.l. *maṇiman*—the wearer of the Kaustubha gem—KD.

Yajña, your thighs; Acyuta, your loins; Hayagrīva (horse-necked Lord), your abdomen; Keśava, your heart; Īśa (the Supreme Ruler), your bosom; Ina (The Lord), your throat; Viṣṇu, your arms; Urukrama, your mouth; and Īśvara (the Supreme Lord), your head.

23. May the wielder of (Sudarśana) discus protect you at the front, and the Bearer of the (Kaumodakī) mace, at the back; May the slayer of Madhu and Ajana (the birthless Lord) each bearing a bow and a sword, protect you on both the sides; May *Urugāya* (the Lord sung by many) bearing the conch (Pāñcajanya), at the four corners (points intervening between quarters); Upendra (Vāmana), overhead; Tārkṣya, on the ground and the Spreme Man wielding a plough, on all sides.

24. May Hṛṣīkeśa protect your senses; Nārāyaṇa, your vital breaths; the Lord of Śvetadvīpa, your heart (the seat of intellect); the Lord of Yoga, your mind.

25. May the son of Pṛśni protect Your understanding; the Supreme Lord, Your *ahaṁkāra* (ego); may Govinda protect You while You are playing; Mādhava, while sleeping.

26. May Vaikuṇṭha guard You while walking; the Lord of Śrī, while sitting. The enjoyer of sacrifices, the terror to all evil spirits, while (You are) eating.

27-29. (All evil spirits like) *Dākinī, Yātudhāni, Kūṣmāṇḍas*, the wicked spirits troubling young infants, *Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas* and *Vināyakas, Koṭarā, Revatī, Jyeṣṭhā, Pūtanā, Mātṛkās* and others; *Unmādas* (spirits causing insanity,) and *Apasmāras* which trouble the body, senses and vital breaths; the evil spirits that frighten in dreams, the great calamitous portents, and those wicked spirits that seize the old and the young all these which are terrified at the mention of Viṣṇu's name—may all these wicked spirits be destroyed."

Śri Śuka said :

30. When the safety of the child was secured in this way (by performing the above-mentioned rites) by the Gopa women, bound to him with ties of affection, the mother suckled him and put him to bed.

31. In the meanwhile, Nanda and other Gopas (cowherds) reached Vraja from Mathurā. They became extremely astonished to see the (enormous) body of Pūtanā.

32. (They said to each other) "How wonderful! Certainly a veritable seer or a master of Yoga (in his previous incarnation) must have been born (in the form of Vasudeva). For that very calamity has been seen by us as was predicted by Vasudeva.

33. (Then) the inhabitants of Vraja hacked down that (Pūtanā's) body with axes and threw the pieces at a distance and burnt it limb by limb on pyres of logs of wood.

34. There arose (a column of) smoke fragrant like that of *aguru* sandle wood, out of that burning body, the sins of which were instantaneously annihilated, the moment Kṛṣṇa sucked (the life out of) it.

35. (How wonderful!) Pūtanā, the blood-sucking demoness, the infant-killer in this world attained to *Mokṣa* by giving suck to him, despite her intention of killing him.

36. How much more would they who dedicate with faith and devotion their most beloved objects to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, attain to *Mokṣa* as did his deeply attached mothers.[1]

37-38. When the Lord traversed Pūtanā's body with his feet which are enshrined in the hearts of his devotees, and are adorable to those (gods like Śiva and Brahmā) who are themselves worshipped by people, and sucked her breast, she, in spite of her being a demoness, attained to heaven, the destination (after death) of his mothers. What more need be said of those cows and mothers (Gopa women) the milk from whose breasts and udders was sucked (so fondly) by Kṛṣṇa? They must definitely attain to his abode.

1. ŚR. explains the plural form 'mothers' when Kṛṣṇa had actually two mothers—Yaśodā and Rohiṇī—by referring to Ch. 13 *infra* in which Kṛṣna is said to have assumed the forms of cowherd boys and calves when god Brahmā stole them away for one year and Kṛṣna in these forms was sucked by the *Gopa* women (the mothers of his abducted companions) and by cows (of those stolen calves). Thus those innumerable Gopa-women and cows became *ipso facto* his mothers.

39. For the glorious Lord, the son of Devakī, the dispenser of Final Emancipation and all other blessings, drank to his heart's content the milk flowing (out of their breasts) through maternal affection.

40. They who have incessantly looked upon (and thus meditated upon) him as their own son, shall never revert to *Saṁsāra*, the cause of which is ignorance.

41. Having smelt the fragrance of the smoke issuing from the funeral pyre (of Pūtanā), the inhabitants of Vraja (who were then away from home) returned to Vraja enquiring, "What it is this (fragrance) due to ? Whence is it coming ?"

42. Hearing from the cowherds the account of the arrival of Pūtanā etc., her death and the safety of the child, they were extremely wonderstruck.

43. Taking up the child (in his arms) as if he had returned from the jaws of death, the noble-minded Nanda smelt him on the crown of his head, and was overwhelmed with joy, Oh best of Kurus.

44. A man who will listen with faith this wonderful account of the liberation of Pūtanā, a sportive achievement of Lord Kṛṣṇa in his childhood, will develop love and devotion to Govinda.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Destruction of the Cart and Tṛṇāvarta

Śri Śuka said :

*0.A In this way, achieving a number of feats (like the liberation of Pūtanā, by way of sportive activities as a child) which brought joy and happiness to Gopas and their wives, Viṣṇu, the exterminator of the wicked, grew up in the house of Nanda.

*0.B Thus (as narrated in the previous chapters) grew up in Nanda's house Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), the destroyer of the wick-

** The Vṛndāvana edition includes the above verses from the texts of VR. and VJ.

ed people, giving delight day and night to the cowherds and their wives.

The King (Parikṣit) urged :

1. whatever (sportive) acts the glorious Lord Hari, the Supreme Ruler, does in whatever incarnation (like the Fish, the Tortoise etc. the accounts of which are narrated by you) they are pleasing to the ear and fascinating to our minds, Oh Master.

2. May it please you to favour us by narrating that very fascinating account (of Lord Hari's deeds), by listening to which (the feeling of) despondency and the various cravings (which generate it) fade away (leaving no trace behind), the mind gets purified in a short time, and devotion unto Lord Hari and friendly feelings towards his votaries are engendered.

3. Do you describe to us any other marvellous deed of Kṛṣṇa as a child who, after his descent in the human (form and) world, enacted (imitated) the ways of human beings.

3A. (VJ.'s text and Vṛndāvana edition)

Oh Master ! You are gracious unto us. So out of mercy towards me, be pleased to describe in details (Kṛṣṇa's sportive acts in childhood) which (completely) annihilate all sins, Oh past-master in Dharma !

Śrī Śuka said :

4. One day (at the end of the third month), when the constellation (Rohiṇī) that presided at the birth of Kṛṣṇa was in ascendance, and coincided with the ceremonial festive ablution to celebrate the infant's (Kṛṣṇa's) turning in the bed was to take place, the chaste lady Yaśodā performed the rite of auspicious bathing of the child in the assemblage of Gopa women (who visited her house for this occasion), while musical instruments were played, songs were sung and benedictory *Mantras* were being chanted (by Brāhmaṇas).

5. When the infant's bath and toilet were over, and Brāhmaṇas who were duly honoured with liberal gifts of (sumptuous) food, garments, garlands and cows of their choice, pronounced the auspicious benediction (with Vedic *Mantras*), Yośodā (the generous wife of liberal Nanda) seeing her child's

eyes closing in sleep, gently put him to bed (in a cradle under a cart).

6. With her mind full of enthusiasm on the festive occasion of Kṛṣṇa's turning in bed, the noble-minded lady, who was busy in receiving with honour the inhabitants of Vraja who came to (congratulate her) on that occasion, did not hear the crying of her child who, wishing to suck his mother, kicked up his tiny feet.

7. Being hit by the small feet, delicate like tender shoots of the baby that was lying beneath, the cart was overturned with its upside down, and all the pots of bell-metal containing various liquid delicacies (and other sweets) were crushed and the wheels, the axle tree were overturned and its yoke shattered.

8. Noticing it (the overturned position of the cart) Yaśodā and other women of Vraja who assembled there for the festive occasion (of Kṛṣṇa's turning in the bed) and Nanda and other cowherds as well, were perplexed at that marvellous sight and wondered, "How this cart could automatically be overturned ?"

8A. (VR. and VJ.'s text and VN Edn.)

Speaking thus and arguing about its cause in a perplexed manner, the people of Vraja surrounded the cart in a distressed mood, as it were.

9. Childern (playing nearby) told the Gopas and their wives whose minds were confused and uncertain (about the cause of overturning of the cart)—

"There is absolutely no doubt that it was upturned with the foot (kick) by this (Kṛṣṇa) while crying".

10. But the Gopas disbelieved it as mere prattle of children, as they did not know the immeasurable might of that baby.

11. Taking up her son, Yaśodā who suspected the trouble of evil spirits, made Brāhmaṇas to recite the benedictory Vedic hymns (to drive out the spirits), and to bless the child, and gave him suck.

12. Brāhmaṇas offered oblations to fire (to propitiate the presiding deities of planets).[1] When powerful *Gopas* assembled (the parts of) the cart as before along with the metal pots

1. Or : the offerings of *bali* (cooked rice) were distributed to eight irections—ŚR.

of dairy products etc., they worshipped it with curds, unbroken rice-grains, Kuśa grass and water[1] (as that was the symbol of their calling and the abode of Lakṣmī).

13. "The benedictions uttered by those who are truthful by nature and completely free from jealousy, falsehood, hypocrisy, intolerance, violence and pride, never become fruitless."

14-15. With this conviction, the cowherd Nanda took up the child and got it sprinkled with water sanctified with sacred *mantras* from the *Sāma*, *Ṛg* and *Yajur*-Vedas, by the best of Brāhmaṇas. Making the Brāhmaṇas pronounce the prescribed benedictory hymns (*Svastyayana*) and offering oblations to fire, Nanda with a serene mind, gave them a heavy feast (of rich, delicious articles of food).

16. For the all-round prosperity of the child, Nanda donated to them cows possessing all good (and auspicious) qualities, adorned them with cloth, garlands and necklaces of gold coins. And Brāhmaṇas, on their part, pronounced blessings to the child.

17. It is obvious that whatever benedictions are pronounced by Brāhmaṇas who are well-versed in Vedas and devoted to God shall never turn out to be fruitless.

18. On one day, the pious lady seated the child in her lap and was fondling him. But (suddenly) she was not able to bear the weight of the Baby, as if it was heavy like a mountain peak.

19. The cowherdess being oppressed with the burden (of the child), was astonished and placed him on the ground. She contemplated on the Supreme Lord not knowing that the whole universe is contained in his body and set about her work.

20. A demon called Tṛṇāvarta in the service of Kaṁsa was specially detailed and deputed (to kill Kṛṣṇa). Assuming the form of a whirl-wind, he carried away the child that was sitting.

21. He enveloped the whole of Gokula with a cloud of dust and blinded the eyes (of the inhabitants). He made the quarters and intermediate points tremble with his extremely terrible roar.

1. Or : with unbroken rice mixed with curds and sprinkling water with Kuśa grass (VT.)

22. For an hour or so the whole of Gokula was covered with (a cloud of) dust and darkness. Yaśodā could not see her son at the place where she kept him.

23. Being assailed by sand particles wafted by Tṛṇāvarta, nobody could see himself or another person in that blinding confusion.

24. Thus not being able to find the trace of her son in the heavy downpour of dust caused by the whirlwind of vehement velocity, the helpless mother (Yaśodā), brooding over him, tenderly began to bewail in the most pitiable manner, and dropped down to the ground like unto a cow bereaved of her calf.

25. When the vehemence of the stormy wind and of the dust-shower abated, the Gopīs (cowherd-women) heard the lamentations of Yaśodā. Not finding Nanda's son there, they were extremely tormented at heart, and broke out crying with their faces flooded with tears.

26. Having assumed the form of a whirlwind, Tṛṇāvarta carried away Kṛṣṇa to the skies. But in consequence of his having been compelled to bear the (unbearably) stupendous weight of Kṛṣṇa, he could not proceed further (beyond a certain height) and his velocity abated (to a stand-still).

27. Due to his extraordinary weight, the Asura thought him to be a mountain. As he was tightly gripped at the throat by him, he could not disengage himself from that wonderful (superhuman) child.

28. Being tightly clasped at the throat with extraordinary pressure, he was rendered motionless. His eyes came out of their sockets. With an indistinct groan he fell dead on the ground at Vraja, with the child dangling from his neck.

29. The bewailing women who assembled there saw the terrible demon falling from the sky on a rock, getting all his limbs shattered like the city (Tripura) cleft by the arrow of Rudra.

30. Astonished to see Kṛṣṇa dangling on the chest of the demon, they picked him up and restored him to his mother. Finding him safe and sound in body though carried away through the sky by the demon, and getting him back unscath-

ed from the jaws of death, Gopīs and Gopas headed by Nanda were verily filled with rapturous delight.

31. "Oh ! How miraculous ! This child, carried by the demon, and (practically) brought to its end (death), has come back safe ! While the blood-thirsty wicked (demon) was killed under the weight of his own sins, and a pious soul is saved from fear due to his even-ness of attitude (towards all).

32. Oh ! What austere penance, what adoration to Lord Viṣṇu, what charitable acts in public interest (like building of temples or tanks), what sacrificial performances, what deeds benevolent to living beings have been done by us that (by virtue of which) the child which was as good as dead, has been fortunately restored to us, bringing delight to us, his kinsfolk."

33. Amazed at the frequent recurrence of such miracles in that big forest (Gokula), Nanda highly esteemed the (parting) words of Vasudeva.

34. One day the beautiful lady (Yaśodā) placed the child on her lap, and being overcome with motherly affection made him suck her breast overflowing with milk.

35-36. When his sucking was almost over, she was caressing his face which was beaming with graceful smile. And Lo ! Oh King ! When he yawned she saw the following in his mouth :

The sky, the firmament above and the earth below, host of luminaries, the cardinal points, the Sun, the Moon, the fire-god, the wind-god, oceans, continents, mountains and their daughters (i.e. rivers), forests and the mobile and immobile creation.

37. Perceiving suddenly the whole of the universe (in his mouth) she was seized with tremor. The lady with eyes resembling those of fawns, closed her eyes, and stayed greatly astonished.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Kṛṣṇa's Sports—Display of Viśvarūpa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. At the request of Vasudeva, Garga, the family priest of Yadus, noted for rigid asceticism, visited Nanda's Vraja, Oh king.

2. He (Nanda) was highly pleased to see Garga. He stood up to show respect to him and folded his palms. He worshipped him, lying prostrate before him, regarded him to be Lord Viṣṇu.

3. When the sage was properly received and comfortably seated, Nanda, pleasing him with sweet words, asked, "Oh Brāhmaṇa, what service should I render to you who are self-accomplished (and want nothing).

4. Oh venerable sage ! Visits of great people like you contribute to the supreme good to persons who are attached to their households and are distressed in their minds. They never turn out to the contrary.

5. You have directly compiled a treatise on the science of astrology (lit. the movements of luminaries) which is beyond the range of senses. It is by that that a man knows his past and future.

6. You are foremost among the knowers of the Vedas. You should, therefore, perform the purificatory rites of these two boys; for a Brāhmaṇa is the preceptor of all people, by his very birth."

Garga said :

7. "I am the family priest of the Yadus and I am known over the world as such. If I were to consecrate your son with religious rites, they will regard him as the son of Devakī.

8-9. Kaṁsa is wicked by nature. The friendship between you and Vasudeva (is also well known). Kaṁsa has heard the words of Devakī's daughter that the eighth born (womb) of Devakī cannot be a female. If taking into account all these, he (Kaṁsa) gets suspicious, and if he were to kill (your son), it will be our blunder."

Nanda replied :

10. "Please perform the purificatory rites proper for members of the twice-born castes, invoking heavenly blessings with benedictory hymns. Please do so secretly at Gokula, without being noticed even by my own people."

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Thus requested (by Nanda), the Brāhmaṇa who himself was desirous of it performed the naming ceremony of the two boys (the sons of Rohiṇī and Yaśodā) secretly, remaining himself unnoticed.

Garga said :

12. "This son of Rohiṇī will be called Rāma as he will delight his friends with his amiable excellent qualities, and he will be known as *Bala* due to his superiority in strength. They will call him Saṅkarṣaṇa due to his capacity to draw together and unite dissenting Yadus (Garga does not want to disclose the transfer of Balarāma from the womb of Devakī to Rohiṇī due to which he was really called Saṅkarṣaṇa).

13. As to this (second son), he assumed human forms in every Yuga with three different complexions, viz., white, red and yellow for each, successively. Now he has assumed the dark complexion. (Hence he will be known as Kṛṣṇa).

14. Formerly, this son of yours was sometime born in the house of Vasudeva. Hence the wise (knowers of this fact) will designate him as Vāsudeva, the glorious.

15. Numerous are the names and forms of this son of yours suitable to excellent qualities and marvellous deeds. I know them (all), but not the common people.

16. This delight of Gopas and Gokula (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) will bring prosperity to you all, and you will easily surmount all calamities with his help.

17. In times of yore, while anarchy prevailed, he protected pious people who were harassed by rogues and robbers, and when strengthened by him, they (righteous people) vanquished the miscreants.

18. Just as those who side with Viṣṇu are not vanquished

by Asuras, those fortunate persons who (passionately) love him are not overpowered by enemies.

19. Therefore, Oh Nanda, this son of yours is a compeer of Lord Nārāyaṇa[1] in excellent qualities, splendour, glory and prowess. Therefore, please take care of him with very minute attention."

20. When Garga returned home after instructing Nanda thus (or addressing Lord Kṛṣṇa), Nanda was so highly delighted that he considered himself blessed with all well-beings.

21. In a short while, Rāma and Keśava began to creep on their hands and knees and sportfully went round Gokula.

22. While they crawled speedily even in the moist places of Vraja, dragging the pair of their legs (behind them), there arose a sweet tinkling sound of the tiny bells of their girdles and anklets. Their minds being delighted with the jingling sound, they followed the passers-by (a few steps) only to return to their mothers, as if in bewilderment and fright.

23. Their two mothers with their breasts spontaneously overflowing with milk due to motherly affection, embraced in their arms their sons who looked charming with their bodies besmeared with mud. They enjoyed ecstatic delight while gazing at their (sons') countenances beaming with bewitching smiles and tiny tender teeth when they were sucking the breasts.

24. When they attained to the age when the sports of boys become attractive to women to see, the damsels of Vraja witnessed how both of them, holding the tails of calves were dragged behind them hither and thither. Forgetting their household duties, they burst out laughing and were transported with joy.

25. When their mothers found it impossible to restrain their extremely active and playful sons from horned beasts, fire, animals of sharp teeth, sharp lethal weapons, water, (carnivorous, cruel) birds and thorns or even to attend to their household duties, they experienced a great mental (strain of) distraction.[2]

26. After a short time, Oh royal sage, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa

1. To whom Nārāyaṇa bears resemblance by his attributes—JG.
2. ŚR. regards this as the highest point of their domestic happiness.

began to move about easily on feet, in Gokul, without rubbing their knees (against the floor).

27. Then, in course of time, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Balarāma began to play with boys of his own age, enhancing the joys of the women of Vraja.

28. Observing the charming boyish pranks of Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd-women came in a body (to his house) and actually spoke (complained) as follows within the hearing of his mother.

29. "Sometimes he untethers the calves untimely (before the milking time of cows allowing the calves to drink up all the milk). If scolded, he (derisively) laughs. Inventing novel ways of stealing, he drinks up the sweet and tasty curds and milk stolen by him. Sometimes he distributes it to the monkeys. If the monkey does not partake of it, he smashes the jar (or milk or curds). If he gets no material (to eat), he gets angry with the infants (people in the) house and goes away setting the infants (in the house) crying.

30. If the jar (of milk, curds or butter) is (kept hanging) beyond the reach of his hands, he constructs contrivance with the help of wooden seats and mortars. Knowing the contents of the pots suspended in slings, he strikes holes into the pots. In a dark room he uses like a lamp his own person, decorated profusely with jewels—he does all this at a time when the Gopa women have their minds fully engrossed in performing their household duties.

31. In this way, he commits acts of nuisance such as passing urine and leaving excretions in our cleansed houses. Having perpetrated such mischiefs and using all devices of stealing, he sits near you like an innocent boy of good behaviour".

Even though such complaints were lodged by women who gazed at his beautiful face with terrified eyes, Yaśodā full of smiles did not feel inclined to chastise him.

32. On one occasion, while cowherd-boys headed by Balarāma were playing, they complained to the mother (Yaśodā) that Kṛṣṇa had eaten earth.

33. Thereupon, Yaśodā who was anxious about his well-being and health), caught Kṛṣṇa by his hand and rebuking him, while his eyes assumed bewildering look (as if) through fear, she spoke :

34. 'You naughty boy ! Why did you eat earth secretly ? These your playmates tell me and this your elder brother also says the same.'

35. 'No mother, I did not eat earth. All these are liars. If (you still think that) they tell the truth, you look into my mouth personally.'

36. 'If that be the case, open your mouth.' Thus ordered, the glorious Lord Hari of unlimited supreme powers, and who, out of sport, had assumed the form of a human child, opened his mouth.

37-38. She (Yaśodā) beheld therein the universe consisting of mobiles and immobiles, the ethereal dome, the cardinal points, the sphere of the earth along with the mountains, continents and oceans, the wind, the fire (of lightning), the moon, the stars, the (whole of the) planetary system, (elements like) water, fire, wind and the sky, (the presiding deities of) the senses and the mind, subtle elements and the three *guṇas*.

39. Seeing in the body, nay in the gaping mouth of her child, this marvellous universe consisting of a variety of organisms produced by (factors like Souls, Time, Nature, Destiny and Mind as well as the whole of Vraja including herself, she was seized with terror.

40. (She bemused) "Is this a dream or an illusion created by the Lord ? Or is it a fantasy—a delusion of my own mind? Or is it the innate divine power of this very child of mine ?

41. Hence I bow down to the feet of the Supreme Lord, which are extremely difficult to comprehend and the real nature of which cannot be grasped easily by the intellect, mind, deeds and words; which are the basis of the universe and through the instrumentality of which and from out of which the universe is manifested.

42. He (that Supreme Lord) is my refuge by whose deluding potency (Māyā) arise perverse notions such as 'I am (Yaśodā)', 'This is my husband', 'This (Kṛṣṇa) is my son', 'I am that chaste lady who protect the whole property of Nanda (the Lord of Vraja)', 'All the cowherds—men and women along with the wealth of cattle—are mine'."

43. The Omnipotent Supreme Lord cast over the Gopa-lady who had thus realized the truth, his deluding *Vaiṣṇava*

(divine) charm which filled her with maternal affection for (her) son.

44. Instantly the Gopa-lady lost her memory (regarding the real nature of the Lord). She placed her son on her lap. Her heart overflowed with intense affection as before.

45. She began to look upon Hari as her own son—Hari whose glory is being sung by the three Vedas, Upaniṣads, Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems and by Sātvatas (or votaries of the Lord).

The King said :

46. Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ! What highly meritorious act did Nanda perform so as to deserve such great fortune ? What did the highly fortunate Yośodā do that Lord Hari sucked her breasts ?

47. While the (real) parents of Kṛṣṇa could not witness the childly sports of Kṛṣṇa which wipe out the sins of the world and which are still extolled by the wise and learned people.

Śuka replied :

48. When Droṇa, the foremost of Vasus, along with his wife Dharā was intent upon executing the orders of god Brahmā, he requested that divinity.

49. "When we are born on the earth, may we entertain the highest devotion to Hari, the Supreme God, and the Lord of the universe—devotion through which a person easily and certainly overcomes evil destiny in this world."

50. 'Let it be so', replied the glorious god (granting his prayer). The illustrious Droṇa was born in Vraja and became well-known as Nanda. And the above-mentioned Dharā (his wife) became 'Yaśodā'.

51. Hence, out of all Gopa men and women, that couple entertained the most intense and passionate devotion to the glorious Lord Viṣṇu (Janārdana) who became their son, Oh descendant of Bharata.

52. In order to carry out (and fulfil) Brahmā's boon (to them), the Omnipresent Lord Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma lived at Vraja and brought delight to them all, by his sportive activities.

CHAPTER NINE

Grace upon the Gopī (Yaśodā)

(Kṛṣṇa tied to the mortar)

Śri Śuka continued :

1. One day, when the female servants were directed to do some other work, Yaśodā, the wife of Nanda, began to churn the curds personally.

2. At the time of churning the curds, she recalled whatever acts of her child were sung there in Vraja and she herself sang them.

3. Wearing round her big waist (loins) a silk garment fastened with a zone, and with her pair of shaking breasts that were overflowing with milk from maternal affection for her son, with her ear-rings set in motion as well as her bangles moving about her forearms, fatigued with pulling the churning rope to and fro and her face bedewed with drops of perspiration, the handsome lady went on churning while jasmine flowers continued to drop from the braids of her hair.

4. Approaching his mother who was engaged in churning (the curds), Śrī Hari, desiring to suck her, caught hold of the churning rod, and awakening her maternal affection for him (by is gestures etc.), he stopped her churning.

5. On his climbing up to her lap, she began to suckle him at her bosom overflowing with milk, through affection, and to gaze at his countenance which was beaming with smiles. But when the milk placed on the oven (for boiling) was about to overflow, she went in haste, leaving him alone, still unsatisfied.

6. Flared up with indignation, he bit his quivering ruddy lips with his teeth and smashed the pot for churning curds with a piece of stone (used for grinding condiments etc. on a slab of stone). Shedding false tears, he entered the interior of the house and began to eat butter clandestinely.

7. After getting down the (pot of) well-boiled milk, the Gopa-lady re-entered (the churning-room) only to find that pot of curds smashed. Knowing that to be the act of her son and failing to see him there, she just laughed (it away).

8. Observing that her son was standing firmly on the base of an overturned mortar, giving freely to a monkey the butter kept on a swing, and looking about with his eyes through caution and fear, lest somebody should detect the theft, she stealthily approached him from behind.

9. Seeing his mother clearly with a rod in her hand, he hastily got down from the mortar and ran away as if in fear. The Gopa-lady pursued him, but failed to overtake him whom even the minds of yogins impelled and attuned through the force of penance (and concentration) do not reach (even though they are capable to do so.)

10. Running after him, the beautiful mother (lit. mother of beautiful waist) whose speed was impeded by her bulky, moving hips and who was, as it were, followed by the flowers dropping from her braid of hair loosened by the speed (of her running), ultimately caught hold of him.

11. Holding by the hand, she threatened to beat Kṛṣṇa, who was crying for having committed that offence, and was rubbing his eyes with his hand whereby the collyrium (applied to his eyes) got spread all over and who was looking up (to his mother) with eyes bewildered and agitated with fear.

12. Perceiving that her son was terrified, Yaśodā, who was extremely affectionate to her child, threw away the stick. It is traditionally reported that being unable to comprehend the prowess of Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodā wished to bind him with a rope.

13*-14. In relation with him there is neither inside nor outside, neither before nor behind; but he is in front and at the back, outside and inside the universe; (nay) he is the universe itself. Presuming such unmanifest supra-sensuous Lord who had assumed a human form, to be her child, the cowherd-woman tried to bind him with a rope to the mortar, as one would tie down an ordinary human child.

15. While binding her child with a rope for his mischief, the cowherd lady found that it was short by two-fingers

* VJ. : There is nothing self-existent and self-dependent as he is everywhere. Since he exists from eternity to eternity nothing pre-exists him or outlasts him. He exists before and after the universe, and is immanent and transcendent to the world. He is the universe as everything is within his power.

(about an inch or so). So she added to it another piece (of rope).

16. When that (additional) string fell short, she tied yet another piece. In this way, whatever additional piece (of string) she brought, it too fell short by two fingers (about an inch).

17. While Yaśodā was putting together all the ropes in her house (and still it fell short by two fingers), all the Gopa-women laughed; and she too joined them smiling, but felt amazed at it.

18. Noticing the over-exhaustion of his mother whose body was bathed in perspiration, and the wreaths of flowers from whose loosened braids of hair were falling down, Kṛṣṇa, out of compassion for her, allowed himself to be tied.

19. In this way, dear Parīkṣit! was demonstrated his subjection to the control of his votaries by Hari, even though Kṛṣṇa is absolutely self-dependent and has the whole of the universe along with its rulers, under his control.

20. Neither (his son) god Brahmā nor (his very Soul) Lord Śiva nor the goddess Lakṣmī who clings to his person, was recipient of such grace as was enjoyed by the Gopī (Yaśodā) at the hands of that bestower of *Mokṣa* (Liberation).

21. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who is (i.e. has assumed the form of) the son of Yaśodā is not so easily attainable to the ascetics who identify themselves with their bodies and to those who possess spiritual wisdom, as to those who are devoted to him and identify themselves with him.[1]

22. While his mother Yaśodā was engrossed in carrying out her household duties, Lord Kṛṣṇa noticed that the pair of Arjuna trees were in their former birth, two *Guhyakas*, the sons of Kubera, the bestower of wealth.

23. They were known as Nala Kūbara and Maṇigrīva. Endowed with great splendour as they were, they were reduced to the state of trees, through the curse imprecated by Nārada due to their pride.

1. vl. *ātma-potānām* / Who make him their only raft to cross *Saṁsāra* —VR., VJ.

CHAPTER TEN

(Uprooting of Arjuna Trees—Redemption of Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva)

The King (Parīkṣit) enquired :

1. Worshipful Sage ! Be pleased to narrate (to us) the reason of the pronouncement of imprecation on them (viz. Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva by (Nārada). What was their reproachful act which aroused the ire[1] of that divine sage.[2]

Śrī Śuka replied :

2-3. On becoming the attendants of god Rudra, those two sons of Kubera, grew puffed up with vain gloriousness. Dead drunk with the liquor called Vāruṇī, thoroughly inebriated with their eyes rolling through intoxication, they, in company of singing women, were strolling through a pleasure-garden in the vicinity of mount Kailāsa, and through woodlands full of blossom, on the banks of the Mandākinī (the Gaṅgā in heaven).

4. Entering the waters of the Gaṅgā which were beautified by blossoming lotus-beds, they sported amorously[3] with young damsels, like unto a pair of he-elephants with she-elephants.[4]

5. By the will of the Providence, the worshipful divine sage Nārada happened to see the pair of gods there, and perceived them to be intoxicated (and speaking vulgarly), Oh descendant of Kurus.

1. *tamas*—(i) Ignorance which is the cause of anger—SS. (Sudarśan Sūri)

(ii) aroused the *Tamo-guṇa* (in Nārada), the effect of which is anger —VJ.

2. v.l. in VR. : *yena vā devarṣiḥ kupitaḥ* 'which enraged the divine sage'.

3. KD. being a born poet gives a graphic description of various love-sports indulged in by them.

4. VB. enumerates a series of sinful mistakes and grievous offences committed by Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva in VV. 2-4, and shows that the curse by Nārada was inevitable and a perfectly just punishment meted out to them.

6. Seeing him, the celestial damsels felt ashamed at their nudity, and were afraid of being cursed. Instantly and quickly they put on their garments. But not so the two Yakṣas (whose godliness disappeared due to their being drunk), and they stayed on stark naked (despite the persistent requests of the celestial nymphs).

7. Observing that those two sons of god Kubera were inebriated with wine, and blind with arrogance of affluence, he (Nārada) with a view of showering grace on them, intended to pronounce an imprecation, and spoke (lit. sang) as follows :

Nārada said :

8. In the case of a person who indulges in the enjoyment of objects of pleasure, no other effect of *rajo-guṇa* (such as the pride of heredity or of scholarship) is powerful enough to cloud his understanding and good sense as the pride of one's affluence. For wherever this form of vanity predominates, women, wine and gambling are found associated with it.

9. Where such pride of wealth is dominant, animals are ruthlessly slaughtered by such merciless persons of uncontrolled mind who (wrongly) regard this transient perishable body as immune from decrepitude of old age and above mortality.

10. Though this body is designated as god (among men—*naradeva* or on the earth—*bhūdeva*), it is ultimately reduced to what are called worms, excretion and ashes. Does the person who harms living beings[1] for the sake of his body, know his own interest ? Does he know that such violence leads to hell ?

11. Does this body belong to the employer (who gives food or money for its maintenance), or to the procreator (or father), or to the mother (who conceives it and nourishes it during childhood), or the maternal grand-father (who adopts it by *putrikā dharma* stipulations), or to the mighty (who compels forced labour), or to the purchaser (in the slave-market when presented for sale), or to fire (which consumes it when cremated), or to the dog (when it lies unclaimed and uncremated) ?

1. VJ takes *bhūta-dhṛk* as 'a person acting against Brahman by indulging in talk of being identical with Brahman, but SS., VR., VB. etc. follow ŚR in interpreting *bhūta* as 'a living being'.

12. Knowing that this body is the common property (of all as stated above), and that it comes out of and vanishes into something unmanifest, what wise person other than an ignorant fool, regard it as his real self, and would kill living beings (for its sake).

12A. *VJ.'s text adds* here, again a verse composed of 9b and 10a above.

13. Poverty is the best (sight-recovering) collyrium to wicked persons blinded with the pride of affluence. A poverty-stricken person correctly realizes that all others are like himself (experiencing the same pleasures or pangs of life).

14. Just as a person, part of whose body is pricked with a thorn, does not wish similar pain to other creatures, as he realizes the equality of other creatures by their gestures expressing pain. But such understanding sympathy is not found in those who have no experience of being pricked.

15. Being devoid of obdurate egotism, a poor person becomes free from all forms of pride here. The severe hardships that come to his lot, by the will of the Providence, serve as a great austere penance (Hence poverty is conducive to final Liberation).

16. The senses and organs of a poverty-stricken person whose body gets over-emaciated with starvation, and who longs to have food (sufficient to keep body and soul together), become too much dried up and feeble to commit injury (and consequently the desire for violence also disappears[1]).

17. Saintly persons who regard all as equals (with impartiality) associate themselves only with the poor. It is in the company of the righteous that he destroys all his thirst (passion for having worldly objects), and in a short while becomes absolutely pure.[2]

18. What interest have the righteous saints who possess equanimity and equal regard to all, and yearn for the attainment of the feet of Lord Viṣṇu, in the wicked people who are

1. Cf *viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ /*
—BG. 2.59

2. v.l. *ārād hi siddhyati*, 'attains final Liberation within a short time' —VJ.

arrogantly proud of their wealth, and who resort to sinful company and hence deserve to be ignored ?

19. I shall, therefore, relieve the pride born of ignorance of these two woman-addicts of uncontrollable mind, blinded with the pride of wealth, and now inebriated with the sweet liquor Vāruṇī.

20-21. Inasmuch as, these two, though the sons of an (exalted) protector of the sphere (Kubera) are too steeped in *tamas* (arrogance begotten of ignorance) to be conscious of their nudity, and are haughtily vainglorious (to remain so even in my presence), these deserve to be (nude, unbending) immobile trees so that they won't behave so again. They will, however, through my grace and favour, retain the memory (and consciousness of their guilt and punishment) even in that immobile stage.

22. After one hundred celestial years, they, who had by then acquired devotion (unto Vāsudeva), will attain to the presence of Lord Vāsudeva, and shall be restored to the celestial status.

Śrī Śuka said :

23. After pronouncing the imprecation thus, the divine sage went to the hermitage of Nārāyaṇa, while Nalakūbara and Maṇigrīva were transformed into the twin-Arjuna trees.

24. To make good the veracity of the words of the sage (Nārada) who is the prominent one among his devotees, Lord Kṛṣṇa slowly went to the spot where the twin Arjuna trees grew together.

25. "The divine sage Nārada is the most beloved of me. These (twin-Arjuna trees) are the sons of Kubera. I shall now accomplish what has been sung (prophesied) by the noble-souled sage".

26. With this aim in view, Kṛṣṇa crawled in between the twin-Arjuna trees. By the mere entry of his person between them, the mortar fell crosswise.

27. The trees were vehemently uprooted by the child, with a rope tied round its belly, while it was dragging the mortar after him. They fell down with a terrific crash, their

trunks, leaves and branches were heavily shaken by the forcible pull exerted by the Supreme Lord.

28. Irradiating all direction with their dazzling lustre, emerged the two Siddhas like fire emanating from trees. Bowing down with their heads to Kṛṣṇa, the Lord and protector of the entire universe, they, now absolutely free from egotism, praised him with folded palms.

29.* "Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh Supreme Brahman in human form ! Oh great *yogin* (whose infinite power is unimaginable), you are the primordial 'Supreme Person'. Brāhmaṇas (i.e. persons who have realized the Brahman or are experts in the Vedas) know that the universe both manifest and un-manifest is your form.

30.** You are the One, the controller of the body, vital breaths, the 'I-ness', senses and organs of all beings. You are the glorious Lord Viṣṇu, whose form (sport) is the time-spirit, and who is the imperishable Absolute Ruler.

31. You are the Subtle Prakṛti constituted of the three *guṇas—sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. You are the (evolute of Prakṛti called) *Mahat-tattva*. You are the witness, the Puruṣa—the Inner controller of all beings who know all the modifications and changes in all beings.

* (i) VR : Your subtle body (composed of both *cit* and *acit* (is the cause of which your gross body (consisting of *cit and acit*) is the effect.

(ii) VJ : The universe is full of your presence, but does not limit your power or nature. You are the Supreme Brahman who pervade the universe.

KD: You are the First Cause as both Prakṛti and Puruṣa were evolved (lit. brought to light) from you.

** (i) VR. :— You are not only the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*), but also the instrumental or efficient cause (*nimittakāraṇa*) of the universe. As the Controller of bodies of all beings, you are the cause of subsistence of the world, and as the Time-spirit you are the destroyer of the world—but though a cause, you undergo, no change or modification.

(ii) VB. This verse describes how the Lord pervades all forms from the *adhi-daivika* point of view.

The time spirit on which depends rulership, affluence (*aiśvarya*) is not merely the sport or activity of the Lord, but the Lord himself.

32.* It is not possible that you can be perceived through the modifications of Prakṛti (e.g. intelligence, 'I'-ness, cognitive and conative senses), or through the *guṇas* (modes of Prakṛti) which lie within the ken of perception. What being in this world, enveloped as he is in the product of *guṇas* (viz. his physical body), is capable of realizing you who were already in existence before the creation (of the Universe).

33.** Obeisance to you glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the Creator (of the Universe), the perfect Brahman who have concealed your great glory by means of *guṇas* which are illumined by your own effulgence.

34. You are (really) incorporal. But your incarnations in corporal frames are perceived by their various heroic feats which are too unparallel or unequalled and of too supreme excellence to be found in those associated with and conditioned by corporal forms.

35. You, the Lord of all auspicious blessings[1], are such (as described above). At present your Lordship has descended in this incarnation with a part of your divineself[2], for the prosperity and emancipation of the entire world.

*(i) (VJ) : Hari alone is capable of perceiving himself. He cannot be seen by Brahmā and other deities or Jīvas presiding over the evolutes of Prakṛti like *mahat ahaṁkāra* etc. Deities who are always near him like Śrī, Durgā etc. can perceive him to some extent. Products of Prakṛti (e.g. things in the world) are perceptible to senses, but are incapable of seeing the Brahman.

(ii) VT : You are endowed with natural qualities like mercifulness etc. which undergo no change or modifications, as can be actually experienced. You cannot, however, be realized as you actually are. Who though properly possessed of qualities like *bhakti* (devotion) and though your actions have taken place in Nanda's Gokula and as such are famous, is capable of realizing you and your *līlās* adequately ?

(iii) VC : It is through your Grace that you can be visualized, otherwise you are always invisible.

** VT : regards this as salutation to the deities in the two manifestations (*Vyūhas*) of the *Pañcarātrins*. Thus the 1st manifestation is Vāsudeva, *Vedhas* is Saṅkarṣaṇa, the creator of the world.

1. : VT. The Lord who confers whatever is desired by the devotees.

2. *aṁśa-bhāgena* etc, :

(i) VR : You have incarnated along with your part (or ray) Balarāma for the creation and prosperity of the world.

36. Salutation to you The Supreme bliss ! Hail to you the supremely auspicious Lord, the son of Vasudeva, the blemishless happiness incarnate, the Lord and protector of Yādavas and Gopas.

37. Be pleased to allow us, the two servants of your follower (Rudra), to go, Oh Perfect Lord ! It is through the Grace of the Sage Nārada, that we had the good fortune of (being blest with) the sight of your glorious Lordship.

38. (May our previous nature not reappear). May our speech be engaged in extolling your excellent qualities and actions; our ears in listening to your stories; our hands be devoted to do your work, and our mind in musing over and remembering your feet; our head bowing to the world which is your abode, and our sight in seeing saintly persons who are but your form.

Śrī Śuka said :

39. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the ruler of Gokula who remained tied down to the mortar with a rope, laughingly spoke to the two Guhyakas who had glorified him thus.

The Lord replied :

40. It was already known to me that the sage Nārada of a compassionate heart had favoured you with his grace, in degrading you (to the status of trees), by uttering an imprecation on you, who were blind with the arrogance of affluence.

41. Just as no obstruction (from darkness etc.) to the sight of man can remain when the sun appears, no bondage (of sin or *saṁsāra*) can exist at the sight of righteous Souls who

(ii) VB : incarnated with a part of your (original self) : *aṁśena bhāgena ca . . . avatīrṇaḥ*

(iii) VJ : *bhāgena-aṁśena* VJ. insists that Kṛṣṇa is an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Lord.

(iv) VT : The dogma of Gauḍīya Vaiṣnavas is that Kṛṣṇa is not a part-incarnation, but the Lord (*bhagavān*) Himself, as stated in V. 33 above: *tasmai . . . Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam! ityādau prasiddhyā*

The same is implied here though VT. is silent on these words in the texts.

(v) KD : takes *aṁśa* as 'Kṛtsnāṁśa'—entirety.

have realized the *ātman* (and possess equanimity of mind), and have thoroughly devoted their hearts to me.

42. Oh Nalakūbara (and Maṇigrīva) ! Now that unswerving devotion toward me is enkindled in you, do you proceed to your own abode. The most covetable supreme devotion unto me which terminates the *saṁsāra*, has now been generated in you.

Śri Śuka said :

43. Being thus addressed, they both circumambulated the Lord tied to the wooden mortar. They repeatedly prostrated themselves before him (to show respect), and with his leave, proceeded towards the North.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Exodus from Gokula—Destruction of demons Vatsa and Baka

Śri Śuka said :

1. Hearing the crashing sound of the falling (Arjuna) trees, cowherds headed by Nanda (thinking it to be a roar of thunder) rushed to the spot, afraid as they were of a thunderbolt, Oh prominent Kuru.

2. They saw the twin Arjuna trees fallen to the ground. They were bewildered as they could not guess the cause of that fall which was quite obvious.

3. It was the child who was dragging the wooden mortar tied to it with a cord. (But not believing in it) they got distressed as to who did it, what could be the cause of that wonder or whether it is an evil portent.

4. The boys (who were present there) reported, "It (the uprooting of the trees) has been done by him (Kṛṣṇa) who going between the trees dragged the mortar, which lay athwart the trees. We also saw two divine figures (rising from the fallen trees)."

5. They did not believe in the report of the boys. The sceptics reasoned with themselves the impossibility of uprooting the two big trees by the child, while a few others had some reservations in their minds (as they remembered Kṛṣṇa's previous feats).

6. It is traditionally reported that seeing his own child tethered with a cord and dragging the mortar, Nanda with his countenance beaming with a smile, set him free.

7. Glorious Lord (of the Universe) though he was, he sometime danced like a child, sometimes sang loudly and behaved like a wooden doll under the control of the Gopīs (cowherd women), when they encouraged him with their clapping of hands and coaxings.

8. Commanded by them, sometimes he would bring articles like a wooden stool, a measure or a pair of wooden sandals, and sometimes he would swing up his arms bringing delight and affection to his own people (his devotees).

9. To the people who recognize him (as God), he, thereby demonstrates his subservience to (the will of) his servants. The glorious Lord thus brought great joy to (i.e. in the life of) people in Vraja through his child-like playful activities.

10*. Hearing the vendor's cry, "Oh people, purchase fruits", Kṛṣṇa rushed to him quickly with food grains (in the hollow of his palms to give in exchange of fruit), desirous of

*Verses 10-20, both inclusive, are not commented upon by ŚR and VB. (as they obviously do not recognize them as a part of the text), but VR., VJ., VT., JG., VC. have recognized them as an integral part of the Bh. P. and have annotated on them. VT. notes that though there are variations in the order of these verses, the Gauḍīya Sampradāya text is followed.

Though it is not possible to present a concordance of the various text-traditions of the Bh. P., the complexity of the problem can be indicated by comparing ŚR. and VJ.'s text here. Ch. XI in ŚR. is Ch. XII in VJ. In this Chapter after the 9th verse, the order of vv in VJ. is as follows :

I. Vv 10-18.

21-29 (in ŚR.) : From *Gopa-vṛddhā mahot-pātān*...upto *bhavatāṁ yadi rocate* /

getting the fruits, though he himself is the bestower of fruits (of actions, prayers, etc.) to all.

11. The fruit-seller-woman filled with fruits (the hollow of the) palms of his hands from which grains were slipping down (through the gap between them) and the basket of fruits was filled with precious stones.

12. On one occasion, queen Rohiṇī called (Bala-) Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the uprooter of the Arjuna trees, who were engrossed in playing with children on the bank of the river.

13. When both the sons being deeply interested in play did not come back despite her calling, Rohiṇī sent Yaśodā who was so much affectionate to her child.

14. Yaśodā, with her breasts overflowing with affection for her child, repeatedly shouted for her child who along with his elder brother was playing with the children beyond the (usual) time-limit.

15. "Oh Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa of lotus-eyes ! Child ! Come up and suck at my bosom. Enough of playing. You must be feeling fatigued with hunger and exhausted with exertions in playing, my sonny.

16. Oh Rāma ! Come quickly with your younger brother. Oh child. It is very early in the morning that you had a breakfast. You must take food now, Oh delight of the family.

17. Oh Dāśārha ! Nanda, the head of this Vraja who is about to take his meals is waiting for you. Do come and bring joy to us both. Oh boys ! You return to your houses.

18. Your body has been covered with dust, Oh child !

II. 19A (extra verse) *tac chrutvaika-dhiyo gopāḥ sarve Nanda purogamāḥ|*
Upa-nanda-raco rājan pratinandya gṛhān yayuḥ || 19.

Vs. 20-28

III. 12-20 (in ŚR) :

Sarit-tīragatam Kṛṣṇam kṛtavatyathodayam (?)

IV 29A

(Additional verse) :

atha Śandaḥ samāhūya gopānidam abhāṣata |
Śveto Vṛndāvanam yāmo yattā bhavatha mācirem |

V **The remaining 30 verses from** *tac chrutvaikadhiyā gopāḥ sādhu sādhviti vādinaḥ|* **etc. are common to ŚR. & VJ. This is the XII ch. in VJ.**

Go and take your bath. The star, presiding over your birth, is in the ascent. Get purified by bath, and give cows to Brāhmaṇas.

19. Behold your play-mates. They have been washed and well-adorned by their mothers. You also take your bath, have your meals, and after getting well-adorned, go to play."

20. In this way, Yaśodā whose mind was bound with the ties of maternal affection, regarded, Kṛṣṇa, the crown of all as her child. She took both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa by hand, and brought them to her house, and made them perform the auspicious rites.

Śuka said :

21. Observing extremely ominous portents in the Bṛhadvana (Gokula), elderly Gopas (cowherds) like Nanda and others met in a conference and deliberated the measures to be adopted in the interest of Vraja.

22. Out of them, a cowherd called Upananda, who was senior to others in wisdom and age, and who was endowed with a penetrating insight into the exigencies of the time, place and things (situation), and a well-wisher of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa advised as follows :

23. "We, the well-wishers of Gokula should now migrate from this place; for, terrible portents of an evil nature forboding destruction of our children are visiting this place.

24. This child Kṛṣṇa certainly had a miraculous escape with great difficulty from the ogress (Pūtanā), the slayer of children. It was surely through the grace of Lord Hari, that the cart did not fall on Kṛṣṇa.

25. He was carried away to the skies, the region of birds, by a demon in the form of a whirlwind. He fell on a rock, but was protected by great gods (our deities).

26. It is sheerly due to the protection afforded by Lord Acyuta that this child or any other boy should not die on getting in between the (Arjuna) trees (as they crashed).

27. Before Vraja is not overtaken by any calamity indicated by these evil portents, let us repair to some other place along with our children and followers and attendants.

28. There is a virgin forest tract called Vṛndāvana which along with its sacred hills, pasturage, trees and plants, is suitable to our cattle and fit to be a happy settlement to our milkmen, women and cattle.

29. Let us, therefore, shift there, this very day. Get our carts and vehicles ready. Be quick (No delay please). If you so approve of it, let our wealth, the herds of cattle, go ahead in advance."

29A. *VJ.'s text adds* :

Having heard the speech of Upananda with concentration of mind (and attentively), all the cowherds of which Nanda was the leader, approved of it, and repaired to their houses, Oh King.

29B. Then Nanda summoned together all the Gopas and directed (spoke) as follows:

"Tomorrow we shall go from this place to Vṛndāvana. Be prepared. Don't delay."

30. Unanimously approving his speech, all Gopas exclaimed "That's right ! Very good". They got their respective conveyances ready with their effects, packed and loaded.

31. Having put into their carriages the aged persons, young children and their women-folk along with utensils and other accessories, the Gopas who were all alert carried bows already strung, in their hands.

32. Keeping their wealth of cattle in their front in advance, accompanied by their family priests, they started on their journey with a flourish of blowing horns and sounding trumpets on all sides.

33. Mounted on chariots, the Gopa women of lovely complexion, with fresh application of saffron-paint to their breasts, wore strings of gold coins round their necks, and put on excellent garments, they felt supremely happy and sang the sportive acts of Kṛṣṇa.

34. So also Yaśodā and Rohiṇī occupied the same carriage, and were eager to hear the sportive acts of their dear children, shone (brightly) with Kṛṣṇa and Rāma (on their laps).

35. Entering Vṛndāvana which was pleasant in all seasons, they, with a crescent-shaped formation of their

vehicles, set up the habitation (for them and the cattle), semicircular like unto the half disc of the moon.

36. Beholding the forest of Vṛndāvana, the Govardhana hill (nearby), and the sand-banks of the Yamunā, the hearts of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa surged with great joy.

37. In this way, giving delight to the inhabitants of Vraja with their child-like sportive activities and sweet lisping, they, in due course, began to tend calves.

38. In the vicinity of their habitation, and in the company of cowherd boys, they tended the calves, taking with them various articles of play.

39-40. Sometimes they played on flutes. Sometimes they used fruits of the Bilva tree or of the Emblic Myrobalan (*āmalaka*) for throwing as balls; sometimes they played kicking those with their feet, making a tinkling noise of small bells (of the anklets); sometimes they imitated the cattle with two-three boys as the tender of cattle, sometime they played the part of bellowing and fighting bulls. Sometimes they imitated the cries of birds like swans and peacocks. In this way they roved simulating ordinary children.

41. On one occasion, while both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were pasturing the calves along with their friends, a demon came there, with the intention of killing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

42. On seeing him assume the form of a calf and mix with the herd of calves, he (Kṛṣṇa) pointed him out to Balarāma, and slowly approached the demon, posing as if he knew nothing about him.

43. Catching hold of him by his hind legs and tail, and whirling him round, he hurled him lifeless to the top of the wood-apple (*Kapittha*) tree. The huge-bodied demon (who assumed his demonic form at the time of death) fell down along with wood-apples which were made to fall (with the impact of the huge dead body).

44. Astonished to see him fall, all children cried out, "Bravo ! Well-done !" Gods being highly delighted, showered flowers.

45. The sole protectors of all the worlds became the two tenders of calves, and with the breakfast in their wallet, roamed about leading the calves in their charge to pasture.

46. On one occasion, all the cowherd boys wanted to take their respective herd of calves to water. They went to a tank[1] of water, made the calves to drink and they also drank of it.

47. The boys saw there standing a monstrous creature like unto a peak of a mountain sundered by (Indra's) thunderbolt, and slipped (of the mountain) and they got terrified.

48. It was verily a powerful demon called Baka who assumed the form of a stork. Swooping down suddenly, the powerful monster with a sharp beak, swallowed up Kṛṣṇa.

49. Perceiving Kṛṣṇa swallowed up by a big crane, children like Balarāma (but not Balarāma) became stupefied like organs and senses of the body in the absence of the vital breath.

50. But Baka had to vomit out Kṛṣṇa, the son of a cowherd (Nanda), but (as a matter of fact) the father of god Brahmā, the creator of the world, as Kṛṣṇa burnt like fire the root of his palate. Finding him unhurt, Baka again attacked Kṛṣṇa with his bill, to kill him.

51. As Baka, the friend of Kaṁsa, rushed at him, Kṛṣṇa, the protector of the righteous[2], caught hold of him by the two halves of the bill, and while the children were looking on, tore him up like a blade of grass in a sportive way, and brought delight to residents of the celestial world.

52. The denizens of heaven then showered the slayer of the demon Baka with jasmine and other flowers from the celestial garden Nandana, and praised him, expressing delight by blowing of conchs, and sounding of drums, beholding which the cowherd boys stood agape with amazement.

53. On finding Kṛṣṇa safely released from the mouth of Baka and return to the playground, children like Balarāma and others, like unto senses would do to the vital breath, embraced him and felt relieved and happy. Collecting their calves together, they returned to Vraja and reported (sang) that exploit (of Kṛṣṇa).

1. VT. locates it to the east of the Nandīśvara hill, near the spot now known as *baka-sthala*.

2. v.l. *satām gatiḥ* 'The final abode of the righteous'—VT.

54. Astonished to hear it, Gopa men and women, who had an intensely loving regard for him, gazed him with eager (lit. thirsty) eyes, as if he had returned from the land of the dead.

55. They said, "how wonderful yet pitiable that this child should have so many mortal enemies. However, it is they who suffered the evil consequences, as they spelt terror to others previously.

56. Howsoever terrible-looking the demons be, they dare not and cannot overpower him at all. Approaching him with a desire to kill, they themselves get destroyed like moths in fire.

57. Oh ! The words of those who are conversant with the Brahman, never prove to be untrue. What the worshipful Garga predicted has been exactly found to be true (by experience)."

58. In this way, recounting with joys the stories of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, Nanda and other cowherds passed their time happily and did not experience the agonies of *saṁsāra*.

59. In this way, they (Kṛṣṇa and Rāma) passed their childhood at Vraja in child-like sports such as hide-and-seek, constructing dams in play, jumping like monkeys and the like.

CHAPTER TWELVE[1]

Slaying of Aghāsura

Śrī Śuka said :

1. One day, intending to have his break-fast (first meal) in the woods, Hari got up early in the morning and woke up his fellow cowherd boys (tending the calves) by the charming sound of his horn, and proceeded from Vraja with calves going in front.

1. VJ.'s text omits this and the next two chapters. The omission is noted and the chapters are annotated by SS., VR., VB., JG., and VC. who express their disapproval of this omission. But VT.'s tirade against this omission is vehement.

2. Immediately, at that clarion-call rushed forth joyfully thousands[1] of affectionate young boys simultaneously, equipping themselves with slings, sticks, horns and flutes, each driving his own herd of thousands of calves.

3. It is traditionally reported that making their own calves join the herd of innumerable calves of Kṛṣṇa, and grazing them, they diverted themselves in children's games at various places.

4. Although they were already adorned (by their mothers) with glass-beads, Guñjā seeds, precious stones and gold ornaments, they decorated themselves with fruits, tender foliage, bunches of flowers, feathers and coloured earths.

5. They stole the slings and other objects belonging to each other, and when detected, they threw them at a distance. Boys who were sitting there threw them still further laughing all the while, returning them (to the respective owners when they were on the point of shedding tears).

6. If Kṛṣṇa had gone to a distance to observe the beauty of the forest, they vied with each other in touching Kṛṣṇa first and enjoyed themselves (in this competition).

7. Some played on the flutes; some blew their horns, some sang humming (hummed) in tune with black-bees, some imitated the sweet notes of the cuckoo.

8. Some ran with the shadows of the (flying) birds; some walked beautifully like royal swans; some sat down with the cranes, while others danced with peacocks.

9. Some pulled monkey's tails dangling down from branches of trees, while others climbed trees along with the tails in hand. Some were making wry faces at monkeys while others were jumping from one branch to another (like monkeys).

10. Hopping with frogs, some became drenched with the waters of the streams and waterfalls; some were laughing at their own shadows (while making faces at one's own reflection), while others cursed their own echoes.

11. In this way, the cowherd boys who amassed a vast fund of merits (in the past), played with Kṛṣṇa who was to the knowers the veritable Brahman, with all the realization of the

1. Innumerable—: *atsānāṁ bālānāṁ ca asaṅkhyeyatvam uktam*—VT., VC.

absolute bliss, the Supreme Deity to the devotees who dedicated themselves to his service, and a human child to those who are under the influence of Māyā or Ignorance.

12. Is it possible to describe the blessedness and good fortune of the inhabitants of Vraja unto whose ken of perception he presented himself in person? The Lord, the dust of whose feet cannot be obtained (and attained to) by the self-controlled *yogīs* who have performed austerities for many past lives.

13. Now (on one occasion), a powerful demon named Agha who could not tolerate the sight of their happy games, attacked the demon whose vulnerable point i.e. death was eagerly watched over even by immortals who had been anxious to safeguard their lives (from him), even though they assimilated (drunk) nectar (and hence had no fear from death).[1]

14. Seeing the Gopa children of whom Kṛṣṇa was the leader, the demon Agha, the younger brother of Bakī (Pūtanā) and Baka (the demon killed by Kṛṣṇa), who was deputed by Kaṁsa (to kill Kṛṣṇa) said to himself, "This is the slayer of my brother and sister. To avenge them both I shall now kill Kṛṣṇa along with his army (of cowherd boys).

15. When these (Kṛṣṇa and his cowherd companions) are killed (and thus are made as if propitiatory libations of sesamum seeds and water to my departed brother and sister), all the residents of Vraja are as good as dead. Why worry

1. *Or* ŚR.: The sight of their happy games which even gods who have drunk nectar are anxious to realize in their hearts, to sustain their life thereby.

Life is not really fruitful by drinking nectar but by drinking the ambrosia of the Lord's name and by remembering and contemplating the sports of the glorious Lord.

KD.: Gods who attained immortality by drinking nectar wish to take a birth as mortals on the earth, and participate in singing the eulogy of Kṛṣṇa's exploits.

VT. takes *amara* as 'Liberated beings who, being free from gross and subtle bodies, are immortal'. Though they have imbibed *amṛta* or *Mokṣa*, they desire to take a *Līlāvigraha* (sportive body) to participate in Hari's sport.

According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, a soul does not lose his individuality in the Mokṣa stage.

about the Physical body when the vital breath (life) is departed? And all those who live (as human beings) have (i.e. consider) their children as their very life."

16. Having made up his mind thus, wicked demon assumed a gigantic body of a boa-constrictor one *yojana* (eight miles) in length and stout like a big mountain, and with a desire to swallow them all, he lay motionless on their path, with his flabbergasting cavelike mouth kept wide open.

17. His lower lip lay on the earth, while the upper lip touched the clouds; the mouth between them appeared like a vale; his fangs were like summits of mountains, and the interior Part of his mouth was full of darkness; his tongue was like a broad road; his breath was like a tempestuous blast, while his enraged red hot eyes were (scorching) like a forest-conflagration.

18. Beholding him in that form, all regarded it as a beautiful landscape of Vṛndāvana. And in a sportive mood they fancied its semblance to the open mouth of a boa-constrictor.

19. (The children began to talk about it as follows: "Ah! How wonderful! Tell us friends, if this animal like formation (living mountain) standing before us, does or does not resemble the open mouth of a gigantic wicked serpent anxious to devour us all?"

20. (Another boy) "Really! The cloud reddened with rays of the sun looks like his upper lip, while the earth grown red through the reflection (of the cloud) looks like the lower lip."

21. (The third boy) "Look here! The mountain Caverns on its right as well as on the left are as if competing with the jaws; and the rows of lofty mountain-summits as it were vie with its fangs.

22. The broad and long road is vying with its tongue, while the darkness pent up in between the peaks, emulates the darkness in the internal part of its mouth.

23. Look here! The fierce blast of wind heated by forest fire feels like its breath, and the bad odour of animals burnt in that forest fire stinks like the flesh of animals in the stomach of a serpent.

24. "Will he swallow us all if we enter his mouth ?[1] In that case, like Bakāsura, he will meet his death in a moment at the hands of Kṛṣṇa". Saying so, and looking at the fascinating face of Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Baka, they all entered (that mouth) laughing loudly and clapping their hands.

25. Hearing the mutual discussion—which was far removed from reality—of his friends who were ignorant of the factual state of things, Kṛṣṇa knew that that was really a demon simulating the form of a serpent, as the Lord is present in the hearts of all creatures. The Lord made up his mind to prevent his companions from entering the demon's mouth.

26. In the meanwhile, the children along with the calves entered into the bowels of that demon. But they were not swallowed up by that ogre who remembered the slaying of his dear ones, and was expecting the entry of the slayer of Baka viz. Kṛṣṇa.

27. Lord Kṛṣṇa, who affords protection to all, was moved with compassion to see the helpless children and calves who had no other saviour, and who having slipped out of (the protective control of) his hands, had become the victims of the gastric fire of the demon. He was surprised[2] at the working of the Providence.

28. "What should be done now ? How both the objects viz. the termination of the life of this wicked (demon) and averting the death of these pious innocents, can be achieved ?" Pondering over this problem, and knowing the expedient, the omniscient Hari entered his (Aghāsura's) mouth.

29. At that instant, gods who were behind the curtain of clouds, shrieked in terror bewailing 'Alas ! Alas', while the demonic friends of Aghāsura of whom Kaṁsa was prominent, exulted in joy.

30. Hearing those (cries and shouts of joy), the Imperishable glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa instantly increased himself in huge

1. v.l. *viśantu sarve grasitāḥ kim asmān*:

Let us all enter it. Let us see if he can devour us—VR.

2. VT. states that Kṛṣna was surprised at the powerful working of Providence, as it exercised its effect even in the presence of himself, in the case of his devotees who entered the mouth of Aghāsura despite his attempts to prevent them.

dimensions into the throat of that demon who desired to crush to powder Kṛṣṇa along with children and calves.

31. All the passage of breath of that huge-bodied monster was choked, and his eyes shot out of their sockets. He was writhing on all sides. His breath being completely obstructed in his lungs, forced its way out through an aperture in the crown of its head called *Brahma randhra.*

32. When all the vital breaths of the demon passed out that way, Lord Kṛṣṇa revived to life with his nectarine look, all his friends and calves who were as good as dead, and came out of the mouth of the demon again, along with them.

33. A mysterious and powerful light setting ablaze (as it were) all the ten directions, with its brilliant effulgence, rose from the huge body of the serpent. It waited in the firmament for the coming out of the Lord (from the serpent's mouth) and (immediately) entered his person while all the residents of the celestial world simply looked on in amazement.

34. Overjoyed at the accomplishment of their purpose by Kṛṣṇa, the jubilant gods offered their worship by showering flowers, the celestial damsels, through dancing, Gandharvas, experts in vocal music, with singing, those well-versed in instrumental music, by playing on their instruments, Brāhmaṇas (like Nārada) through singing hymns of praise, and his attendants and followers (like Garuḍa and others) with shouts of victory.

35. Hearing in the vicinity of his abode (*Satya Loka*) the auspicious and joyous sounds of wonderful hymns of praise, instrumental and vocal music and shouts of victory, god Brahmā, immediately came to the spot and was wonder-struck at the glorious feat of the Lord.

36. Oh King ! When the hide of that weird boa-constrictor became dry, it served for a long time as a hiding place in playing (like a big cave) to the residents of Vraja.

37. Witnessing the exploit of Hari, as a child of five years, in rescuing them from death (from Aghāsura) and the demon-serpent from death (involved in rebirth in *Saṃsāra*), the cowherd boys of Vraja told to each other of it in his sixth year with equal astonishment.

38. That even a demon like Agha should get his sins absolved by his touch, and should get absorbed in him—an attainment extremely difficult for the unrighteous, is not to be wondered at in the case of Hari who has assumed through his Māyā, the form of a human child, but who is (really) the Creator of all beings, great and small.

39. Even if the semblance of the personality of the Lord is once installed in one's heart in meditation, it leads to the attainment of divine position. What indeed would he not give to Aghāsura in whom he had actually entered, as he had warded off Māyā by the eternal realization of the bliss of his Divine self.[1]

Sūta said :

40. Oh Śaunaka and other Brāhmaṇas ! Having heard this wonderful story of his saviour, king Parīkṣit, who was a gift (whose life was protected in womb) by Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yādavas, found his heart fascinated with it, and again requested Śuka, the Son of Vyāsa, to narrate the same sacred story about him.

The King (Parikṣit) submitted[2]

41. Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage! You said just now that what was done by Hari in his childhood stage of five years, was sung by the cowherd boys in the sixth year (in the *pauganḍa* stage)[3]. Now could an act done at a distant time, can be regarded as done in the present time.

42. Be pleased to narrate to me, Oh Great Yogin, as I feel great curiosity about it. How can it be possible unless it is due to the deluding power (*Māyā*) of Hari, Oh preceptor.

43. Though we are (after all) ordinary Kṣatriyas we are the blessed-most persons in this world, inasmuch as we can

1. Here ends the XIII Chapter in VR.

2. Ch. XIII in VR. begins here.

3. The following are names of different stages in life : childhood *Kaumāra* to the end of the 5th year, boyhood (*Pauganḍa*) to the end of the 10th year Adolescence (*Kiśora*, to the end of the 15th year, Youth after the 15th year (*Yauvana*).

repeatedly drink the hallowing nectar in the form of stories of Lord Kṛṣṇa from you.

Sūta said :

44. Oh the most excellent devotee of the Lord ! When thus queried, Śuka, the son of Bādarāyaṇa who lost his senses (i.e. consciousness), due to his immersion in contemplation about Kṛṣṇa when reminded of the Lord by Parīkṣit's question, slowly regained his consciousness of the external world (with difficulty), and began to narrate.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Infatuation of God Brahmā

Śrī Śuka said :

1. A good query has been made by you, Oh highly fortunate king. By listening to the stories of the Lord again and again, you bring new charm to them (by your intelligent questions), Oh best of Hari's votaries.

2. It is the nature of the righteous persons who assimilate only the essentials, that, just as the topic of young damsels is ever fresh and fascinating to gallants[1], the auspicious stories of Lord Acyuta (who never slips from *rasa* appear with fresh sweetness every moment to them, though their speech, ears and minds are devoted to them).

3. Listen to me attentively, Oh king, for I am disclosing to you a secret; for preceptors confide what is even confidential and most hidden, to their loving disciples.

4. Having saved the cowherd boys from death in the mouth of the demon Agha in the aforesaid manner, the Lord brought them to the sandy bank of the river, and spoke as follows:

1. If an extremely disgustible object like a woman can become an object of ever fresh sweetness and love, what need be said about the glorious Lord—VT.

5. "Extremely beautiful is this bank of soft, clean, stainless sand, so spacious and suitable for our sports, oh friends ! It is encircled by beautiful trees, rendered fascinating by the echoing notes and humming of bees attracted here by the sweet smell of blooming lotuses.

6. Let us have our meal here. It is high time now as the day is considerably advanced and we are oppressed with hunger. Let the calves drink water and leisurely graze the grass nearby."

7. Approving of his proposal, (lit. saying 'so be it'), they led the calves to drink water and set them to graze in the green pasture. Untying their slings (and opening their tiffin-boxes), they enjoyed the lunch with the Lord in great delight.

8. Sitting together closely round Kṛṣṇa in a number of circular rows, and all of them facing him[1] with their eyes blooming fully, the boys of Vraja shone (looked brilliant) like lotus-petals grown round the pericarp (of that lotus).

9. Some improvised flowers and leaves as dining plates, some tender leaves and shoots, some fruits, some their wallet-slings, some barks and slabs of stones (for plates), and they enjoyed their meals.

10. (Even though each boy participated something of the dishes, others had brought) each boy severally showed (by gestures etc.) the special taste of his own dish, laughing himself and making all others laugh. (In this way) all took their meals with the Lord (who also tasted something of the dish brought by each of them).

11. The presiding Deity and the Enjoyer of sacrifices as he was, he indulged in child-like sports, and with his flute between his belly and his *pītāmbara* (silken loin cloth[2]) and his horn and cane under the left arm (pit), and holding a soft morsel of boiled rice mixed with curds and (choice eatable) fruits held in between his fingers of his left hand, he occupied a

1. VC. explains that it was Kṛṣna who, being 'possessed of hands, feet, eyes, heads and faces in all directions' (*sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṃ tat sarvato'kṣi-śiro-mukhaṃ*) faced each of them, making each elated to feel that he alone had the privilege of facing him directly—a blessing denied to others.

KD. : The boys lost their individuality in Kṛṣṇa (13.24-28).

2. Belt-like garment round the waist. (KD).

central position in the circle of his friends, and made them to laugh by cracking jokes—And gods from the celestial regions simply looked on (envious that they are not lucky enough to participate).

12. As the cowherd boys whose minds were absorbed in Lord Kṛṣṇa were having their repast, the calves, being allured by luxuriantly grown pasture, strayed away deep into the woods, oh scion of Bharata.

13. Perceiving that they were overwhelmed with fear (at the straying away of calves), Kṛṣṇa, the terror to the terrors of the world, reassured them, saying, "Friends, (Don't worry—lit. cast aside all your fears). Please do not disturb your meal. I shall fetch all the calves here".

14. With these words, while the morsel of boiled rice mixed with curds was in his hand, Kṛṣṇa went in search of his calves over the mountains, in caverns, in bushes and thick jungle.

15. God Brahmā (the lotus-born god)[1] who formerly stood in heaven to witness the release (of the cowherd boys and calves) from Aghāsura and was greatly astonished, desired to see another sweet feat of the Lord who assumed the form of a child through his Māyā power, and he lifted up the calves and abducted the cowherd boys, and carried them to some place and vanished himself.

16. Not being able to find the calves, and failing to see the cowherd boys on the sandy bank, Kṛṣṇa searched for both of them all round.

17. Not finding either the calves or their protectors (cowherd boys) anywhere within that forest, Kṛṣṇa who knows everything in the Universe, understood it to be the work of god Brahmā.

18. Thereupon, with a view to bring joy to the mothers of the cowherd-boys (by restoring their children and calves), as well as to god Brahmā (by allowing the boys and calves to

1. VC. suggests a pun on *jala* (*ḍa*) due to the interchangeability of -d- and -l-. A lotus is born out of *jala* (water) which is *jaḍa* (wanting in intelligence) and god Brahmā is born out of that knowledgeless inert being called lotus. Hence his own intelligence shares the stupidity of its heredity.

remain in his charge), Kṛṣṇa, the Maker and the Controller of the Universe, converted himself both (into the cowherd boys and the calves).

19. Having exactly changed him into the same size and number of small bodies of the cowherd boys and calves, with same proportion and size of their limbs like hand, feet etc., taking with them the same (number and size of) sticks, horns, flutes, decorative leaves on the head, slings and wearing the same clothes and ornaments, and assuming the same goodness of nature (or character), accomplishments, name, form and age as well as their ways of sporting etc. (of each individual), the birthless Lord Kṛṣṇa, being thus identical with all forms, shone there as a concrete illustration, proving the veracity of the Vedic text : "Everything in the universe is pervaded by Viṣṇu."

20. Having converted himself into the form of calves which were tended back by his ownself in the form of cowherd boys, and playing with his own forms, Kṛṣṇa, the self and the self of all, entered Vraja.

21. Having taken the respective calves separately to their own houses, and tying them into their respective stalls, he entered the respective houses of the cowherd boys and stayed there in their form, oh King.

22. Rising hurriedly at the sound of the flutes, the mothers (of the cowherd boys) raised them up and hugged them fast in their arms. With their breasts overflowing with milk of motherly affection which was sweet like nectar and inebriating, they suckled the *Para Brahman* mistaking him for their children.

23. Observing the time-schedule of games etc., during different parts of the day, and returning in time in the evening at the usual time, Kṛṣṇa (the consort of Lakṣmī) in the form of a cowherd boy) was fondled and treated with shampooing, bathing, anointing (with sandal paste, pigments etc.), decorating (with ornaments), evil-warding rites, applying the decorative mark (*tilaka*) on the forehead, feeding (with dishes) etc. (by the Gopīs). He also filled them with great joy by his sportive winsome ways.

24. Thereupon the cows returned hurriedly to their own pens, and inviting their respective calves by their specific

lowing-calls, suckled them with milk overflowing from their udders, licking the calves (all over), every now and then.

25. The maternal affection of the kine and the Gopīs towards him (in the form of calves and cowherd boys), was the same as before, except that their affection grew more ardent, and Hari's behaviour towards them as (their) child was the same as before, but there was no delusion (in Kṛṣṇa's relation with them, as was in the case of their real children).

26. (In this way) for one year, the affection of the residents of Vraja towards their children grew gradually every day (as they were the parts *aṁśas* of the Lord), but in the case of Kṛṣṇa it developed in an unprecedent way and became unlimited (as he was the *aṁśin*—the Lord himself).

27. In this way, protecting and being tended himself in the form of calves, by himself, in the capacity of cowherd boys, he sported himself for one year, in the forest, as well as in Vraja.

28. One day, while it was some five or six days to complete the period of a year, Kṛṣṇa, alongwith Balarāma entered the forest, while they were tending the calves.

29. The cows which were grazing grass on the top of the Govardhana hill saw from afar their calves pasturing near Vraja.

30. As soon as the herd of cows saw them, they being overpowered with affection for the calves, forgot themselves. They rushed by a path difficult to be followed by their protectors (cowherds). Like bipeds (due to fast running on all fours), with their necks contracted towards their humps and with tails raised up, they dashed on speedily bellowing (all the while), and with milk oozing out of their udders, all the way.

31. Coming down to the foot of the Govardhana hill, the cows, though they had their own calves, suckled them with the milk from their udders, licking the bodies of the calves (with such intense eagerness) as if they wanted to swallow them.

32. Being extremely angry at their disgrace and inability in restraining and controlling the cows, and making their way with great difficulty through the inaccessible hilly track, they saw their sons, along with the calves.

33. With their hearts submerged in (i.e. overwhelmed with) affection at the sight of their children and with filial love

surging in them, they forgot their anger, and raising their children with their arms and embracing them, they smelt on the crowns of their heads and were enraptured.

34. Then the grown-up Gopas who felt extremely happy at the embrace of their children, withdrew slowly with a heavy heart from that place with tears gushing out at their memory.

35. Observing the intense longing and love growing every moment in the heart of Vraja (people and the cows) for their children (and calves), though weaned away from their mother's breast, Balarāma failed to understand its reason and began to think :

36. "It is really wonderful that the affection of the people of Vraja—and I am no exception to it—towards their children is increasing in intensity by leaps and bounds as never before, as it did in the case of Vāsudeva, the soul of the whole of the universe.

37. What infatuation is this ? Whence has it emerged ? Is this delusion caused by gods, men or demons ? Most probably it must be the deluding potency of my Lord and of none else, as it enchants even me (No other Māyā has this power of deluding me)".

38. Giving deep thought to the matter, Balarāma, of the Dāśārha clan, saw through his spiritual eye (lit. the eye of knowledge) that all the calves and his cowherd friends were the Lord Kṛṣṇa himself.

39.* (Balarāma asked Kṛṣṇa)—"These (cowherd boys) are not the rulers of gods. Nor are these (cows) the sages (as I know them to be). It is you who appear in these different forms. Be pleased to tell me, how all this took place." The Lord briefly explained which Balarāma could grasp correctly.

39A. *VR.'s text adds* :

(When Brahmā returned after hiding the cows and cowherd boys to *Satya loka*) Even Brahmā was disallowed by

*(1) *SS.* Balarama wanted to know how the Lord though one became many. Here SS. quotes *Tait-Up.* 2.5 *vijñānaṁ cāvijñānaṁ ca Satyaṁ cānṛtaṁ ca satyam abhavat.*

(2) *VR.* 'Be pleased to tell how you who are the one, came to be many.' Kṛṣṇa explained that as stated in the Vedas, He accomplished it through His Will. Balarāma came to understand it now.

his own doorkeepers who were deluded by Kṛṣṇa who assumed the four-faced form and occupied his (Brahmā's) seat in the *satyaloka*, and he had to go back.

40. When the self-born god (Brahmā) returned in a quarter of a moment or half (the time of winking of eyes) according to his measure of time which amounted to one human year, he saw Hari playing as before with all his companions, even at the end of the year.

41. "Whatever number of children there was in Gokula along with the calves—all of them are stupefied and lying in the bed of my Māyā-power and none of them has awakened.

42. Who are these and whence have they come as they are other than those who are under the spell of my deluding power ? They are the same in number and have been playing with Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu—the all-pervading Lord) for a period of one year.

43. Pondering for a long time on these differences (between children under his spell and those playing with Kṛṣṇa), the self-born god Brahmā could not, even with difficulty, distinguish between those (children and calves) who were real and who were not.

44. Thus in his attempt to delude Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) who transcends all delusion, yet is deluding the whole universe, god Brahmā found himself enchanted by his own deluding capacity.

45. Just as the darkness caused by a drop of mist (becomes absorbed in the darkness of night, and like the light emitted by the fire-fly gets merged in the broad day-light, similarly lower type of *māyā* (deluding power) when used against a superior person loses its effectiveness and is lost to the user.

46. And Lo ! While god Brahmā was looking on, in a moment all the cowherds appeared dark as cloud in complexion and wearing silken yellow garments.

47. (They were) endowed with four arms wielding in each hand a conch, a discus, a mace and a lotus; (they were) wearing crowns, ear-rings. pearl-necklace and wreaths of sylvain flowers.

48. (They were) adorned with Śrī-vatsa (a curl of golden hair on the right bosom), armlets (*aṅgada*) and a pair of

bejeweled bracelets marked with three lines like conchs, on their wrists.

48A. *VR.'s text* :

With their chest beautified by *Śrī-vatsa* and with *kaustubha* gem-pendant round the neck, they appeared shining with anklets, bangles, girdles and rings.

49. All over their persons, from head to foot, they were beautified with wreaths of tender, fresh *Tulasī* offered to them by highly meritorious (devotees).

50. With their smiles bright like the moon-light (the whiteness of which represents the *sattva-guṇa*, whose function is the protection and preservation of the world) and with their side-long glances from their reddish eyes (the reddishness of which stands for the *rajo-guṇa* the function of which is the creation of the world), they looked like the creators and protectors of the desires of their votaries (they fulfilled whatever desire aroused in the heart of their devotees) with the help of *sattva* and *rajas*.[1]

51. They were adored severally by means of dancing, singing and offering many other courses of worship by all embodied beings, mobile and immobile, from Brahmā's own self to a clump of grass, all endowed with a corporeal form.

52. They were waited upon all around by mystic powers like *aṇimā* (power of becoming atomic in size) and by potencies such as Māyā, Vidyā and by twentyfour principles (enumerated by *Sāṅkhyas*) beginning with *Mahat* (—all assuming the forms of persons).

53. They were also attended upon by the Time-spirit[2] (which sets in motion the process of creation by disturbing the balance of the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*), Nature, Saṁskāras (latent desires or proclivities), Desire (for enjoyment), Activity, the three *guṇas*—all assuming corporal forms, with their glories eclipsed by the Lord.

54. All of them were embodiments of the one absolute essence consisting of reality, knowledge and infinite bliss. Their

1. They appeared like Protectors with their white *sattva*-like smiles and shone with their reddish side-glances like creators by the reddish-*rajas guṇa*—ŚR.

2. C. *Kālaḥ svabhāvo niyatir yaddṛcchā* etc.—*ŚV. Up.* 1.2

greatness and glory were incomprehensible even to those who have obtained the vision of *Upaniṣadic* knowledge.

55. It was only once that Brahmā espied that all those forms were identical with the Supreme Brahman by whose light the universe both mobile and immobile, animate and inanimate stands revealed.[1]

56. Thereupon, when god Brahmā, out of great curiosity and wonder, directed his eyes elsewhere (towards himself or to his seat on the swan, he was so over-whelmed by the spiritual effulgence of the Lord that all his eleven sense-organs (five conative, five cognitive senses and the mind) became dazed and motionless; And he stood still and silent like a statuette of a secondary deity by the side of the presiding deity of that settlement (*Vraja*).

57. When Brahmā, the Lord of Sarasvatī (the goddess of learning) who was incapable of comprehending Lord Kṛṣṇa's (or the Supreme Brahman's) special glory and greatness, became confused about Brahman which is beyond the reach of logical reasoning, and is thus incomprehensible—Brahman which stands resplendent in its perfect bliss; is far above and beyond Māyā, and is unborn, and can be known only through the *Vedāntic* (*Upaniṣadic*) texts which describe It in the negative terms (*neti, neti*—'It is not so, It is not such'), and he could not even perceive the manifestation at all, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Unborn Lord immediately understood god Brahmā's perplexity, and drew off the curtain of his Māyā.

58. Thereupon god Brahmā whose vision to view the outside world was restored, opened his eyes with difficulties like a person brought back to life from death, and verily saw again this whole universe along with himself.

59. Immediately he cast his eyes around in all directions and found stretched before him the (vista of) Vṛndāvana forest abounding in trees providing the means of subsistence to people, and with desirable objects[2] (necessities of life) in plenty.

1. *tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti—Muṇḍ. Up.* 2.2.10, *Śv. Up.* 6.14.

2. SS., VT. interpret 'samapriya' as :

(i) Vṛndāvana, Govardhana etc. Liked by Lord Kṛṣṇa or (ii) along with Lord Kṛṣṇa who was dear to goddess Lakṣmī (mā).

60. In that forest, men, deer and other animals who are (normally) inimical by nature, lived together as friends, and from which hatred, covetiouness (and other passions) had disappeared due to the presence of Kṛṣṇa.

61. (ŚR.) brings out the full significance of every attribute of Kṛṣṇa thus):

And Brahmā, the highest deity in the Universe, perceived the Lord acting before him the part of a child born in the family of cowherd—The Lord who, though without a second, was searching for calves, though absolutely one, was (trying to find) his friends (cowherd boys), though endowed with unfathomable knowledge, was attempting to search them (as if he did not know); though he was Infinite and omnipresent, he was looking around; though he was the Supreme Lord, he was behaving like a child, and though the Brahman himself, he held a morsel of food in his hand.

62. As soon as he beheld it, Brahmā hastily alighted from his mount (swan) and lay prostrate before him like a stuff of gold on the ground. Touching his pair of feet with the crest of his four crowns, he paid respects to him and bathed his feet with his holy tears of joy.

63. And repeatedly remembering the great glory of the Lord witnessed by him uptill now, he rose again and again to lay prostrate at his feet for a long time.

64. Thereupon, rising up gradually, he rubbed his eyes. Looking up intently at Hari but with a bent head, he folded his palms and with great humility and concentration of mind, he, with his body trembling with emotions and in a faltering voice, chanted the praise of the Lord.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

God Brahmā eulogizes Kṛṣṇa

Brahmā said :

1. I submit my eulogium unto you, Oh praiseworthy Lord (in the form of) the child of the cowherd Nanda—The Lord whose personality is dark-blue like a rainy cloud, in complexion; (who is) clad in silken garments refulgent like lightning; whose sublimely charming face appears glorious with ornaments of *Guñjā* seeds and a crest of peacock feathers; (who is) adorned with wreaths of sylvain foliage and flowers; whose splendid beauty is enhanced with a morsel of food (in the left hand), a cane and a horn (under left arm-pit) and flute and other emblems and whose feet are soft and tender.

2. Even though I am (god) Brahmā (the creator of the world), I am not really competent to comprehend even with my mind concentrated (inwardly) this corporeal form of yours which you have revealed to me for showering your Grace on me[1]—a form you assumed at your sweet will (or as desired by your devotees) but is not composed of elements[2] (gross or subtle). Much less can I comprehend directly you who (being transcendental to *guṇas*) are absolute bliss of The Self.[3]

3. Oh Lord ! Unconquerable as you are in the three

1. *SS.* It is impossible for me to comprehend any form you assume in your incarnations, and the greatness of your attributes, unless you, who are the absolute truth, bliss and consciousness condescend to enable me to do so, out of grace.

2. *ŚN.* (Śrīnivāsa-Sūri)—A follower of Rāmānuja :—The personality of the Supreme Self (God) is never composed of elements :

na bhūta-saṅgha-saṁsthāno dehosya paramātmanaḥ / quotes Śrīnivāsa-Sūri (ŚN). It is through His Grace that His all-pervading sentient-cum-nonsentient personality can be grasped with pure mind.

3. *VB and GD.* : Eulogy is the description of greatness. But even though you, out of grace unto me, have assumed this form, it is impossible for me to comprehend even this, with all the capacity of pure mind concentrated within. Need it be told that it is impossible for me to comprehend the greatness of your self of absolute existence, consciousness and bliss.

worlds, you appear conquered by those (devotees) who giving up all efforts in attaining knowledge, lead their life reverentially paying their respects with their body, speech and mind, to your stories (spontaneously recounted by the righteous), as they come to their ears without leaving their homes (but by remaining in the company of those pious devotees). (What is the propriety in exerting for knowledge ?)

4*. Nothing else but sheer exertions only like those who engage themselves in pounding merely the outer husk of grains (which contains no grains and as such yield no food-grains at all by this labour of pounding), is the resultant lot of those who, neglecting the path of devotion which is the fountain head of all blessings in the form of material prosperity here and liberation from *Saṁsāra* hereafter, undergo troubles to attain mere knowledge only, Oh Omnipresent Lord !

5. Oh Infinite Lord ! In days of old, in this (very) world, a number of *yogins* (who failed to attain spiritual wisdom by the path of *yoga*) dedicated all their desires and activities unto you, and obtained the knowledge of their self only through Devotion awakened in them by the resignation of their activities and desires (to you), and by virtue of listening to your stories, and thus they easily attained to your Supreme Nature (Godhead), Oh Acyuta.

6. It is, however, possible, Oh Almighty Lord, to comprehend your glory properly by the pure-souled ones (who have thoroughly controlled their senses) through their personal realization of the self, who is above modifications and

* (i) *SS.*, *VR.*, *SN.* The pursuit of the Self by following the path of knowledge (brushing aside the path of devotion) results in nothing but more afflictions as stated in BG 12.5:

Kleśo'dhika-taras teṣām avyaktāsakta-cetasām /

(ii) *VB.* : Bhakti (Devotion) is like the Wish-yielding-gem (*Cintāmaṇi*). It confers knowledge of the self as well. But mere pursuit of self-knowledge is sheer affliction and does not bear any fruit (*Kleśayuktaḥ, na tu phalayuktaḥ*). It does not yield secondary or unessential fruit or even incidental (*prāsaṅgika*) fruit.

(iii) KD. interprets *bhakti* (devotion) as *abheda bhakti* (in which the distinction between the devotee and God disappears). *Bhakti* itself is the essential knowledge (*Bhakti teci mukhya Jñāna*), and people reached *nirvāṇa* (Liberation) through *bhakti* only (14.4.31-89)

transcends all forms, for it is self-illuminating (and as such is beyond objective perception in 'this—that relation') and not by any other way.

7. Has anyone ever been able even to calculate (and estimate) your attributes when you are verily their actual support and controller—especially when you have incarnated for the well-being of the universe by manifesting innumerable qualities? Nobody, even if he be so exceptionally competent and clever as to count minutely all the particles of the (dust on the) earth, or the dew-drops in the sky, or the luminous particles in the rays of the sun, in a span of many births.[1]

8. He who, eagerly and anxiously waiting for your compassion and grace, experiences (in a detached manner), the fruits of his (past) actions and leads a life of complete reverential submission unto you, in thought word and deed, becomes a partner in the State of Liberation[2] (as if it is his ancestral property).

9. Oh Almighty Lord! Look at this wicked foolhardiness of mine. Extremely insignificant as I am (before you of whom I am born) like a flame of fire emanating from (the universe consuming) conflagration, I, with a view to see the exhibition of my magnificent grandeur, tried to cover (delude) even you with my *māyā* when you are the Infinite, Eternal, Supreme Self, the Deluder of the deluders.

10. Hence, Oh Imperishable Lord, be pleased to forgive me who am born of *rajas* and therefore steeped in ignorance. Under the false notion that I am the real Supreme Ruler independent of you, I became blind by my arrogant ignorance of being the real birthless creator of the universe. Therefore this person (I, Brahmā) may please be regarded as deserving your grace (pity) as he (I) has a protector in you.

11. What am I after all, but an insignificant being invested with a body of seven spans (according to my humble

1. Cf. *Yo vā Anantasya guṇān anantān /*
anu-kramiṣyan sa tu bāla-buddhiḥ //
rajāṁsi bhūmer gaṇayet kathañcit /
Kālena naivākhila-śakti-dhāmnaḥ //
KD—*Sukalpa*—Span of life extending over innumerable births.
14.7.264

2. J.G.B. (*JG.'s Bṛhatkrama-sandarbha*):
Become an attendant (*pārṣada*) of Viṣṇu in this very life.

measure), and confined in a momentary perishable small pot-like egg called the world, covered with the sheaths of *tamas* i.e. *Prakṛti* (Primordial matter), *mahat* (cosmic intelligence), *ahaṁkāra* (cosmic ego), elements like the ether, air, fire, water and earth? How infinitely great is your glory?[1] The pores (of the skin) of whose body are like ventilators through which innumerable egg-like universes (each as big as mine) flow in and out like atoms. How can I stand any comparison with you? (Being extremely insignificant, compassion may kindly be shown to me of your own accord (Sanātana Gosvāmī's *Bṛhat Toṣaṇi*).

12. Oh Lord, transcendental to sense perception![1] Does the raising of feet by the foetus become an offence against the mother? (No. On the contrary the mother is happy to feel that the child in her is alive and kicking. Hence whatever has been committed by me, does not constitute an offence). Is there anything described as being existent or non-existent outside your bowels?[2] (It behoves you to forgive all my offences with a motherly affection, as you have announced yourself (in BG.9.17) to be the father, mother and protector of the universe).

13. The traditional scriptural statement that Brahmā, the unborn god, was verily born of (lit. sprang from) the stalk of the lotus forming the umbilical cord of the navel of Nārāyaṇa lying on the cosmic waters of the deluge, caused by commingling all the seas, at the end of the three worlds, is not false. Am I not thus born of you Oh Lord?

14* Are you not Nārāyaṇa? Yes, you are Nārāyaṇa inasmuch as you are the soul of all embodied creatures, who

1. *Adhokṣaja* : As I owe all the power of my senses etc. to you, no act committed by me be taken as an offence—VT.

2. All the sentient and non-sentient universe born of you and ultimately is being absorbed in you, is insignificant like an atom and is within you—SS.

*This verse gives or rather implies different popular etymologies of 'Nārāyaṇa'. ŚR gives them as follows

Nāraṁ jīvasamūhaḥ, ayanam āśrayaḥ—

thus form your dwelling place (and *nāra* means the aggregate of living beings). You are Nārāyaṇa as you are the Lord who preside over and promote life in all beings, and being the witness to the entire universe, you alone know them all. You are the Nārāyaṇa—the Deity that abide in (and thus are the basis) of all the twenty-four principles evolved out of Nara, as well as waters—your abode for reposing, which is the evolute of Nara who is also your part. Even your reposing on water is also not true, but your *māyā*, as your form is indiscernible.

15. (Your form is beyond accurate determination or ascertainment, for) If your form which is the basic support of the world, reposed on cosmic waters in reality, how is it that I could not see it at that time when I tried for one hundred years to explore through the lotus-stalk out of which I came, (the source of my birth), Oh Lord of inconceivable power. Or why

(i) *Nāra*—aggregate of all beings; *ayanam*—abode. Hence one who dwells in all bodies as their soul.

(ii) *Nārasya ayanam pravṛttiḥ*—The source of the Promoter of all the aggregate of *jīvas*.

(iii) *Nāram ayase*—You know the aggregate of all beings. ay—to know.

(iv) Nāra—that which is produced from Nara.
Nāra—water. Nārāyaṇa is one who dwells in or reposes on water.

The above etymologies are supported by SS., VR. etc. SN. quotes the following verses in support of the above etymologies.

nārāṇām ayanatvācca Nārāyaṇa iti smṛtaḥ /
nāra-śabdena jīvānāṁ samūhaḥ procyate budhaiḥ//
teṣām ayana-bhūtatvān Nārāyaṇa iti smṛtaḥ /
nāro narāṇāṁ saṅghātas tasyāham ayanaṁ gatiḥ /
tenāsmi munibhir nityaṁ Nārāyaṇa iti smṛtaḥ //
cetanā'cetanaṁ sarvaṁ Viṣṇor yad vyatiricyate /
nāraṁ tadayanaṁ cedaṁ yasya Nārāyaṇas tu saḥ //

VT. states that God's reposing on cosmic water is not illusory (*māyika*), because it, being a sportive act (*līlā*) of God, is real.

SG. explains, god Brahmā was so over-whelmed with the spiritual feat (of assuming the form of calves, cowherd boys etc.) that he regarded Lord Kṛṣṇa as greater than Nārāyaṇa, "Oh Kṛṣṇa you are not Nārāyaṇa, Oh Lord of the totality of Brahmāṇḍas (all the universe) is only your part or a ray ?"

According to SG. Kṛṣṇa is the real, complete Supreme Person (*Kṛṣṇas tu pūrṇa puruṣottamaḥ*)

was it that it became clearly visible to me in my heart when I performed severe penance and why was it that it instantly disappeared.[1]

16. It is here only in this your incarnation (as Kṛṣṇa) that you have clearly demonstrated the illusory nature of this entire external universe to your mother, by manifesting it completely in your abdomen, Oh dispeller of Māyā.

17. Just as this entire universe including yourself appears present in your bowels, it is also manifested the same way even outside your bowels. Is this (double manifestation) possible except through your deluding potency.

18. Has not the illusive nature of this universe with the exception of your own self, been demonstrated to me by you even today?—At first (before I stole away the calves and the cowherd boys from Vraja) you were one. Then you assumed the forms of all your friends and calves from Vraja. You then revealed yourself in as many four-armed forms which were worshipped by all as well as by me. Then you became as many universes. You still remain the sole same Infinite Brahman without any second.[2]

19. To persons who are ignorant of your real nature,[3] you, the all-pervading Lord abide in *Prakṛti* and you spread your Māyā at your free will, and appear (though one as many) as if you are myself (i.e. god Brahmā) at the creation of the Universe,

1. VB : As I am your son the parental relation requires mutual sights. How is it that I could not see you often ?

2. V.B. In the ultimate analysis nothing but Brahman without a second remains and nothing else.

SG. The forms of calves and cowherd boys assumed by you were not illusory. Although whatever forms you manifested were discernible as separate, you are the second-less Brahman who baffle (all attempts at) discernment. What remains is your own self, the Brahman characterised by Truth, Knowledge, infinite Bliss.

3. JG.—Those who do not comprehend your greatness call this all as Māyā and not the working of your yogic power which is indescribable. The process of creation, protection or destruction of the world or assumption of the forms of calves and cowherds is not jugglery or *Māyā*, but your real sport at your free will.

Padavī—The path of devotion (SG., VC.) and *anātmani*—'In the body.'

as yourself i.e. Viṣṇu for its protection, and as the three-eyed god Śiva, at the time of the dissolution of the universe.

20. Oh Creator and Controller of the Universe ! Unborn as you are, you incarnate among gods (e.g. Vāmana), sages (e.g. Vyāsa), as well as among men (e.g. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa), sub-human beings (e.g. beasts as in the Boar incarnation) and acquatic animals (the Fish and Tortoise incarnations) for subduing the pride of the wicked, and showering grace on the righteous and saintly people[1], Oh Lord !

21. Oh Supreme Lord ! The receptacle of infinite powers (like knowledge, power, energy etc.) ! The In-dweller in the hearts of all ! Who knows (or is capable of knowing) the nature, time, place, extent of your sportive acts in which you indulge, after spreading out (exhibiting) your Yogic (deluding) Potency, in these three worlds, Oh Master of Yoga.

22. Hence, though this entire world which is of unreal nature like dream-experience, devoid of intelligence and full of endless, innumerable miseries, appears and disappears in You who are infinite, eternal bliss and knowledge *incarnate*, and through Māyā it seems to be real and possessing your characteristics.

23. You are the only one Self (*ātman*) abiding in the bodies of living beings, the ancient-most, real, self-refulgent, infinite, first and foremost, eternal, imperishable person of unobstructed blissfulness, untainted (by any blemish or Māyā), perfect, without any second, free from limitations and immortal.

24. Those who, through correct *upaniṣadic* mystic vision obtained from the sun-like spiritual preceptors, properly comprehend you as being of the above description, as the self-abiding in all beings, and as their own soul, easily cross this ocean of *Saṁsāra* (metem-psychosis) which is (as a matter of fact) unreal.

25. In the case of those who do not comprehend the *ātman* (The Self) in its essential nature, the entire world or *Saṁsāra* is created due to this lack of understanding. But

1.

Pari-trāṇāya sādhūnāṃ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām /
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge //

—BG.4.8

through realization and enlightenment (about his nature) the *saṁsāra* disappears again, as the appearance and disappearance of the body of a serpent (super-imposed through ignorance) on a rope (does before and after realization of the real nature of the rope).

26. The bondage of *saṁsāra* and Liberation from it, are terms which, as a matter of fact, are instituted through ignorance. They are not separate entities distinct from the reality characterised by truth and knowledge. When considered against the background of the absolute transcendental *Paramātman* of eternal consciousness, they cease to have separate existence, as do the day and night in the (sphere of the) sun.

27. How pitiable is the ignorance of these ignorant people that they consider you, their real self, as other (different from themselves), and their body as their very self. And thus they think that their real self is to be searched for outside in external objects.

28. Oh Infinite Lord ! Righteous people really seek you within the body (which is composed of matter and the spirit), by discarding that which is 'Not-that' (non-self). Can pious men of accurate judgement arrive at that correct conclusion, that the rope lying near (which was mistaken for a serpent) is certainly a rope, unless they have negated the wrong super-imposition of a serpent over that rope (through ignorance).

29. It is, however, he (your devotee) who is blest with the slightest grace of the pair of your lotus-like feet, who understands the real nature of the glory and power of the Lord, and not a person who is searching for it for a long time (but has not been favoured with your Grace), Oh Lord !

30. Oh Protector (of the universe) ! May I be blessed with that great luck, whereby in this very life (of Brahmā) or in any other birth, even in sub-human beings, I shall be one of your devotees, and serve your foliage-like tender feet ?

31. Oh ! How highly blessed are the cows and women of Vraja, the nectarine milk from whose udders and breasts is sucked with extreme delight (and satisfaction) by you in the form of calves and (cowherd) boys, Oh ! Omnipresent Lord, to whom even sacred sacrifices have not been able to give gratification (to that extent) even till today.

32. How surprisingly admirable (and enviable) is the good luck of Nanda and the cowherds of Vraja, that they have a friend in you, the eternal perfect Brahman, the embodiment of the highest bliss.

33. (As it is simply beyond the capacity of anyone to describe it) let the greatness of the fortune of these cowherds be kept aside for the time being. But we eleven[1]-god Śiva and others (the presiding deities of sense-organs) are exceptionally fortunate, for, through the *cups* in the form of the sense-organs (of these cowherds), we constantly drink the exhilarating and inebriating sweet nectar-like honey of your lotus-feet, (How much more blessed are the cowherds of Vraja who can enjoy your personal charms through all their senses, if our single organ medium is so enchanting !).

34. It will be an exceedingly high fortune to be born in any species (even as humble grass) here, in this forest (of Vṛndāvana), especially in Gokula, where one may have the (good luck) of bathing (from head to foot, all over the body) in the dust of the feet of any one (of the devoted inhabitants) from Gokula; for their entire life is the Lord Mukunda Himself, the dust of whose feet is still sought after by the Vedas.

35. As Pūtanā merely through her assumption of the guise of the good (pretending motherly affection to you) was brought to your region along with the members of her family, our mind is baffled in trying to guess what fruit other than yourself, the highest possible reward in the world, you can confer on these residents of Vraja whose homes, wealth, friends, beloved relatives, their selves, sons, life and mind are completely dedicated to you (and are meant for you), Oh Lord.

36. Oh Lord Kṛṣṇa ! So long as people do not become yours (your votaries), passions like desire, hatred etc. act as

1. ŚR gives the following list of organs presided over by deities. The mind (the moon god), *buddhi*—intellect (Brahmā), *ahaṁkāra*—ego (Śiva), the auditory sense (*dig-devatā*—deities presiding over the cardinal points), the tactile sense (Vāyu—the wind god), the sight (the sun gods) the sense of taste (Varuṇa—the Lord of waters), the olfactory sense (Aśvinī Kumāras), organ of speech (Agni—the fire god), hands (Indra), feet (Upendra). The organs of excretion and urination seem to have been excluded in the *Bhāgavata* verse and the inclusion of god Brahmā and Śiva are substituted to make up the number eleven.

thieves (to deprive them of their merits or spiritual wealth) and the house serves as a prison and infatuation works as fetters.

37. Oh Lord ! Even though you are transcendental to the world and as such have nothing to do with the worldly life, you play your role in this (worldly) life for enhancing the rapturous joy of people who have submitted to you for resort.

38. I have nothing to say about those who (pose that they) know you. Let them. (In fact, they are deluded in thinking that way). But as far as I am concerned, your glory is beyond the ken of my mind, body (senses) and speech.

39. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Be pleased to grant me leave (to depart). You know everything, Oh Omniscient Lord. You are the protector of the world. This world and this person (both of which I wrongly regarded as mine) are now offered to you.

40. My respectful obeisance to the end of this Kalpa (the duration of my life) to you, Oh Lord Kṛṣṇa who cause delight to the lotus (in the form) of Vṛṣṇi clan, who bring flow-tide to the sea in the form (i.e. enhance the prosperity) of the earth, gods, Brāhmaṇas and the cows; the dispeller of the darkness of the pseudo-religious hypocrites, the destroyer of the demons on the earth and adorable to gods (right) from the sun.

Śrī Śuka said :

41.* After offering his hymn in praise of the Supreme Lord in this way, god Brahmā (the creator of the Universe) circumambulated him thrice (out of respect), and bowing down to his feet, he returned to his region which is adorable to and desired by all.

42. The Lord granted permission to god Brahmā who was born of him (and was therefore, pardoned his audacity to test the Lord). He brought back the (original) calves to the sandy bank of his choice (for the common dinner with the cow-herd boys in that picnic) where his companions were (already waiting) as before.

*VT. notes that Kṛṣṇa by his silence, refused god Brahmā's request to stay in his vicinity and indicated that one must execute one's prescribed duties during the tenure of his office—

yāvad adhikāram avasthitir adhikāriṇām

43. Though the children were separated from Kṛṣṇa, the very lord of their life, for one complete year, they thought it to be only half a moment due to the effect of the illusive power of Kṛṣṇa, Oh king.

44. What do they not forget in this world when the mind is infatuated with the Māyā Potency of the Lord ? The whole world under its deluding influence often forgets itself.

45. His companions greeted Kṛṣṇa, "Welcome for your speedy return. Not a single morsel has been eaten by us (during your absence). Have a hearty meal."

46. Laughing (loudly at the welcome) Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of sense organs, had his meal with the cowherd boys. He showed them the skin of the boa-constrictor, and returned to Vraja from the forest.

47. With person attractively decorated with peacock feathers, flowers and variegated mineral colours and exultant at the fanfare of the transporting sounds of flutes whistles of leaves and horns that were loudly blown, and shouting at the calves while tending them, Kṛṣṇa whose looks brought delight to the eyes of the cowherd women,[1] entered Vraja, while his companions singing his hallowing glory, followed him.

48. The children sang in Vraja : "By this child, the delight of Yośodā, a big serpent was killed today and we were saved from it".

King Parīkṣit enquired :

49. Oh Brahman sage ! Be pleased to explain to me how was this unbounded abundance of love which was never before exhibited (by the inhabitants of Vraja) even to the children born to them, was possible in the case of Kṛṣṇa who was born of another.[2]

1. SG., as an alternate explanation, introduces Rādhā here. *yad vā Śrī-Kṛṣṇaika-priyāyā bhagavatyāḥ Śrī Rādhādevyāḥ tan netrāṇām eva viśeṣatas taddarśanotsavasiddheḥ|*

2. vide Supra 13.26.

Śrī Śuka explained :

50.* Oh King ! One's own self (*ātman*)[1] is the most beloved to all created beings. Others such as children, wealth etc. are dear, because they are beloved to the self.

51** One does not cherish that much love to one's progeny, wealth, house etc. which (being dependent on their feeling of mine-ness) is called their own, as one has for one's body (which is identified with the self), by all embodied beings, Oh Great King.

52. To persons who believe in the identity of the body and the (indwelling) Soul, their own body is the dearest to them and not so much the children etc. which come after it (or are connected with it), Oh best of Kṣattriyas.

53. (If, instead of believing in the one-ness of the body with the soul) this body shares the feeling of 'mine-ness' (is regarded as different from the soul yet 'mine') it would not be so intensely loved as the soul itself. For when this body is being worn out, the desire to live grows stronger.[2]

54. Hence one's own self is the most beloved to all embodied beings. It is for the sake of the Self that all this world mobile and immobile, exists.

55. Do you know that this Kṛṣṇa is the soul of all embodied beings. It is for the good of the world that he, through his Māyā power, appears to have assumed a corporal form.

56. To those who know the Reality, everything mobile and immobile in this world, is Kṛṣṇa.[3] Everything is the

1. VR. *ātman*=The Supreme Self.

* For vv. 50-54 cf. *na vā are patyuḥ Kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati / ātmanas tu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati/* etc.—*Bṛhad. Upa.* 2.4.5.

** *VB.* The feeling of love for one's own body, due to the 'I'ness attributed to it by these who identify the body with the soul, is stronger than that (which one feels) for one's progeny or wealth with which 'mine-ness' is associated.

2. SG. and VT. read: *jīvitāśā abalīyasī*: The desire to live is not so strong as the person's ego is eliminated through discriminatory (philosophical) thinking.

3. SS. quotes *tad-ananyatvam-ārambhaṇa-śabdādibhyaḥ* BR. S.2.1.15) (0.14 according to Śaṅkara) in support of Kṛṣṇa's person comprising everything sentient and non-sentient in the universe.

Also cf. Infra 11.2.41.

manifestation of the the Almighty Lord and there is nothing else (than he).

57. Of all things that exist, their essence lies in their cause and Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate cause of all these causes. Hence, tell me if there is anything apart from him.

58. To those who resort to the boat in the form of the foliage like tender feet of Kṛṣṇa, (the slayer of demon Mura) of hallowing reputation—the final abode of the great (sages) (saints etc.)—the ocean of *saṁsāra* is as shallow as the footprint of a calf. They attain to the highest region (vaikuṇṭha) from which they never revert to the Saṁsāra, the region of miseries.

59. Whatever I have been asked by you here as to show what was done by Hari in his stage as a child was proclaimed broadcast in his boyhood, has been completely narrated to you.

60. By listening to or by glorifying how Lord Kṛṣṇa (The Slayer of demon Mura) played with his chums, his slaying of the demon Agha, his repast on the meadow, his assumption of non-phenomenal forms and the sublime hymn of praise sung by god Brahmā, a person attains everything that he desires.

61. In this way, they both (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) passed their childhood at Vraja, in child-like sports such as hide-and-seek, playful construction of dams, jumping like monkey (from one branch of a tree to another).

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Slaying the demon Dhenuka

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. And after attaining the *pauganḍa* stage (boyhood from the age of six to nine), those two brothers (Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) were approved (by Nanda and others) as suitable for the job of tending the cows[1]. While grazing the cows and their

1. VT. quotes *Padma P.* which states that during their childhood, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma tended calves. On their attainment of the sixth year, from the 8th day of the bright half of Kārttika, they became *bona fide* cow tenders. Hence that day is now known as *Gopāṣṭamī*.

calves in company of their friends, they rendered the region of Vṛndāvana extremely sacred, by their foot-prints.[1]

2. On one occasion, playing on his own flute, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by cowherds singing his glory, Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmī as well as the spring) tending his herd of kine in front of him, and desirous of indulging in sports, entered a forest blossoming with flowers and affording a good pasture suitable to the cattle.

3. Observing that the (Vṛndāvana) forest was resounded with the sweet notes, sound and humming of birds, beasts (or deer) and bees, and was wafted with a breeze cool due to its contact with pools with waters translucent like (the pure) minds of the great, and fragrant with lotuses, the Lord set his heart to play there.

4. Perceiving at every place, trees glowing with the beauty of reddish foliage and touching their feet with their heads—top branches—heavy with a burden of fruits and flowers, Kṛṣṇa, the Primeval Person, slightly smiled out of delight, and addressed his elder brother.

The glorious Lord said :

5. Oh ! How wonderful ! Carrying the presents of fruits and flowers on their heads (top branches), these trees bow down their heads (branches) laden heavily with fruits to your lotus-feet which are adored by the immortals, with a view to absolve themselves of the sin or ignorance (*tamas*)[2] which caused their birth as trees, Oh prominent God.

6. These (humming) bees, singing your glory that purifies all the world, are resorting to you at every step—you the Ancient-most Person. Most probably, these are the hosts of sages who

Śuklāṣṭamī Kārttikasya smṛtā Gopāṣṭamī budhaiḥ /
taddinād Vāsudevo' bhūd gopaḥ purvaṁ tu vatsapaḥ //

1. Cowherds used to go bare-footed. Hence the imprints of Kṛṣṇa's feet on the soil of Vṛndāvana—VT.

2. VT. argues that it was ignorance but they deliberately accepted birth as a tree in Vṛndāvana forest, as god Brahmā made a similar request in his prayer (Supra 14.34)

VB. regards these three verses 5, 6 and 7 as if prayers from the trees, bees, birds and beasts.

are prominent among devotees, and they do not let you miss—their personal Deity—even though you lie concealed in the (Vṛndāvana) forest, Oh sinless one!

7. On your arrival at their home, the peacocks are dancing joyously; the female deer, overwhelmed with joy are giving you delight with their oglings like unto cowherd women (of Vraja), and the flocks of cuckoos welcome you with their sweet cooing. Blessed are these forest-dwellers.[1] For such is the nature of the saintly persons.

8.* Blessed is the earth today; and also the blades of grass and plants touching your feet, and the trees and creepers gently pricked by your nails (to pluck leaves or flowers), and the rivers, hills, birds and beasts that have been viewed at with kind looks, and the Gopa girls who are hugged to your bosom (between your arms) for which even the goddess of beauty, (Lakṣmī) longs.

9. Being delighted at least at the sight of Vṛndāvana (the beauty of which is described above), Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoyed himself along with his companions, while grazing the cows in the pastures on the river bank, in the vicinity of the (Govardhana) mount.

10. Adorned with garlands and accompanied by Balarāma (Saṅkarṣaṇa)[2], he used to burst out into singing in imitation of the sweet humming of bees intoxicated with the honey sucked by them, while his followers were extolling his feats in song.

11. Sometimes he imitated the rapturous notes of swans, and sometimes he danced mimicking the dancing peacocks, provoking his companions to laughter.

11-A. *Vṛndāvana edition adds*[3]

Sometimes he imitated the chattering of the parrots in

1. VJ. regards that words *śikhi & Kokila* also mean 'sages—one with matted hair', and the gods Brahmā (ka) Śiva (*u*) and others.

*This verse is No. 19 in VJ's Text (in which this ch. is No 13) and is spoken by Śrī Śuka.

2. *Saṅkarṣaṇa* is used to indicate that Balarāma being non-different from Kṛṣṇa, joined him in singing—VT.

3. P. 565 Footnote. Source not given but VT's text comments on this verse and not on V. 11 above.

sweet indistinct words. Sometimes he sweetly cooed in imitation of the warbling and cooing of cuckoos.

12. Sometimes, in a voice deep and sonorous like the rumbling of clouds, and extremely fascinating to the cows and cowherds (alike), he would affectionately call out (by names) cows that have strayed away to distant pastures.

13. He used to imitate the notes and cries of birds like *Cakora* (a fabulous bird subsisting on lunar rays), *Krauñca* (a curlew or heron), *cakravāka* (the ruddy goose), *Bhāradvāja* (a sky-lark) and also peacocks, and sometimes behaved or shrieked like animals terrified at tigers and lions.

14. Sometimes by shampooing his feet and rendering other services (like fanning), Kṛṣṇa would remove the fatigue of his elder brother, Balarāma, exhausted with playing, and lying with his head on the cushion-like lap of a cowherd boy.

15. Sometimes holding each other by hands, they (Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) laughingly applauded the cowherd boys who were dancing, capering, singing, prattling and wrestling with each other.

16. At times, being exhausted with (physical) exertions in wrestling, he used to lie on different beds[1] of tender leaves (prepared by his companions) at the foot of trees, placing his head on the cushion-like laps of (elderly) cowherd-boys.

17. Some cowherd boys kneaded the feet of the great-souled Lord while other sinless ones fanned him with fans made of tender leaves.

18. Others whose hearts (lit. intellect) were steeped in love and devotion for him, sang gently and in sweet low tone beautiful songs suitable for the occasion, and pleasing to him (or songs pertaining to his feats), Oh Great King!

19. In this way, Kṛṣṇa, by his Māyā, had concealed his course (i.e. real divine nature) and played his *role* as a cowherd

1. VT. states that by His Māyā power, Kṛṣṇa lay on all the beds leading each group to believe that Kṛṣṇa was honouring the bed prepared by them.

VB. explains that Kṛṣṇa did so for the sages who were occupying the feet of trees and his beds were the heart of *yogins* where he lay and he showed his preference and respect to cowherd boys by placing his head on their laps.

boy by his acts (sports and behaviour). The Lord whose foliage-like tender feet were caressed by goddess Lakṣmī played like a rustic boy with rustics, though occasionally he behaved like the Almighty Lord.

20. A certain cowherd called Śrīdāman was a bosom friend of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and so were other cowherd boys like Subala, Stoka. Kṛṣṇa spoke to them with friendly affection.

(VJ. reads : Śrīdāman spoke to Subala, Aśoka, Kṛṣṇa and other cowherds out of friendliness).

21. "Oh Rāma ! Balarāma of mighty arms ! Oh Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of the wicked ! Not far from this place, there is a great dense forest thick with rows of palmyra trees.[1]

22. Abundant fruits lie fallen and have been falling there, but they are all monopolised by Dhenuka of wicked soul.

23. He is a demon of mighty prowess[2], Oh Rāma ! Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Assuming the form of a donkey, he lives surrounded by members of his tribe (donkeys), all of whom are equal in strength to him.

24. Being afraid of that cannibal who feeds on human beings, the tract of forest is not visited by men and is also avoided by herds of beasts and flocks of birds.

25. Very delicious and sweet smelling fruits untasted by us lie there. And it is the sweet fragrance of those fruits that has filled the air all around, and we perceive that here also.

26. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Be pleased to give those to us whose hearts are enamoured of their odour. A very strong yearning urges us, Oh Rāma. We make a move if you approve of it.

27. Hearing the request of his friend and with a desire to accomplish their wishes, those two mighty gods laughed heartily, and proceeded to the Palm forest accompanied by the cowherds.

28. Balarāma entered the forest and by violently shaking the palm trees with his arms like a young elephant, he made the fruit drop down by his physical power.

1. VT. locates it with 'Tālasi' or 'Tāraphara'. It is to the southwest of Mathura at a distance of 8 miles from Govardhana.

2. v.l. *atitīvra*—of extremely ferocious nature—VJ

29. Hearing the sound of the falling of fruits, the Asura in the form of a donkey, rushed to the place making the earth along with mountains tremble and quake.

30. Rushing at Balarāma, the powerful demon kicked with his hind legs on the chest of Balarāma, and braying loudly the wicked fellow ran away to some distance. (moved hither and thither around Balarāma).

31. Approaching Balarāma again, the donkey stayed with its face away from Balarāma, and in violent wrath, he flung his hind legs (struck with his hind hoofs) Balarāma, Oh King !

32. Catching hold of both his legs with one hand, Balarāma violently whirled him and when the demon died due to that terrible whirling, he hurled him to the top of a tall palm tree.

33. Being struck (with the carcass of that donkey), the big palm tree with heavy (palm-fruit laden) head crashed, and shook heavily the adjoining tree which fell down, despatching its neighbouring tree to the same fate.

34. Being struck down by the impact of the dead body of the donkey which was sportively hurled by Balarāma, all the palm trees shook heavily, as if swept down by a violent hurricane.

35. This is not miraculous in the case of the glorious Lord Śeṣa (who incarnated as Balarāma) the Ruler of the universe, in whom the universe is woven warp and woof, like a piece of cloth into the threads, Oh dear child !

36. The whole tribe of Dhenuka, the donkeys which flung in rage due to the killing of their brother, dashed at Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

37. As they attacked, both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa held them by their hind legs, and flung them easily to the tops of the tall palm trees, as if in sport.

38. Littered over with heaps of palm fruits, the tops of the palm trees, and the dead bodies of the demons, the surface of the earth looked like the sky overcast with clouds (red, white and blue in colours).

39. Hearing of their marvellous feat, gods and others (such as demigods, celestial damsels etc.) let down showers of

flowers on them, played on the divine musical instruments, and praised them highly.

40. Then the forest being thus rid of Dhenuka, people being free from fear, enjoyed (ate) to the full, fruits of those palm trees, and the cattle grazed in the pasture fearlessly.

41. Kṛṣṇa whose eyes were large like lotus-petals, and the hearing and singing of whose glory is hallowing and meritorious, entered Vraja along with his elder brother Balarāma, in company of his cowherd followers who were glorifying and praising him.

42. The cowherd women rushed out in crowds to welcome and see with eager eyes, Lord Kṛṣṇa, looking charming with sylvain flowers and peacock feathers adorning his curly locks of hair, overlaid with dust raised by (the hoofs of) cows, of beautiful eyes and bewitching smiles, and who was playing on his flute while followed by cowherds singing his glory.

43. Drinking with their black-bee-like eyes the honey (i.e. charm) in the lotus-like countenance of Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa), the damsels of Vṛaja got subsided their fever of separation from him during the day time. Kṛṣṇa, on his part, entered the cowpen after duly receiving their worship, welcome (consisting) of bashful smiles, ogling with side glances and modesty.

44. Yaśodā and Rohiṇī who were very fond and affectionate to their sons, poured their benedictions suitable to the occasion to their heart's content.

45. They whose fatigue of journey (while tending the cows) was removed by bath, massage etc. in the forest, were dressed in beautiful clothes, and were adorned with excellent garlands, perfumes (sandal paste) etc.

46. They partook of the sweet dish served to them by their mother, and after being caressed by them, they went to sleep in excellent beds, and enjoyed sweet, happy sleep at Vraja.

47. In this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa used to move in the Vṛndāvana. On one occasion, unaccompanied by Balarāma, but in company of (lit. surrounded by) his friends, he went to the Yamunā.

48. There, being tormented with the heat of the summer and oppressed with thirst, the cows as well as cowherds drank the river water polluted due to the contamination of poison.

49. Being deprived of their discretion and judgement by the Providence,[1] immediately after sipping the poisonous water, they all fell dead, by the side of the water[2], Oh best of Kurus.

50. Finding them verily reduced to that condition, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the masters of Yoga, restored his *proteges* to life by his glance that (as if) showered nectar.

51. Recovering their consciousness immediately, all of them rose up from the brink of the water and gazed at each other with amazement.

52. They came to understand that their restoration to life after death by drinking poison was the result of the gracious look of Kṛṣṇa (Govinda), Oh King Parīkṣit.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Expulsion of Kāliya

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Perceiving that the (waters of the) Kṛṣṇā (i.e. Yamunā) had been poisoned by a black serpent (Kāliya), the Almighty Kṛṣṇa, desirous of purifying it, expelled him (from that place).

The King (Parikṣit) asked :

2. May it be kindly narrated to me as to how Lord Kṛṣṇa caught hold of (and subdued) the serpent in the interior of the unfathomable waters (of the Yamunā), and (secondly)

1. Those whose knowledge was affected by the power of the sportive activities of the glorious Lord—VT.

2. Jīva Gosvāmī, in *ṣaṭ-sandarbha* (in *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*) explains that Gopas being attendants of the Lord did not die by the poisonous water. This is simply to show that they are human beings as the Lord behaved as a human incarnation.

tad bhāgavata iva nara-lilaupāyikatayā prapañcitam iti mantavyam

For details vide De—*Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement*, pp. 55-56. VJ. regards this a bit allegorical indicating that the poison of *saṁsāra* does not affect the devotees of Hari (vide Intro. to ch. 16).

a serpent is not an acquatic animal; how could he make his abode in the interior part of water for ages together, Oh learned Brāhmaṇa.[1]

3. Who will feel satiated while drinking the nectar of the noble deeds of the glorious omnipotent Lord of absolute free will, while he was acting his role as a cowherd, Oh Brāhmaṇa Sage ?

Śrī Śuka said :

4. In the Yamunā, there was a certain pool, the haunt of Kāliya, the waters whereof were boiling with the serpent's fiery poison and even the birds flying over it, fell dead (due to poisonous vapours).

5. Beings, mobile and immobile, on the banks of that river, succumbed to death at the touch of the wind charged with the poisonous spray, while blowing over the ripples of that deadly water.

6. Kṛṣṇa, whose incarnation was for the subjugation of the wicked, considered how the real power of the snake lay in its virulent venom and that it had polluted the river with its contamination. Climbing up a very tall *Kadamba* tree (on the bank of the Yamunā[2]), he tightened his girdle and striking his arms (as if challenging Kāliya to fight) jumped down into the poisonous water.

7. The pool of the serpent, the voluminous waters of which were swelled with venom discharged by the serpent, extremely agitated by the vehemence of the plunge of the Supreme Man, dashed up overflowing on all sides to a distance of hundred bows (i.e. four hundred *hastas* or cubits) in terrible

1. VT. supports this meaning of 'Vipra' by quoting Yājñavalkya—
janmanā, Brāhmaṇo jñeyaḥ, saṁskārair dvija ucyate /
vidyayā yāti vipratvaṁ tribhiḥ śrotriya-lakṣaṇam //

2. ŚR. & VR. explain that that Kadamba tree did not get dry by Kāliya's poison due to contact of nectar while Garuḍa was carrying it away from the custody of gods (Mbh. Adi. 33) VB. states that Garuḍa used to perch on it, waiting for Kāliya to come out so that he would kill it. The tree was thus preserved for Kṛṣṇa. VT. states it was Lord Kṛṣṇa's tree—as if identical with him (*Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-vṛkṣatvāt*) and was protected by Lord Kṛṣṇa for his sports.

waves saturated and bitter with poison. But there is nothing miraculous in this in the case of the Almighty Lord (of infinite strength).

8. Hearing the thunderous sound of water agitated by the strokes of the mighty arms (of the Lord) who was sporting with the prowess of a supreme powerful elephant, and perceiving it as an attack on his abode, and unable to tolerate it, the serpent (whose eyes functioned also as ears) advanced rustling against Kṛṣṇa, Oh dear King !

9. Biting him in all tender parts, twisting himself, he enclosed completely in his coils the Lord who looked extremely beautiful, delicate and effulgent like a cloud; (who) was adorned with *Śrīvatsa* mark and was dressed in raiment of bright golden hue; who, with a bewitching, smiling face and with feet tender like the pericarp of a lotus, was sporting (in the water) with absolute fearlessness.

10. On seeing Kṛṣṇa caught in the coils of the serpent and no movement of his being visible, his dearest chums, the cowherds, who had dedicated to him their own selves, their belongings, family and even desires, became extremely distressed, and dropped down with their minds maddened with grief, sorrow and fear in succession.

11. Fixing their gaze at Kṛṣṇa and extremely distressed cows, bulls and heifers began to bellow; they stood there as if weeping through fear.

12. And at Vraja, very ominous and terrible portents of three-fold character indicating imminent danger appeared on the earth (e.g. seismic disturbance), in the sky (e.g. raining of meteors or blood), and to persons (throbbing of the left-side in the case of men and right side in the case of women).

13. Noticing the evil omens and learning that Kṛṣṇa unaccompanied by Balarāma had left for grazing the cattle, the cowherds of whom Nanda was prominent, were overwhelmed with fear.

14. Being ignorant of the real (omnipotent) nature of Kṛṣṇa, they concluded from the omens, the death (or fatal calamity) of Kṛṣṇa. As they regarded him as their very life, and had set their hearts on him, they became submerged in grief, sorrow and fear.

15. Young and old, men and women who followed the vocation of cowherds (or were extremely affectionate) being eager to have a look at Kṛṣṇa, proceeded from Gokula in a sad melancholy mood.

16. Perceiving them so nervous and terrified, the glorious Lord Balarāma who knew the prowess of the younger brother, laughed heartily, but spoke nothing.

17. In search of their beloved Kṛṣṇa, they followed the track indicated by his foot-prints bearing the special marks of being the supreme Lord, and they reached the bank of the Yamunā.

18. On the way, and in between the foot-prints of cows and others, they carefully observed the foot-prints of the Lord characterised by the marks of a lotus, a barley seed, a goad, the thunder bolt and a banner, and they proceeded quickly, dear Parīkṣit.

19. Noticing from a distance Kṛṣṇa entwined in the coils of the serpent, and being merged motionless in water in the interior of the pool, and the cow-herds fallen in a swoon on the bank and the piteously lowing all around, they became sorely distressed, and lost their consciousness.

20. With their hearts deeply attached to the infinite Glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, and cherishing the memory of his warm-hearted friendship, charming smile, meaningful glances and pleasing words, the Gopīs (cowherdesses) were extremely tormented with grief to find their most beloved (Kṛṣṇa) trapped in the coils of the serpent, and looked upon the three worlds bereft of their beloved, as totally desolate and interestless.

21. Shedding profusely tears of grief, the cowherdesses who were equally grieved like Yaśodā, closely held her back (from following Kṛṣṇa in the Pool as her heart followed her child. They were recounting the stories of Kṛṣṇa so beloved in Vraja. With their eyes riveted on the face of Kṛṣṇa, they stood there like lifeless bodies.

22. Noticing that Nanda and others whose very life was Kṛṣṇa, entering the pool of water, glorious Lord Balarāma who knew the prowess of Kṛṣṇa, prevented them from doing so.

23. Observing that the whole of his Gokula including women and children entirely depended on him for shelter and

was extremely grieved for his sake, Kṛṣṇa who followed the role of mortals, stayed for about a *muhūrta* a short while (about 48 minutes) in that entrapped condition, and emerged out of the coils of the serpent.

24. His body being oppressed by the (internal) pressure of the expanding dimensions of Kṛṣṇa's body, the enraged serpent freed Kṛṣṇa from his coils, and raised his hoods breathing out violently poison from his hissing nostrils, and was staring at him with eyes motionless yet hot like a frying pan, and mouth emitting flames of fire.

25. Like Garuḍa, the king of birds, watching for an opportunity (to pounce on his prey), Lord Kṛṣṇa sported with the serpent which was constantly licking the corners of its mouth with its forked tongue, and whose eyes sending forth extremely virulent poisonous (flames of) fire, and wheeling round the serpent, he made it whirl around itself.

26. When all the energy (and prowess) of the serpent became exhausted in whirling round itself, Kṛṣṇa, the First (Eternal) Person bent down its raised shoulders (i.e. neck, with his hands[1]), and mounted on its broad hood.[2] With his lotus feet extremely red and refulgent with their contact with the heaps of jewels on the heads of the serpent, the First Teacher of all arts[3] began to dance.

27. Observing that the Lord intends to dance and is about to commence it, all his (servants—celestial artists like) Gandharvas, Siddhas, gods, Cāraṇas, heavenly damsels (*apsarās*)[4] suddenly, promptly and with loving devotion presented them-

1. *Śiraḥ sa Kṛṣṇo jagrāha*
Svahastenā'vanamya ca—Harivaṁśa, quoted by VT., VC also VB.

2. VB. raises the question how the Holy Lord rode on an inauspicious reptile and replies that firstly, being the creator of all, the problem of inauspiciousness does not arise, and secondly, He is habituated to sleep on a serpent (Śeṣa) as (*Śeṣa-śāyī*)

3. v.l.—*amṛta-Kalādhi-guruḥ*—VJ. who is the Supreme Master of the moon of nectarine rays.

4. VB.—The following are the functions of the celestials on such occasions : *Gandharvas*, to sing; *Siddhas*, to shower flowers; sages, to compose hymns of praise; *Cāraṇas*, to play on musical instruments and *apsarās* celestial damsels to dance. But the procedure of dancing viz. *Nāndī*, followed by scattering of flowers etc. was upset by the suddenness of the Lord's decision to dance.

selves there with drums, tabors and musical instruments, flowers, singing the songs of his praise.

28. Dear Parīkṣit ! During the course of dancing (at every beat), the Lord who wields a rod to punish the wicked, struck down and scalped with the stroke[1] (so that the next kick in the dancing beat should be more painful) the unbending hood of the hundred and one hooded serpent which was whirling round and round, and was on the point of death. Profusely vomitting blood through his nostrils and mouths, the serpent became utterly depressed in spirits.

29. During the course of his dance, Kṛṣṇa kicked and bent down whatever head (hood of the serpent) was raised by the serpent that was profusely emitting poison through its eyes, and was hissing (through nostrils) with rage, and thus subdued it. Looking upon him as the Most Ancient Person (Lord Nārāyaṇa on the bed of the coiled body of Śeṣa), he was devoutly worshipped with (the showers of) flowers (by Gandharvas).

30. With its umbrella-like hoods being crushed and wounded by the violent and unearthly dance, and vomitting blood profusely out of its mouth, the serpent, all the limbs of whose body were shattered[2], remembered the Ancient Person Nārāyaṇa, the Father (Creator) of the mobile and immobile creation, and mentally resorted to him for refuge.

31. Finding their serpent-husband collapsing under the infinite weight of Kṛṣṇa carrying (innumerable) worlds in his abdomen, and his umbrella-like hoods crushed and shattered under the strokes of his heels, its distressed wives with dishevelled hair and clothes and ornaments in disorder approached him.

32. Being overwhelmed with anxiety (for their husband) the wives of Kāliya, holding their babies[3] in their hands in

1. V.B. *Kiṁcana prahāra-mātraṁ karoti, Kiṁ tu mamarda —pādena mardanam api karoti, yathoparatāni tvag gacchati, dvitīyaprahāre adhikavyathā—jananāstham/*

2. VB : crushing of hoods etc. is the expiation of external sins and vomitting blood is absolving of internal sins. When both types of sins were purged, Kāliya remembered God.

3. v.l. *puraskṛtārhāḥ*—Who have already worshipped him (*agre kṛta-pūjanāḥ*)—VJ.

front of them, prostrated themselves on the ground[1] before the Lord, the Creator of all beings. With an earnest desire to absolve their husband from sin, and to secure the deliverance of their sinning husband from the hands of the Supreme Lord (also), the pious ladies folded their palms, and sought asylum in him who affords protection to all.

The serpent's wives submitted :*

33. "As your incarnation is intended for the chastisement of the wicked (and for showering Grace on the righteous[2]), the punishment meted out to this (Kāliya) who has committed sinful acts, is quite just. You entertain equal impartial outlook and attitude towards your enemy as well as to your sons. It is with a view to confer good fruit (or your Grace, or Eternal Happiness) that you inflict punishment[3] (proportionate to the nature of the offence.)

34. As a matter of fact, the punishment inflicted (on Kāliya) is a blessing and a favour (in disguise), conferred on us all, for your chastisement of the wicked absolves them of their sins. Your wrath is regarded (by us) as a blessing and a favour bestowed (by you), as it destroyed all the sins of this embodied being (Kāliya) whose state of being a serpent was due to those sins.

35. (We really marvel) how great austere penance (as per correct procedure) must have been practised in former life by Kāliya, himself remaining free from pride, and giving due respect to others, or what righteous acts out of compassion to

1. VT. states that there was a small island in the middle of Kāliya's pool in the Yamunā.

*ŚR states the analysis of this panegyric as follows:

(1) Acquiescence in the punishment meted out to Kāliya (6 verses).

(2) Hari's praise (10 verses), (3) Prayer to Lord Hari (5 verses). VB's analysis is slightly different.

KD. shows that five characteristics of peaceful negotiations (*sāma*) are seen in the appeal of Kāliya's wives as follows (1) Relation of Just punishment proportionate to offence (*sambandha*) V. 34; (2) Benefit:*lābha* v. 35; (3) obligation—*upakṛti*, v. 36; (4) Non-difference v. 37-8; (5) Praise of virtues—*guṇakīrtana* Vv. 39ff.

2. Otherwise your incarnation will be of a negative character—VT.

3. *SS.*—Even your wrath is a form of your Grace.*

all beings, must have been performed by him then, that you, who support the life of all, have been pleased with him.

36. We simply cannot understand what meritorious acts entitled him to the privilege of touching the dust of your feet, with a desire to receive which, the most charming goddess Lakṣmī, giving up all pleasures, performed austere penance for a long time, observing strict vows, Oh Gracious Lord!

37. Those who have attained the dust at his (the Lord's) feet, do not covet for (a life in) the celestial regions, or the position of the sovereignty over the whole of this world, or the post of god Brahmā, or the rulership of the subterranean regions, or mastery over the mystic powers secured through *yoga*, or the Liberation from *saṁsāra* whence there is no return (to *saṁsāra*).

38* Oh Lord ! Though this serpent-king is born of *tamas* (viz. of the ignorant race of serpents), and is of wrathful nature, he could attain ('the bliss of being favoured with the dust of your feet' 'the touch of your feet' 'the direct visualization of your person') that which is attainable to others only with great difficulty and by desiring to secure which, corporeal beings whirling on the wheel of *saṁsāra*, realize all desirable prosperity including liberation from *saṁsāra*.

39** Salutations to You, the Almighty Lord of incomprehensible excellences, the dweller in the bodies of all beings (as Their Inner Controller), yet undiscernible (or All-pervader). You are the support of all elements like the sky (the wind, water etc.), or the abode of all beings. You are eternally existent as cause of all, but are transcendental to causal relation[1].

40. As the treasure house (or the source) of all knowledge and consciousness, you are perfectly full of them. You are the *Brahman* of infinite power, devoid of (and transcendental to) all attributes and immutable, the regulator and motivator of

*KD. : By riding over the heads of our husband, you became his crest-jewel and in a way both of you became one. Nay, our husband became in a way superior to the Lord who became a head-ornament of Kāliya. This is the *abheda*—(identity) stage in *sāman* (pacific measures or negotiations)

—10.16.499-504.

**The next ten verses form the *guṇa-kīrtana* (eulogy of excellences), the next stage is *sāman* (peaceful negotiations)—KD.

1. *Kāraṇātītāya* (ŚR)

Prakṛti (or possessor of Supernatural Potencies). We bow to you.

41. (We pay obeisance to) you who are the (very embodiment of) Time-Spirit[1], the support of (the potencies of) Time, the witness to different divisions of Time; you are the universe itself as well as its Director[2], creator as well as its (material and instrumental) cause.

42. Hail to you who constitute all the elements[3] (both gross and subtle), all the (ten) cognitive and conative sense-organs, the (five) vital breaths, the mind, the intellect and the heart. You keep yourself shrouded from the *jīvas* due to their ego (*ahaṁkāra*) comprising of three *guṇas*.[4]

43. We bow to you who are infinite, subtle (and hence beyond the ken of perception and therefore) not subject to changes or modifications, and the Omniscient. (Due to your Māyā) You are the subject of various theories[5] (such as you exist, do not exist, are Omniscient, non-omniscient, bound in *saṁsāra*, absolutely free, one, many). You are the power that is described in the words as also the power of description inherent in words.[6]

1. *Kālāya*—One who is like a Wish-yielding cow to his devotees—VJ

2. Due to 'difference-cum-non-difference', and 'Duality-cum-non duality relations', this is explanable—SD.

3. *bhūtātmane*—

(i) VR. To him who enters in and controls all the beings (*Brahman* as *niyantā*). This verse brings out the causal relation between the subtle and gross sentient-cum-non-sentient aspects of Brahman as well as body-cum-soul relation. (*evaṃ sūkṣma-cidācid-viśiṣṭa-Brahmaṇaḥ sthūlāvasthā cidacid-viśiṣṭabhede tayoḥ kārya-kāraṇa-bhāvaḥ...śarīrātmabhāvaśceti nibandhanadvayam uktam*)

(ii) VT.—to him who inspires consciousness i.e. gives knowledge of beings (*Jñāna-pradāya*)

4. VJ. reads v.l. *nirguṇenābhimānena*

You, whose glory remains concealed through ignorance (*ajñānena*) which is not born of *guṇas* like *sattva* (*sattvādi-guṇa-janmarahitena*).

5. *nānāvādānurodhāya*—(i) Established despite various theories—SS.

(ii) Common to all theories—VJ.

(iii) God appears according to one's views (*yathā nirūpyate tathā Bhagavān bhavati*—VB

6. *Vācyavācaka-śaktaye*—Both meaning and word derive their power from you.—VT.

44. Salutations to you who are the Source of the means or instruments to arrive at correct knowledge[1]; Absolute Wisdom[2] (independent of any source of knowledge); the source of Scriptures (i.e. whose breath are the Vedas).[3] We salute again and again to you who are both participation in and withdrawal from the worldly activities, and the Veda itself[4] (which prescribes both types of injunctions).

45. We bow to you Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of the highest bliss, whose nature is to draw away (i.e. to absolve) the sins of his devotees, whose fourfold forms or manifestations (*vyūhas*) are Rāma i.e, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva (of pure *sattva*),. Pradyumna, of the highest splendour (and possessor of Supreme affluence), and Aniruddha, comprehensible only to the wise—you who protect your votaries bestowing them with grades of liberation such as *Sāyujyatā* etc.

46.* Obeisance to you who illuminate the internal organ by presiding over its four aspects—mind, reason, the intel-

1. *Pramāṇa-mūlāya* (i) The source of perception or cognition (lit. the eye of the eye etc.)—ŚR.

(ii) The source and support of the Vedas, the authority of which rests on you.—VB.

2. *Kavaye* : (i) The knower of the past, (present) and the Future —VJ.

(ii) Whose form is the Word or the material cause of the Word—VB.

3. *Śāstra-yonaye* : cf.:(i) *Śāstra-yonitvāt* ! *Brahma Sūtra* 1.1.3

(ii) *are'sya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam etad yad Ṛgvedo Yajur vedaḥ sāma vedo'tharvāṅgirasaḥ.* —*Bṛha. Up.* 4.5.11

(i) Knowable through *śāstras* i.e. The Vedas—VJ.

(ii) Hence whose testimony are the *śāstras* or the accurate conception about whom is found in *śāstras*—VT., SD.

4. *nigamāya*—The promulgator of *Upaniṣadic* knowledge—SS., VR.

* (i) VR: Salutations to you who enhance the attributive intelligence (*dharma-bhūta-jñāna*) of your devotees and reduce or diminish the knowledge of your non-devotees by shrouding them (as it were) with Māyā constituted of three *guṇas* who are indicated through the function of the mental faculties comprising of *guṇas*; the witness of the hearts of all beings simultaneously; the eternal self-illuminating light of knowledge.

(ii) VJ : We bow to you who shed light on *sattva* and other *guṇas*, as also on knowledge, devotion etc. (of the devotees) ; who dwell in the *Prakṛti* constituted of *guṇas*; whose existence is deduced through knowledge received through sense-organs; the self-knowing witness to all *guṇas*.

lect and the ego, in the form of four manifestations—*vyūhas*—(mentioned above); who shroud yourself under those *guṇas* and shine forth as many; who are indicated and perceived through the functions of the internal organ (mentioned above), who are merely the witness to the mental faculties or aspects (referred to above), yourself remaining self-knowing yet beyond the ken of perception.

47. Oh Lord ! The Prompter of Senses ! May our obeisance be paid to you whose greatness and working are beyond the comprehension (of our intellectual capacity), but are implicit as the cause of every phenomenon.[1] You are the silent sage[2] revelling in your own blissful self.

48.* We bow to you who are conversant with the ways (courses) of the high and low (or the gross and the subtle) and preside over them all; who are both transcendental to and immanent in the Universe, and its witness as well as the cause.[3]

49. (Beings are under your control. How can you hold them responsible for their nature or behaviour) Oh Lord ! Though perfectly detached, you wield the eternal power called

1. *Sarva-vyākṛta-siddhaye*—(i) You are the source of everything and everyone such as gods etc. that are manifested and the controller of senses —VR.

(ii) The source of the manifestation of the world of name and form (*nāma-rūpātmakaṁ jagat sarvaṁ vyākṛtam, tasya siddhir utpattir yena*)—VJ.

2. *munaye* etc. (*i*) You observe complete silence inspite of your mercifulness in protecting *jīvas* (creatures) from three types of miseries, and your superiority to the world from god Brahmā to a clump of grass—VR.

(ii) The All-knower who never speaks anything irrelevant or false —VJ.

*Salutations to you who know the state or condition of both the cause and the effect; who stand above them all; who are different from *jīvas* yet are called *viśva* due to your presence in them—VJ.

(ii) We bow to you who know the causes of the gross and the subtle. You are the basis of the Universe which is superimposed on you. You are free from the conditions known as *viśva, taijasa* etc. Knowing that Kṛṣṇa was pleased with the fiftyfive epithets given to him in praise, the serpent's wives argue that the nature of a being is created as such by the Lord and hence Kāliya is not guilty as he acted according to his nature for which the Lord is responsible.—KD 16.46. 607-622.

3. Who are above the states called *Viśva, taijasa* etc. but still appear to be a part and parcel of it through Māyā—ŚR.

Time, and bring about the creation, preservation and destruction of this universe by means of *guṇas* (of *Prakṛti*). You carry on your fruitful sportive activity by awakening with your glance the various (latent) propensities in the nature of all creatures.

50* All these forms of quiet, turbulent and stupid natures found in all the three worlds, are the toys in your sports. Now the gentle-natured are dear to you, as you have incarnated for the establishment of righteousness, and you are present here to protect the saintly, righteous people (*or* your forms which desire to protect the righteous are gentle and dear).

51. The first offence of one's child (or subject) deserves to be condoned (and tolerated) by the Lord. Oh tranquil-minded Lord ! Be pleased to pardon this stupid creature who has not recognised you (your divine nature).

52. Be gracious to him, Oh Lord. The serpent is on the point of death. We, women, deserve to be pitied by the good and the righteous. Be pleased to grant unto us our life in the form of our husband.

53. May you be pleased to ordain us, your maid-servants, what we should do for you ; for one who faithfully abides by your command, becomes free from fear of all kinds (or attains to liberation from *saṁsāra*)."

Śrī Śuka said :

54. The glorious Lord who was thus fervidly appealed to and praised by the wives of the serpent, left the swooning serpent whose hoods were badly smashed with his kicking (with heels).

55. Regaining gradually his senses and vitality, Kāliya began to breathe slowly with difficulty. The miserable creature folded its palms, addressed to Lord Kṛṣṇa (as follows).

Kāliya said :

56. Dominated as we are by *tamas*, we are wicked-mind-

* It behoves you to be gracious unto all gentle-natured (*Sāttvika*), ferocious-tempered (*rājasic*) and dull-natured (*tāmasika*) forms, teeming in the three worlds. You have, however, incarnated for the protection of righteousness. Hence the protection to the gentle is dear to you and equally so are those who wish to renounce their offensive nature —VR.

ed since our very birth, and entertain wrath for a long time. It is difficult, Oh Lord, to relinquish one's natural disposition (whereby one identifies one's body with the soul and feels attachment to body and its belongings), as it exercises a powerful hold on people like an evil spirit.

57*. By you has been created this universe as the outcome of the three *guṇas* and is replete with various natures, prowess, energy, hereditary or class differences (seeds), latent desires and bodily shapes of forms, Oh Creator of the Universe.

58. Oh glorious Lord ! In this world, we, serpents, are by nature deeply wrathful. Deluded by nature as we are, how can we escape from (the clutches of) your Māyā which is so difficult to shake off.

59. You, Omniscient Lord of the world, are the cause of relieving us from the influence of Māyā; therefore, be pleased to confer your grace or punishment on us as you deem it proper.

Śrī Śuka said :

60. Hearing his speech, the Lord who assumed the human form for a specific purpose (of helping gods) ordered : "You must not stay here, Oh serpent. Hurry up and go to the sea along with your wives, children and kinsmen. Let this river be used by cows and men.

61. Whatever mortal being remembers this command of mine to you, and recites it both in the morning and in the evening, shall have no fear from you (serpents).

62. Whoever, after taking bath in this pool, the scene of my sport, propitiates gods (and *manes*) by offering water-libations, and observing a fast, worships Me meditating on Me all the while, is absolved of all sins.

63. That Garuḍa of beautiful wings, in terror of whom, you fled (abandoned) the island Ramaṇaka and resorted to this pool, shall not now devour you, as you bear my foot-prints."

Śrī Śuka said :

64. Thus addressed by Lord Kṛṣṇa of miraculous feats,

* VJ. Although Viṣṇu is the creator of the Universe, god Brahmā created the different varieties of *guṇas* or natural characteristics. They are due to the variety in the proportions and combinations of *svabhāva* (in-born nature), *vīrya* (prowess), *ojas* (virility, vitality) etc.

Kāliya and his wives devoutly worshipped him with delight (at the assurance of safety from Garuḍa).

65-66. They worshipped the Lord of the Universe with celestial clothes, necklaces and gems and ornaments of superb quality, with heavenly perfumes and ointments and a grand wreath of blue lotuses. Having propitiated the Lord whose banner is Garuḍa, they, with great pleasure, circumambulated him and bowed to him and were duly permitted by the Lord.

67. Accompanied by his wives, friends and children, Kāliya went to the Ramaṇaka island in the sea. The Yamunā of nectar-like water became instantly rid of poison through the grace of the Lord, who out of sport has assumed a human form.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Rescue from the Forest Conflagration

King Parikṣit enquired :

1. Why did Kāliya migrate from Ramaṇaka, the home of the Nāgas ? Or what specific offence did he commit against Garuḍa ?

Śrī Śuka replied :

2-3. Oh King of mighty arms ! It was formerly agreed[1] that whatever share of offerings was received by the Nāgas, every month, from the serpent-worshippers, was to be dedicated to the noble-souled Garuḍa, and to be deposited on every New Moon day at the foot of a particular tree (in Ramaṇaka) by serpents who were the prey of Garuḍa. All Nāgas thus contributed their share for self-protection.

1. V.B. : quotes the following agreement brought about by Brahmā between Garuḍa and the serpents :

amāyāṁ vṛkṣa-mūle tu Nāga-lokeṣu yad bhavet |
ekasmin divase tāvad ekatra sthāpayantu hi ||
tato hi Garuḍas tasmins tad bhuktvā naiva pīḍayet|
iti vyavasthayā sarpā māsi māsi balim daduḥ||

SS. states that they offered one serpent per month to Garuḍa.

4. Being elated with pride for its power and virulence of its poison, Kāliya, the son of Kadru, slighted Garuḍa, and ate up the offerings intended for him.

5. On learning this, the glorious Garuḍa, beloved of the Lord, got enraged, and with a desire to kill Kāliya, swooped down on it with terrific speed, Oh King.

6. Raising up its numerous heads (hoods), the serpent whose weapon is poison, advanced against Garuḍa who was vehemently rushing at it, and bit him with fangs as its weapons, and looked terrific with its dreadful tongues, poisonous hissing and cruel eyes.

7. Brushing it aside with the terrific vehemence of his speed, the wrathful Garuḍa, the son of Tārkṣya (the sage Kāśyapa), the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu and possessed of terrific prowess, struck it down with its left wing[1] brilliant like gold.

8. Struck down with the wing of Garuḍa, Kāliya became overwhelmed with fear and agitated. It entered the pool of the Yamunā that was out of bounds for Garuḍa, and hence unapproachable.

9. On one occasion Garuḍa, being extremely hungry carried away by force his favourite prey—an acquatic creature, though he was prohibited from doing so by the Sage Śaubhari.[2]

10. Seeing that the fish were greatly over-whelmed with grief and felt miserable due to the death of that fish king, Śaubhari, out of compassion for the acquatic creatures in that pool, and for the safety of the creatures living in that pool declared;

11. "If ever Garuḍa enters this pool and eats the fish hereof, he will instantly meet death. I utter the truth."

12. Only Kāliya knew this (Śaubhari's) curse but no other serpent knew it. So it resided in that pool out of the fear of Garuḍa. It was expelled out of it by Kṛṣṇa.

13-14. Finding Kṛṣṇa come out of the pool, decorated with heavenly garlands, sandal pigment and rich dress and

1. VT. notes that it was to express his contempt for Kāliya that Garuḍa used his left wing.

2. Probably the same sage who married all the fifty daughters of Māndhātā. It might be during his stay in the pool of the Yamunā for performing the penance, that the above incident took place. (*vide Supra*) 9.6. 39-55, also VP. 4.2.69-131)

beautified with numerous costly big diamonds, gems and gold ornaments all over his Person, all cowherds leapt to their feet like sense-organs on return of life (or 'creatures after the return of the vital Principle'), and with their hearts overwhelmed with rapturous joy, embraced him with deep affection.

15. Regaining their consciousness, Yaśodā, Rohiṇī, Nanda and other cowherds and cowherdesses got their desires fulfilled by meeting Kṛṣṇa.

16. Balarāma clasped Kṛṣṇa in the arms and laughed, as he knew the prowess of Kṛṣṇa.

16A. *VR's text adds this half-verse*:

He seated him on his lap and looked at him again and again in great affection. The trees, cows, bullocks, calves all were filled with extreme joy.

17. The Brāhmaṇa preceptors (of Nanda) along with their wives (who had already come there along with all the inhabitants of Vraja), now approached Nanda and congratulated him, "Thank God ! How fortunate it is that your son seized by Kāliya is liberated from its clutches.

18. Confer some gifts on Brāhmaṇas, on account of the deliverance of Kṛṣṇa (from Kāliya)". Delighted at heart Nanda immediately gave cows and gold as gifts.

19. The highly fortunate Yaśodā who got restored to her child, which was as good as lost, hugged him. Seating him on her lap, he again and again shed tears of joy.

19-A *VR's text adds* :

In the meanwhile, when the sun set, Kṛṣṇa along with Rāma camped there along with their parents, cowherds and their wealth—the herds of cattle.

20. The inhabitants of Vraja and cows, oppressed as they were by hunger, thirst and physical exhaustion, passed that night near the bank of the Yamunā, oh King of Kings !

20-A *VJ.'s text adds* :(a half verse)

At that time, in Vraja, Oh best of Kurus !

21. In the jungle dried up with summer, a great forest conflagration broke out at midnight, and surrounding the Vraja lying fast asleep, it began to scorch them.

22. Touched by the fire, the inhabitants of Vraja woke up and in their bewilderment sought resort to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord who had assumed a human form through his Māyā.

23. "Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh highly fortunate Kṛṣṇa ! Oh Rāma ! Oh Rāma of infinite prowess ! This extremely terrific fire is now consuming us who are yours (your devotees).

24. Oh Lord ! Protect us who are your well-wishers and friends, from this death-like (deadly) fire from which it is extremely difficult to escape. We cannot give up your feet (resorting to which) there is no fear from any quarter".

25. Perceiving this helplessness and danger of his people (devotees), the Supreme Ruler of the earth, the Infinite Lord of unfathomable powers, swallowed up that terrible fire.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Slaying of the Demon Pralamba

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Surrounded by his kinsmen whose hearts were full of delight, Kṛṣṇa, whose glories were sung (by them), entered Vraja (looking) beautiful with herds of cows.

2. While they (Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) assuming through their Māyā power, the guise of cowherds, were indulging in various sports, there was the advent of the season called the Summer which is not much pleasant to embodied beings.

3. It, however, appeared like the spring due to the special (environmental) characteristics of Vṛndāvana where the glorious Lord Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) was personally staying along with Balarāma.

4. It resounded with the sound of cascades that drowned the jingling of the crickets. It looked beautiful with clusters of trees constantly sprayed with the particles of water from the waterfalls.

5. Due to the pleasant breeze blowing over the waves of the rivers and the pools (and the cascades) and moistened with spray and carrying the fragrant pollen of white lilies, blue lotuses and other flowers, the inhabitants of that forest (Vṛndāvana) which, covered with meadows richly overgrown with green grass, did not experience the scorching heat radiating from the sun and forest fires in the summer.

6. At the place, the scorching rays of the sun, fierce like virulent poison, were not able to dry up the moisture and verdant nature of the soil wherein the mixture of sand and mire on all sides of the bank remained always wet by the waves that used to beat against the banks of rivers with unfathomable water.

7. The resplendently beautiful forest was in full blossom and was resounded with the cries and notes of various birds and beasts, with singing peacocks and humming bees and warbling cuckoos and waterfowls.

8. With a desire to enjoy sports, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded with cows and cowherds, entered the forest playing upon his flute.

9. With their persons decorated with tender foliage, peacock feathers, clusters of flowers and coloured earth, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and other cowherds indulged in dancing, wrestling and singing.

10. While Kṛṣṇa was dancing, some cowherds sang, some clapped their hands, some played on flutes or blew their horns, while others applauded and cheered up.

11. Gods who had assumed the forms of cowherds[1] and thus completely concealed their god-head, eulogised in applause both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, as actors do to cheer up another actor (in spite of their master-servant relation).

12. The two brothers wearing side-locks, sometimes, sported by running in circles, long-jumps, shot-putting, striking of arms, tug-of-war and wrestling.

1. VR. reads *gopa-jāti-praticchannau* as adj. qualifying 'Kṛṣṇa-Rāmau' and interprets : 'Gods who assumed the forms of cowherds glorified Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who had completely concealed their divinity in the guise of cowherds.'

13. Sometimes while other cowherds were dancing both (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) sang personally, and played on instruments and applauded (with words) "well-done ! Buck up", Oh great king.

14-16. Some time they would play with a *Bilva* fruit, sometime with *Kumbha* fruit, and now with a handful of *Āmalaka* fruits (myrobalans). Sometimes (in a running race or with swift movements in an arena) they would playfully not allow themselves to be touched, while at times they would play hide-and-seek after shutting the eyes of a cowherd boy—or by blindfolding and such other games. Sometimes they would divert themselves by mimicking the sounds and notes of beasts, birds. Now they would indulge in jumping like frogs, and now they would cut jokes of various kinds; now by swinging with the help of branches of trees and sometimes by playing the role of kings.

Indulging in such sports well known among the people, they rambled all over the area in the rivers, on the mountains, in the valleys, bowers, in woods and lakes.

17. While Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were grazing their cattle in the meadows of that forest, a demon called Pralamba assumed the guise of a cowherd and entered his followers with a view to kidnapping them.

18. Even though Kṛṣṇa, the omniscient (All-perceiving) Lord of the Yadu clan, knew it (his real intention), he agreed to be his playmate and friend, with an intention of finishing with him.

19. Kṛṣṇa, a past-master in games, summoned all the cowherds and proposed, "Oh comrade-cowherds ! Now let us play by dividing ourselves into two suitable parties."

20. In that game, the cowherds selected Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa as their captains—some (one party) accepted Kṛṣṇa's side, while the rest (the other party) Balarāma's side.

21. They indulged in various sports characterised by one party members to carry as mounts the members of the other party—the winners being the riders and the defeated party-members, the carriers.

22. In this way, some boys riding and some carrying and

simultaneously grazing the cattle—they went near a banyan tree called Bhāṇḍīraka.

23. When cowherds like Śrīdāmā, Vṛṣabha and others belonging to the party of Rāma, became victorious in the game, Kṛṣṇa and others carried them on their backs, Oh King.

24. Being defeated, Lord Kṛṣṇa bore Śrīdāman, Bhadra carried Vṛṣabha and Pralamba took Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī on his back.

25. Considering that Kṛṣṇa was irresistible, the prominent demon Pralamba swiftly carried away Balarāma far beyond the limit for dismounting.

26. When his progress was stopped by carrying Balarāma who grew weighty as the mount Meru (the king of all mountains), the demon who assumed his original (demonic) form adorned with gold ornaments and clothes, looked like a cloud illuminated with flashes of lightning carrying the Moon (the Lord of Stars) on his back.

27. Balarāma (the wielder of a plough as a weapon) was a bit disturbed to see the demon's body soaring with crashing speed in the sky, and with burning eyes, terrific (frowning) brows, terrible jaws and teeth, hair like flames of blazing fire, weirdly dazzling with the splendour of gold wristlets, crown and ear-rings.

28. The very next moment, Balarāma regained his consciousness (of his divine nature) and grew fearless. And like Indra striking vehemently a mountain with his Vajra, in great rage, he dealt a heavy blow with his fist on the head of his enemy who was carrying him away from his group of cowherd friends.

29. The moment the blow descended on his head, it was shattered to pieces; vomitting blood profusely (from his mouth), he lost his consciousness. Giving out a terrific roar, the demon fell dead, like a mountain struck down by Indra's weapon (thunderbolt).

30. Seeing the demon Pralamba killed by the mighty Balarāma, the cowherds were extremely astonished and shouted, "Bravo ! well done !".

31. Pronouncing benedictions on him, they highly praised him. And he deserved it. With their hearts overwhelmed with

affection, they embraced him as one returned from the realm of death.

32. When the sinful demon Pralamba was killed, gods felt highly gratified and happy. They showered on Balarāma wreaths of flowers and applauded him with their approbations "well done ! Well done !"

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Swallowing up of a Forest-conflagration

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. While the cowherds were deeply engrossed in playing, their cows roamed to a great distance, grazing at will, and lured by green pasture, strayed into an inaccessible part of the dense jungle.

2. Entering from one forest (-area) to another, the she-goats, cows and she-buffaloes became thirsty while wandering in the forest, began to cry loudly and got into a thicket of reeds.

3. Not finding the cattle, cowherds, of whom Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were prominent, felt repentance (for their dereliction of duty). Despite their search for the cows, they were at a loss to know where they could have gone.

4. Having thus lost their means of livelihood, the cowherds got perplexed not knowing what to do. Then all of them followed the track of the cows marked with their footprints and blades of grass cut by their hoofs.

5. Finding their wealth of cattle strayed from its path in the jungle of Muñja-grass and lowing helplessly, they directed their herds back and were overwhelmed with fatigue and thirst.

5-A. *VR's text adds*:

Climbing up to the top of a tall tree and showing his personality dark like a cloud in complexion, Kṛṣṇa loudly called out those distressed cows by their individual names.

6. Being called by their names by the glorious Lord in a tone deep like the thundering of clouds, the cows became overwhelmed with joy to hear the sound of their names, and responded with lowing loudly.

7. Thereafter, as the Fate would have it, there broke out, on all side, a forest conflagration causing havoc in all the inhabitants of the forest. And helped by its assistant, the strong wind, the great fire appeared desirous of lapping up all the mobile and immobile creatures with its tongues of dreadful flames.

8. Observing the advance of the forest-fire on all sides, the cowherds and cows got horrified. Just as people afflicted with the fear of death seek asylum with Lord Hari, they resorted to Kṛṣṇa along with Balarām, for shelter and prayed to Him.

9. "Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh Kṛṣṇa of infinite prowess ! Oh Balarāma ! Balarāma of immeasurable power ! It now behoves you to protect us who are being burnt by fire, and have approached you for asylum.

10. We are really your kinsmen and as such, should not be destroyed thus. You are the knower of all that is righteousness. We are all devoted to you and have in you our saviour."

Śrī Śuka said :

11. Hearing the pitiful appeal of his cowherd-comrades, Lord Hari assured them, "Don't be afraid. Please close your eyes."

12. With the words 'Be it so', they closed their eyes when, in the meanwhile, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Master of Yoga swallowed up that menacing conflagration and completely saved them from that calamity.

13. Then, on opening their eyes, they were extremely surprised to find themselves and their cows safe from danger, and brought over to Bhāṇḍīra[1].

1. From the details given in VT. about the bunyan tree called Bhāṇḍīra, it appears that at the time of Jīva Gosvāmī, they located it to the Northwest of the Śiva temple called 'Spāro' (?) near Vṛndāvana, and the jungle of muñja grass where the conflagration was swallowed up by Kṛṣṇa was ten miles to the south of the bunyan tree.

—Bh.P. 10.19.13 (*Vrindabana Edn* Vol. I P. 673)

14. Observing that it was due to the yogic power of Kṛṣṇa and the manifestation of his Yogic Potency (yogamāyā) that they were delivered from (death from) the forest fire, they came to believe in his divine nature.

15. Tending homewards the cows in the evening, Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma, returned to Vraja, playing on his flute, while the cowherd boys were singing his praise.

16. The very sight of Kṛṣṇa (Govinda) filled the Gopīs (cowherd-women) with Supreme delight, as every moment of separation from him was felt by them as a hundred ages (*yugas*).

CHAPTER TWENTY

Description of the Rainy Season and the Autumn

*Śrī Śuka said**:

1. The cowherd-boys related to their mothers and other women-folk (particularizing the special points) in details, the miraculous feats of them both (*viz.* of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) as to how Kṛṣṇa rescued them from a forest-conflagration, and how Balarāma killed the demon Pralamba.

2. Listening to the account, elderly cowherds and cowherd women were astonished. They (thenceforth) looked upon Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as the most prominent gods who have come down to stay in Vraja.

3.** Then (after the summer), there was the advent of the rainy season which is favourable to the regeneration of all be-

* In VJ.'s text verses 1 and 2 form a part of the last i.e. VJ's 17th chapter. VJ's new (18th) chapter begins from the 3rd verse of this (20th) chapter.

** Note : VV. 3-24 give a spiritually suggestive, beautiful description of the rainy season in the epic style. Annotators have tried to find some 'hidden meaning' convenient to their school of thought in these verses.

VJ. regards this description as an illustration (*dṛṣṭānta*) of the deep or superficial (of pure and not so pure) devotion to god Nārāyaṇa. (*Nārāyaṇa-bhakti-vaiśadyāvaiśadya-dṛṣṭāntatvena Prāvid ṛtum varṇayati |*

ings, and during which, the sky appears beautiful with refulgent circles (round the Sun and the Moon), and is resounded with thunders.

4. Being overspread with thick dark blue clouds (heavy with water), attended with lightning and thunder, and with its light (of the Sun or the Moon) being obscured and dimmed, the sky looked like Brahman modified by the conditioning *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*[1] (or the individual soul whose spiritual wisdom is obscured by *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* each corresponding to the lightning, thunder and clouds which overcast the sky)[2].

5. (Like a king redistributing his wealth for public welfare to his subjects, from whom he collected it in the form of land revenue and other taxes). At the proper time (in the rainy season), the Sun-god or the Rainy season[3] began to release the wealth in the form of water to the earth from which he absorbed it with his rays, during the (last) eight months.

6. Mighty clouds charged with lightning (with which they viewed the earth parched with the summer heat) and violently tossed by tempestuous winds (as if they were overwhelmed with compassion for the world afflicted with the summer) showered down the life-giving[4] water (resuscitating the world) which brought delight to all, just as merciful persons[5] lay down their lives out of compassion for the harassed and tormented people.

1. *Saguṇa Brahman*—(1) Individual soul conditioned by *guṇas* but capable of expanding by *guṇas* and not physically—VR (2) Four-faced god Brahmā—VJ

2. (i) VR : By nature, the sky is clear, pure and bright but gets darkened by clouds etc. So also though knowledge is inherent in the *Jīva*, the cognitive power remains ineffective till the *Jīva* attains Liberation or *mukti*. Hence one should try for Liberation.

(ii) The Sun: the brightest luminary is shrouded with clouds like god Brahmā with the three *guṇas*,—VJ.

3. *Parjanya*—The sun-god who presides over the thundering clouds —VJ.

4. v.l. *prāṇinām*—The very life of living beings—VR.

5. Just as the glances of Lord Kṛṣṇa shower the water in the form of Spiritual Knowledge on his earnest devotees—VJ.

7.* Just as the shrivelled and emaciated body of a person undergoing severe austerities for the attainment of some desired object, regains its normal health and plumpness after the realization of that object, the earth that was parched and shrivelled through the heat of the sun (in the summer), now swelled up (and became green) when drenched with water by the rain-god.

8. At the nightfall (when the sky is overcast with clouds) it is the fire-flies and not the planets that shine through darkness even as the heretical scriptures dazzle in their sins, in the Kali age and not the *Vedas*.

9. Just as young Brāhmaṇa pupils break their silence at the end of their daily religious routine, and begin their recitation of the *Vedas* on hearing the voice of their preceptor, the hibernating frogs which were lying silent, broke out croaking on hearing the sound of rains (or the thunder of the rainy clouds).

10. Rivulets that dry up in the summer, now overflow their banks and flowed into the wrong channel, like the body and riches of persons with unrestrained mind (and enslaved by their senses) and misdirected to the wrong track.

11. Like the army (camp) of a king, the earth appeared green with verdant grass (at some places), crimson-coloured by (the crowds of) *Indragopa* insects, and at some places, it became covered with the growth of umbrella-shaped mushrooms.

12.** Fields with their rich crop brought delight to the farmers and heart-burning[1] to the rich (feeling jealousy towards

* This verse shows the *pravṛtti mārga* of worldly prosperity—VJ.

** SR & KD. : Fields caused joy or grief to the farmers according to the richness or failure of harvests as they did not know that everything depends on destiny.

VT. takes *kṣetra* as 'a body'.

VR: The verse teaches that one should feel joy at the prosperity of others.

VJ. interprets *kṣetra* as 'a sacred place' and explains: Due to the vision of the great glory of the Lord, holy places bring joy. But to those who are proud and materialistic and think about the cost of pilgrimage find that the same holy places are full of misery and anxiety. One who is keen on getting *Mokṣa* (Liberation) should devote himself to the lotus feet of Hari.'

1. VB. : To the proud kings who are bent on conquering the enemies, the rains and fields covered with crops, cause obstruction and troubles, as they do not know that victory or defeat depends on the Will of the Lord.

the farmers) as they did not know that everything depends on the luck.

13.* Being drenched with the fresh rain-waters,[1] all beings living on the land and in water assumed a beautiful, winsome appearance immediately, even as persons attain to attractive divine form[2] through the service (worship and contemplation) of Hari (due to its being the highest form of religion and of supremely blissful nature).

14. The sea, the waters of which are already tossed into high waves by stormy winds, becomes more violently agitated at the confluences with rivers, even as the heart of an immature *yogī*, still influenced with passions, becomes highly perturbed by contacts with worldly objects.[3]

15. Though continuously subjected to the down-pour of rains, the mountains were not agitated at all, like the devotees of Hari whose minds are absorbed in the meditation of the Lord and are not perturbed even under overwhelming calamities (of threefold nature).

16. Being unused (or unrepaired for a long time) and hence overgrown and covered with grass, the tracks and paths become doubtful (unrecognizable) like the *Vedas* which are not properly studied (and repeatedly recited), get consigned to oblivion by the force (passage) of time.

17. Just as pleasure-seeking women bear no constancy to men of virtue and merit (if devoid of money), the fickle-hearted

* VT. endorses ŚR. and states that both the process and attainment (*sādhanāvasthā* and *sādhyāvasthā*) of the service of Hari are supremely blissful.

VR. : No Grace can be attained except through the service of Hari.

1. VJ. interprets *vāri* as 'knowledge' that removes the misery of *saṁsāra* of the denizens of the nether-world (*pātāla*), inhabitants of the terrestrial globe and residents of the higher (celestial) world. To these inhabitants, pure spiritual knowledge leading to gracious divine forms, is attainable through the service of Hari.

2. VB. : Just as devotees assume the four-armed divinely refulgent Hari-like form etc. 'The inhabitants of land etc.' stand for persons characterised by *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

3. *guṇa*—(i) *rajo-guṇa*—VJ.

(ii) Natural propensities creating agitation in the mind for sensual pleasure. These are to be controlled by meditating on Hari.—VR.

flashes of lightning did not remain constant (and faithful) to clouds which are the friends of the world.

18. Just as the attributeless Supreme Person manifests himself in the world which is a product or conglomeration of *guṇas*, (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), the rain-bow (Indra's bow) though devoid of a *guṇa* (a string), shone forth in the sky, the special quality (*guṇa*) of which is sound.

19. Veiled over by clouds shining with her own beams of light, the moon did not shine forth like the individual soul, enveloped and shrouded in its ego-sense, illumined by its own light.

20. Just as persons sorely distressed and (hence) disgusted with the miseries of household life (*saṁsāra*) feel delighted at the arrival of the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, peacocks to which the advent of the rainy season (*lit.* the appearance of the clouds) is itself an occasion of joy, become exulted with their hair (feathers) standing on their end (while dancing with their feathers spread out).

21.* Just as persons, at first grown emaciated and exhausted through asceticism, become stout and robust on attaining the fruition of their desires, the trees shrunk and dried up through the heat of the summer, sucked water through their feet (i.e. roots) and assumed many new (rich) forms (putting forth luxuriantly new branches, foliage, fresh blossoms, fruits etc.).

22. (This verse shows the characteristics of persons permanently indulging in saṁsāra—*nitya-saṁsāri*).

The cranes continue to stay even in sliding, miry and thorny banks of lakes, Oh Parīkṣit, like unto wicked-minded persons given to low pleasures, continue to live in houses wherein they carry on their detestable cruel (*lit.* of non-pacific nature) jobs.

* VR. Persons performing penance with some material end in view grow emaciated through penance, but after realizing the fruition of their desire, become multiplied in the form of sons, grandsons etc., and persons who, with no ulterior motive except the propitiation of the Lord, perform penance, attain Liberation, and are endowed with various supernatural forms and life similar to the Lord.

VJ. interprets *pādapa* as 'ascetics' and explains: As ascetics performing penance, drink the ambrosia of *Śāstric* knowledge and controlling their senses and minds realize the Supreme Soul (*paramātman*) Himself.

23. While the god of rains poured down showers of rains, dams and bridges got damaged and breached by floods, just as the paths[1] (of religious duties prescribed for different classes of society (*varṇas*) and stages of life (*āśramas*) in the Vedas, are breached by attacks of false heretical theories in the *Kali* Age.

24. Clouds impelled by winds showered their nectar-like waters to creatures below, just as rulers of the earth or merchant kings advised by Brāhmaṇas at opportune times, distribute their blessed wealth among the subjects (or carry out works of social welfare).

25. When the forest was thus abounding in trees richly laden with ripe dates and rose apples, Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by cows and cowherds, and accompanied by Balarāma, entered in it for sporting.

26. At the call of Kṛṣṇa, cows which (normally) proceeded in slow gait owing to the weight of heavy udders, hastened with quick steps, showering with joy the milk from their udders on the way.

27. On the way, Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the inhabitants of the forest (men, birds and beasts) exulted with joy, rows of trees dripping with honey, streams of waters cascading from hills, and their echoing sound in the hills and the caves that were at hand.

28. Sometimes when it rained, the Lord took shelter under a tree or entered a cave, and sported Himself joyously eating bulbs, roots and fruits.

29. Accompanied by Balarāma, he sat on a slab of stone near water, and ate the rice mixed with curds (brought from home), sharing it with cowherds who were to sit with him for the meal.[2]

30-31. Beholding the bulls and calves lying on the lush green grass ruminating in great satisfaction, with their eyes

1. Due to the heretical arguments advanced by the Buddha and his followers the Vedic paths of action (*Karma*), of Knowledge and of Devotion are broken down—VB. Bhakti, however, has a place in non-vedic religions in India.

KD. includes the followers of *āgamas* and *tantras* under heretics.

2. Some other cowherds made their own arrangement at different places—VB.

closed, and cows fatigued with the heavy weight of their udders (also resting and chewing the cud in satisfaction), and the splendid beauty of the rainy season enhanced by his own enchanting powers, bringing delight to all creatures, the Lord felt gratified (with them all).

32. While Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were dwelling at that Vraja in this way, the autumn characterised by cloudless skies crystal-like waters and gentle breezes, set in.

33. (Originally waters are crystal clear, but they become turbid due to rainy season). Now due to the autumnal season which makes the lotus-plants blossom forth, waters have regained their original translucent nature, just as the minds of persons who have fallen from the path of *yoga*, regain their mental serenity by resuming their *yogic* practices.

34. Just as devotion to Kṛṣṇa removes all the evils setting upon persons belonging to different stages of life (*āśramas*)[1], the Autumn dispelled all the clouds from the sky and prevented the contacts of the elements or the congestion of created beings, dried up the mire on the earth, and cleansed the turbidity from water.

35. Having discharged (and thus renounced) all their possessions (in the form of the waters in them), the clouds shone forth in their spotless white splendour, as quiescent sages who have absolved themselves of all sins do, after renouncing all their three-fold desires (about progeny, property and celebrity).

36. Just as people with spiritual wisdom impart their nectar-like knowledge on some occasions, and refuse to do so on others, the mountains also at some places allowed the streams of pure water to flow, while at others they withheld them.

37. Just as ignorant persons immersed in their household matters are not cognisant of the daily shortening of the span of their life, so the creatures in shallow waters did not perceive the diminishing water level every day.

38. Just as a poverty-stricken, wretched man burdened with family responsibilities but of uncontrolled senses, undergoes

1. SR. enumerates the evils : The trouble of physical work during studenthood, the pangs of separation in married state, and sexual passions etc in *sannyāsins*.

miseries, the creatures in shallow waters suffered from the heat of the autumnal sun.

39. Marshy tracts of land gradually gave up their marshiness, and the plants their unripeness, just as (spiritually) wise men slowly (step by step) discard their notions of 'I' and 'mine' with respect to their bodies and belongings which are distinctly different from their self.

40. When the season of autumn set in, the waters of the ocean grew calm and still, even as a meditative sage established in his self, gives up ritualistic performances and recitation of the Vedas.

41. Cultivators secured the supply of water to their fields by strengthening the bunds (and thus stopping the breaches and leakages), just as *Yogins*, by control of senses, preserve their spiritual knowledge which otherwise gets dissipated (through unsubdued senses)[1].

42. The moon relieved the sufferings of creatures caused by the rays (heat) of the autumnal sun, just as the (revelation of) spiritual knowledge alleviates the troubles caused by the (false) identification of the body with the soul, or Lord Kṛṣṇa removes the pangs of separation of (cowherd) women of Vraja.

43. The cloudless sky shone forth beautifully with bright stars twinkling clearly in autumnal nights, as the mind with the predominance of *Sattva*, correctly comprehends the import of the *Vedas* (*Śabda-Brahman*) as decided by the *Pūrva* and *Uttara Mīmāṁsās*.

44. The full moon, surrounded by stars, shone resplendent in the heavens, just as Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yadus, did in his circle of Vṛṣṇi clansmen, on the earth.

45. People, embraced by the (cooling) temperate breeze which has blown over blossoming forests, felt relieved of the heat (of the sun) but not so the Gopa women whose heart was stolen (captivated) by Kṛṣṇa (whom they embraced in their hearts) as the pangs of actual separation were enhanced thereby.

46. Due to the (fecundating influence of the) Autumn, and through the insistent courting of their mates, cows, female deer

1. VB. aptly quotes :
ūrdhvendriyais tu vikṣepo jñānasyā'dho vināśanam l
nirodhe puñja-bhāvena svakāryaṁ sādhayed dhruvam ||

(or beasts), she-birds and women, conceived (irrespective of their willingness), just as the acts for propitiating the Lord are followed by the concomitant fruit (automatically).

47. At the sunrise all lotuses (except moon-lotuses) bloomed forth, just as all subjects except criminals (or robbers) become fearless on the installation of a king (i.e. restoration of good government).

48. The earth, rich with ripe cornfields, shone bright and beautiful, especially due to the incarnation of the two rays (*āṃśas*) of Lord Hari (viz. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) and also with the performance of Vedic sacrifices of harvest season (wherein new corn is offered), and with festivities and grand celebrations gratifying the senses, which were carried on in cities and villages.

49. Just as *Siddhas* (the masters of *yoga* and *mantras*—mystic incantations), detained (in their present bodies) by their ordained span of life, attain their respective desired heavenly bodies, when the appropriate time arrives, merchants, sages, kings and *snātakas* (life-long bachelor-students) shut up in their places due to the rainy-season, (and were impeded from undertaking an expedition or journey) now set out to achieve their respective objects.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE*

The Song of Gopīs (cowherd-women)

***Śrī Śuka continued*:**

1. In this beautiful forest, with its waters made crystal-clear by the Autumn, and caressed by a breeze surcharged with the fragrance of beds of lotuses, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered deep, along with his cows and cowherds.

* Ch. XIX according to VJ.'s text. He thinks that the object of this chapter is to emphasize that everyone should perform devotion, the means of spiritual knowledge, according to his capacity—

sva-yogyatānusāreṇa Harau jñāna-sādhanaṁ bhaktiḥ kartavyā |

2. While grazing the cattle, Kṛṣṇa, in company of cowherds and Balarāma, entered deep into the forests, the lakes, rivers and mountains wherein were resonant with the warbling of flocks of enraptured birds and hummings of bees; through the glades of trees adorned with their floral wealth; and he played[1] charmingly on his flute.

3. When the damsels of Vraja heard from a distance that enchanting music of the flute exciting erotic sentiments,[2] some of them sung unto their friends the excellences of Kṛṣṇa,[3] in his absence.

4. Hardly did they begin to describe when, remembering his dalliance with them, they could not proceed, as their mind was distracted by the vehement force of passion, Oh King.

5. (The cowherd women depict their mental vision of Kṛṣṇa as he entered Vṛndāvana. This visualization of Kṛṣṇa distracted the Gopīs as mentioned in the above verse.)

Possessed of a charming personality like an accomplished actor,[4] graced with a crown of peacock feathers,[5] his ears

1. *cukūja*—(i) played on, sounded—ŚR., VR., SD.

(ii) conveying an erotic invitation to Gopīs—VJ., VB.

2. VB. says that it was a divine music. Hence it could be heard from such a long distance.

3. SG. & VT. carefully exclude elderly ladies like Yaśodā and Rohiṇī from this effect. In them, motherly affection was awakened. While Rādhā being deeply moved conveyed her feelings to her friends like Lalitā. The text of the Bh. P., however, is silent about names of erotically excited *gopīs*, including Rādhā.

4. v.l. *naṭa-vara-vapuḥ*—(i) The most beautiful among all the forms assumed so far by the Lord.—VT.

(ii) Just as an actor puts on a special dress for playing a particular part on the stage, the Lord assumed this human form with this special dress on the stage of the world.—SG.

(iii) By looking at which (form), all beings dance with joy—SG.

5. MR. (Miśra Rāmakṛṣṇa in his com. *Prema-mañjarī*) quotes from *Kṛṣṇa-yāmala*.

Rādhā-priya-mayūrasya patraṁ Rādhekṣaṇa-prabham /
bibharti śirasā Kṛṣṇas tasyāś cūḍānibhaṁ yataḥ //

A poetic explanation that Kṛṣṇa wore the feathers of a peacock due to the similarity of the 'eye' (eye-like bright bluish coloured centre) of the feather to Radhā's eye.

decorated by *karṇikāra* flowers, clad in garments (brilliant) yellow like molten gold, wearing the Vaijayantī wreath made of flowers of five different colours, (consisting of *tulasī*, *kunda*, *mandāra*, *pārijāta* and *lotuses*[1]) filling the holes of his flute with the nectar of his lips[2] and accompanied by the cowherds[3] singing his glory, Kṛṣṇa entered the Vṛndāvana forest, beautified with his foot-prints.

5A. *VJ's text adds* :

Kṛṣṇa wore a crest of peacock's feathers and appeared as a forest-dweller with Karṇikāra flowers adorning his ears. He rested his face on his left arm (his face was turned to the left). Breathing through the flute with appropriate histrionic movements of eye-brows and fingers, he made all the hosts of cowherds sing classical music (the *Gāndharva Veda* as compiled by Bharata), and gave delight to all the creatures in the world.

6. Listening to the music of the flute which bewitched and transported the hearts of all beings, all the women of Vraja embraced him mentally, as they were (each) engaged in describing it.

The cowherd women sang* :

7. "This is the highest reward of being blessed with eyes; we do not know if there can be any greater felicity than this, Oh friends. Those only have enjoyed the fruit who have drunk to their hearts' content (*ni-pītam*) (the charm) of the counte-

1. MR. in his com. (mentioned above) quotes a verse giving names of flowers woven in the Vaijayantī wreath :

Tulasī-kunda-mandāra-pārijāta-saroruhaiḥ /
pañcabhiḥ kusumair etair vanamālā prakīrtitā //

2. The musical notes issuing from the flute were sweet like nectar to the ear, but this sweetness is transferred poetically to the breath that issued from Kṛṣṇa's lips (mouth)—VB.

3. Balarāma is implied in Kṛṣṇa as that was the inseparable pair.

* It is presumed that the *gopīs*, one after another sing these verses. The names of *gopīs* given in SG or VT are not mentioned in the Text of the Bh. P. The *gopīs* express their eagerness to be with Lord Kṛṣṇa to enjoy his company personally, and each regards herself as unfortunate as compared even with inanimate objects like rivers and Govardhana hill which are supposed to enjoy Kṛṣṇa's melodious music on the flute.

nance of the sons of Nanda as they played on the flute, casting around their loving side-glances at the time of tending their cattle to the forest, along with their cowherd-companions.

8. Picturesquely clad in garments intertwined with tender mango-leaves, with tufts of peacock feathers, and bunches of flowers (decorating the head), and wearing wreaths of lilies and lotuses, and singing[1] and dancing freely sometimes in the midst of the group of cowherds, they (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) appeared exceedingly beautiful like actors on the stage.

9. Oh Gopīs ! What infinitely great meritorious acts must have been performed by this flute, in consequence of which it can freely enjoy to its heart's content, the nectar flowing from the lips of Dāmodara (Kṛṣṇa)—which is the legitimate monopoly of *Gopīs*—and leaves but little to others; the rivers (which like mothers nourished with their waters the life of the bamboo of which the flute is made) which enjoyed a part of it, expressed their ecstasy with the blooming of lotuses (like hair standing on their ends with joy). The bamboos (the parent of the flute) like righteous elderly people shedding tears of joy to find a great devotee of the Lord born in their family, shed drops of dew.

10. Oh friend ! Vṛndāvana which has attained the splendid beauty of bearing the imprints of the lotus-feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa,[2] has enhanced the glory of the earth (far above

1. *gāyamānau*—Some times when exhausted they invited other cowherd boys to sing at intervals and exhibited their superiority. The cowherd boys are blessed as they could fully enjoy the singing and dancing of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa who felt shy to do so at Vraja among elderly people. Hence the Gopīs felt that they are extremely unfortunate, as they missed the free exhibition of dancing and singing of Kṛṣṇa—SG.

VT. repeats SG. VB. explains how this Lord's act was full of all *rasas*. His *rasa* theory is beyond the scope of a footnote.

2. The epithet is *Devakī-suta* 'the son of Devakī', and not *Yaśodā-suta* 'the son of Yaśodā'. In fact, the *gopīs* did not know that Kṛṣṇa was Devakī's son, and they presumed that he was Yaśodā's son. The narrator Śuka and members of the audience, knew that Kṛṣṇa was Devakī's son, and hence the author of the Bh. P. who represented that it was Śuka

that of the heaven). While seeing the rapturous dance of peacocks on hearing the music of Kṛṣṇa's flute, which they felt to be deep and low rumbling of clouds, all other animals on the hills stood motionless.[1]

11. Blessed are the female deer which though lacking in reasoning, capacity (due to their birth in animal species) offer, along with their mates, the black-antelopes, their worship to him with their loving glances, on hearing the music of flute played by the picturesquely dressed Kṛṣṇa, the son (or delight) of Nanda (while our cowherd-husbands are too petty-minded to tolerate it, if we do the same).

12. Beholding Kṛṣṇa, whose handsome appearance and amiable disposition were enhancing the delight of women, and listening to the enchanting music played upon by him, celestial damsels moving in the aerial cars (seated on the laps of their heavenly husbands) became infatuated under the spell of the god of love, and had the chaplets of flowers drop down from the braids of their hair, and the folds of their garments slip down and unsettled.

13. And the cows quaffed, with goblets in the form of their ears raised erect, the nectar-like melodious music of the flute flowing from the mouth (i.e. the breath) of Kṛṣṇa, and the calves stood entranced and motion-less[2], holding in their mouth the mouthful of milk sucked from the flowing udders

who reported even this speech of *Gopīs*, used the term *Devakī-suta*, without being aware of the slip. SG., VT., VC defend it by quoting from *Bṛhad-Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that 'Yaśodā' and 'Devaki' are two names of Nanda's wife.

dve nāmnī Nanda-bhāryāyā Yaśodā Devakītyapi /

But the quotation is not found in my (*Gita Press*, Gorakhpur) edition of VP. Other annotators accept the epithet *Devakī-Suta* as Kṛṣṇa, and have just ignored the textual slip. SG.'s defence that Devakī merely gave birth to Kṛṣṇa, but he was really brought up by Yaśodā (*suta-śabdena kevalaṁ tayā prasūta eva, putras tu Yaśodāyā eva iti bhāvaḥ*) is merely a cover-up.

1. SJ. interprets the motionlessness as 'swoon due to the impact of divine love' (*Prema-mūrcchā*). This blessed state is not enjoyed even in Vaikuṇṭha. The *gopīs* regret their misfortune of not being transported to that swoon-like state. This shows the unsatiable nature of Divine Love.

2. This is the manifestation of *Sāttvika-vikāra*—SG.

(of their mothers).[1] Through (the medium of) their eyes, they embraced Govinda (Lord Kṛṣṇa), with tears of joy trickling from their eyes.

14. How wonderful! Oh mother! The birds in this forest must most probably be considered as sages, for (just as sages desirous of visualizing Kṛṣṇa follow different branches of the Veda, and perform the duties prescribed therein, without any desire for the fruits accruing from them), the birds are perching on the branches of trees covered with charming fresh foliage (without flowers and fruit obstructing Kṛṣṇa's sight) in order to have complete (unobstructed) view of Kṛṣṇa with un-winking eyes,[2] and to listen to the melodious music of the flute (with full absorbing attention), remaining speechless and oblivious to the external world (like sages happily absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's music or praise).

15. Listening to the music of Kṛṣṇa with wrapt attention, even the (inanimate) rivers exhibited their passion for him, by the whirlpools which thereby diminished the rapidity of their currents (flowing to the sea, their Lord), and (under the pretext of) offering him the present of lotuses, they, with the arms in the form of waves, clasped the pair of his feet, as if to camouflage their act of embracing.

16*. Perceiving[3] that in the heat of the sun, Kṛṣṇa pasturing the cattle of Vraja in company of Balarāma and cowherds, and himself following them playing on the flute, the rain-cloud (due to Kṛṣṇa's being similar to it in complexion and dispel-

1. VJ. (and as an alternative explanation SG. & VT.) regard *snuta-stana-payaḥ-kavalāḥ* an adj. qualifying *gāvaḥ* (cows), and interpret: "With milk flowing from their udders and a mouthful of grass in their mouth". I think the music of the flute enchanted both the cows and the calves, and they forgot even to swallow the mouthful of milk. Hence my translation as above.

2. v.l. *Śṛṇvanti mīlitadṛśaḥ* 'Listening with half-closed eyes'—SG.
"Listen with closed eyes without looking at anything else"—SD.

* VT. states that noticing the effect of the heat of the Sun on the cattle and cowherds, Kṛṣṇa played the musical mode called *mallāra rāga*) (*Megha-malhāra rāga*) on his flute, which effected a shower. It is believed that if this *rāga* (musical mode) is scientifically sung, it brings rain-showers immediately.

3. With its eyes of lightning—VT.

ling heat-like distress of the people) arose and out of overflowing friendliness to him, spread out his body as an umbrella over them, and showered him with flowers[1] (i.e. flower-like showers).

17. Perfectly accomplished of purpose are the Pulinda (including aboriginal and backward class) women who, after being overcome and distressed with passion at the sight of the saffron (colour) sticking to the blades of grass (as well as rocks and other places)—the saffron-paste originally applied to the breast of the Divine Consort[2] (of Kṛṣṇa) and rendered still more charming by its contact with the reddish, lotus-like feet of the Lord of high renown (or whose glory is sung in the *Vedas*)—got cured of those pangs (of having a vision of Kṛṣṇa) by smearing their faces and breasts with that paste.

18. "Alas ! Oh friends ! Even this mount Govardhana is the foremost among the servants (devotees) of Lord Hari, inasmuch as it derives extremely high delight from the touch of the feet of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, and it receives them with respect, catering to their needs and to those of their (cowherd) friends and cattle, by offering fresh water, good grazing ground, caverns for shelter and edible bulbs and roots.

19. Oh friend ! Of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who tend their cattle from one forest to another along with their young cowherd friends, and characterised by carrying ropes[3] (for tying hind-legs of cows when milking), and string-nooses (for controlling unruly cows), it is, however, wonderful that the sublimely sweet and melodious notes of their flutes cause motionlessness in mobile corporeal beings, and induce bristling with joy (which is a form of motion) among the (immobile) trees."

20. While describing to each other such (fascinating) sports of the Lord who ranged over the forest called Vṛndāvana, the cowherd-ladies became completely absorbed in them (or in him).

1. The flowers of the clouds are the rain-drops— *megha-puṣpaṁ ghana-rasam* quote SG. and VT.

2. VT. insists that she is no other than Rādhā.

3. *niryoga-pāśa* etc.—Extremely powerful bonds or ties created by *yoga*—VJ.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO*

Cowherd-maids Pray to Kātyāyanī—Kṛṣṇa's carrying away their garments

Śrī Śuka said :

1. In the first month (Mārgaśīrṣa), in the season of Hemanta,[1] maids in the Vraja (cowherd-settlement of Nanda), observed the vow of adoring goddess Kātyāyanī, eating only pure food fit for being offered to sacrificial fire.

2-3. Having taken bath in the waters of the Yamunā at day-break, they made an image in sand of the goddess, just near the river water, on the bank, and worshipped her with sandal-paste, fragrant flowers, offering her propitiatory oblations, burning frank-incense, waving lights before her, and presenting other miscellaneous gifts of varying costs, along with tender shoots, fruits and unbroken grains of rice.

4. Those virgins performed the worship of the goddess, each repeating the prayer (as a *mantra* or incantation) : "Oh goddess Kātyāyanī ! Oh great deluding potency of the Lord ! Oh great *yoginī* (of great Super-human powers) ! Oh absolute ruler of the universe ! Be pleased to grant the son of cowherd Nanda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) as my husband ![2]

5. The maidens who have set their heart on Kṛṣṇa, observed the vow for the period of a month, worshipping goddess Bhadrakālī with the prayer, "May Nanda's son be our husband".

6. Getting up early in the morning, and calling others by their names (to wake them up), they sang in loud chorus

* It is significant that this episode is not given in the *HVP* and *VP*. The object of this chapter is to demonstrate that devotion alone 'generates' (brings about) the Lord's grace.

bhaktir eva bhagavat-prasāda-janantti darśayitum—VJ.

1. This season consists of the following months of the Hindu calendar—Mārgaśīrṣa and Pauṣa.

2. This Sanskrit verse is regarded as a *mantra* and it is to be repeated 1,600 times a day, during the period of *Kātyāyanī-vrata*—KD.22.62.

VT and VC. quote *Nārada-pañcarātra* to show that every *mantra* about Kṛṣṇa has goddess Durgā as the presiding deity. Hence the justification of this *vrata* and *japa* for getting Kṛṣṇa as a husband.

the glory of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as they went to bathe in the Yamunā clasping each other's hand.

7. On one occasion (on the last day of that vow which was a full-moon day), they, as usual, left their garments on the bank, and singing the glory of Kṛṣṇa, they sported in the water merrily (as that was the concluding day of their vow). Thus they concentrated on him in mind, word and deed).[1]

8. Understanding their intention, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Master of all other experts in *yoga*,[2] surrounded by his companions,[3] went there to grant them the fruit of their vow.[4]

9. It is traditionally reported that he collected all their garments and quickly climbed a *Kadamba* tree (nearby). Laughing loudly, he spoke to them in fun, while (other) boys also kept a-laughing.

10. "Oh delicate girls! As you are exhausted by observing a religious vow, I am not joking. Earnestly I tell you. Let each of you come here at will, and receive her respective garments.

11. As these (cowherd) boys know it, I have never spoken a lie up till now. Oh girls with beautiful waist (Oh girls of pure hearts)! You may come here one by one or all together, and take your own clothes.[5]

1. *evaṁ mānasa-vācika-kāyikaikatānatvaṁ darśitam*—VT. The poet-annotator KD. says that the maidens imagined the bluish water of Yamunā as the person of Kṛṣṇa and embraced Him (in the form of water) and kissed it etc.—KD.22.84-87.

2. The epithets *bhagavān yogeśvareśvaraḥ* shows that it is the 'eternal metaphysical Lord—the third aspect of the Reality' which is implied here and not the human Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa (vide Intro. XLVIII-XLIX Bh.P. vol. I). KD. underscores the same, "He became many to satisfy them." —KD. 22.99.

3. VT. quotes *Gautamī Tantra* and shows that these companions are 'Intellect, ego, mind, heart'.

4. VB. thinks that the maidens have committed the following faults : nude bath, breaking of silence and playing while observing a vow. To purge them of these, Lord Kṛṣṇa came there and by his look did it.

5. It is the erotically tinged devotion of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas which makes VT. state that Kṛṣṇa was desirous of seeing the central part of their

12. Perceiving (the implications of) his joke, the cowherd girls were overcome with love. Bashfully they looked at each other and smiled, but none came out of the water.

13. When Kṛṣṇa was speaking to them jocularly, the girls got confused in their mind. Keeping themselves immersed in the cold water upto the neck, they requested him, while shivering with cold.

14. "Oh dear Kṛṣṇa ! Pray, do not be unjust to us. Darling ! We know that you, the son of Nanda, are our beloved, whom the whole of Vraja praises. Pray, do return our clothes to us, as we are shivering (with biting cold).

15. Oh beautiful Kṛṣṇa of charmingly bluish complexion ! We are your servants. We all shall carry out your behests. You are a knower of *dharma*[1] (righteous conduct). Pray return our clothes, else we shall (be constrained to) report the matter to the king (Nanda)" (threatened the elderly gopī's).

The glorious Lord said :

16. "If you are my servants (as you say), and undertake to abide by my biddings, come here and take back each your (respective) clothes, have a countenance beaming with a smile.

16A. *VJ. and VT. record a half-verse*

Otherwise, I will not return the garments. What will the angry chief do to me ?".

bodies (*yuṣmākam madhyabhāgādisaundaryam eva draṣṭum iṣyate, na ca vastrair etair matprayojanam iti nigūḍho bhāvaḥ*/) It is on the background of Tantricism that this Vaiṣṇavism was developed. Hence the commentator's words should not be superficially understood at their face value in view of note on page 1396. VB. says Kṛṣṇa wanted to see their hearts, interpreting *madhya* as 'heart'. Other annotators have just passed it over. As Kṛṣṇa's physical age was *only six years and four months* at this time, the girls wishing to marry him must have been presumably *less than six years* of age and as such this episode appears allegorical.

1. VB. quotes a *smṛti* text which prohibits the seeing of the secret parts of a girl, sexual act of beasts, a naked woman or one whose breasts are exposed to view :

17. At this, all the girls shivering with cold and covering their private parts with the palms of their hands, came out of the water, frozen (lit. shrunk) with cold.

18. Perceiving their virginity,[1] the glorious Lord who was propitiated with the purity of their hearts, placed their clothes on the branch of the tree and smilingly addressed them, with great pleasure.

19. "It is a positive offence against gods, that you entered water in a nude state,[2] after undertaking the observance of a religious vow. For the expiation of this sin, you bow raising up your folded palms to your heads, and lay prostrate (on the ground) after which you accept your (respective) clothings."

Additional verses in the Texts of VR and VJ.

19-A. Hearing this command full of religious significance, from the great Soul (Lord Kṛṣṇa), the damsels paid obeisance to him with one hand, covering their private part with the other.

19-B. Seeing them (violate the proper way of bowing to the Lord), the glorious Lord uttered this observation full of righteousness (and concerning religious formality), "Those who are experts in Vedas know it (and have laid it down) that he who bows to god Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) with one hand only, should be punished by cutting off the other hand (not used in bowing).

19-C. Hence, a person should pay respects to his Lord by both of his hands. You, therefore, comply that way, and that will please me the better".

20. Considering what was explained to them by Lord Kṛṣṇa (Acyuta), the maids of Vraja realized that taking a plunge (bath) in a nude state is a transgression in the observation of their vow. Being desirous of completely fulfilling the vow, with all the related rites and formalities, they

Kanyā-yonim paśu-krīḍām nagna-strīm prakaṭa-stanīm nāvalokayet/
Hence as a knower of *dharma*, Kṛṣṇa should return the clothes.

1. On seeing them arrived—VT.
2. Cf. *na nagnaḥ karhicit snāyāt l*

—*MBH. Anu.* 104.51

bowed to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the very embodiment of the fruit and religious rites, directly present before them. And it was he who washes off all sins, flaws and transgressions.

21. Seeing them bowing down humbly before him, the merciful Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, was pleased with them, and returned to them all their clothes.

22. Though they were badly deceived by the criticism of their nudity (in verse 19), were compelled to give up bashfulness, were ridiculed (by saying that he was not joking (verse 10), were treated like puppets and robbed of their clothings, they were so much satisfied with the company of their beloved that they bore no displeasure towards him.

23. They put on their clothes. So charmed were they with the company of the Lord, and their hearts were so much attracted, that they did not stir away from that place but continued to cast their bashful glances at him.

24. Understanding that their motive of undertaking the observance (of Kātyāyanī) vow was the longing to touch his feet, the glorious Lord Dāmodara (Kṛṣṇa) addressed the maidens :

25. "Oh chaste ladies! Your object (in observing the Kātyāyanī vow) viz. to worship me, is already known to me. It is approved of by me, and it shall be realized.

26. Your desire for my company is not censurable, for your longing to have enjoyment with me will not again lead to a birth in Saṁsāra. A seed once fried or boiled does not sprout.

27. Return to Vraja, Oh girls, as your object is accomplished. You will spend the autumnal nights in enjoyment with me—the object for which you, good ladies, have observed the vow of the worship of Kātyāyanī."

Śrī Śuka said :

28. Thus commanded by the Lord, the maidens whose object was accomplished, continued to contemplate in their minds the lotus-feet of the Lord, and returned to Vraja most grudgingly (lit. with great difficulty).

29. The glorious Lord, the son of Devakī, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by cowherds, went to a great distance from Vrndāvana, grazing the cattle.

30. Perceiving that the trees served as umbrellas by spreading their shade in the scorching heat of the summer sun, Kṛṣṇa addressed to his cowherd friends, the residents of Vraja:

31. "Oh little Kṛṣṇa, Oh Aṁśu, Oh Śrīdāman, Subala, Arjuna, Viśāla, Ṛṣabha, Tejasvin, Devaprastha and Varūthapa !

32. Have a look at these great blessed souls who live only for the welfare of others, and themselves undergo (for others) the severity of stormy winds, heavy showers, summer heat and snow, and save them off from us.

33. The birth of the trees is verily the most blessed in the world, as it contributes to the well-being of all creatures. Just as no needy person returns disappointed from benevolent persons, so is the case with a person who approaches these for shelter.

34. They fulfil the desires (needs) of others by means of their leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, wood, fragrance, gums or exudations, ashes, coals and tender leaves.

35. That a person should sacrifice his life, wealth, intellect and speech for doing what is beneficial to others, is the farthest limit of the usefulness of embodied beings for their fellow creatures."

36. Praising them (the trees) thus, the Lord proceeded to the Yamunā passing through the avenue of trees whose branches were bent low with clusters of young leaves, foliage, bunches of fruits and flowers and other leaves.

37. Having made their cattle drink that very sweet, cool and healthy water of the Yamunā (to their fill), the cowherds themselves drank that sweet water to their heart's content, Oh king.

38. The cowherd pastured their cattle in the groves on the bank of the Yamunā. Being oppressed with hunger they approached Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa and addressed as follows :

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE*

Spiritual Emancipation of the Wives of Brāhmaṇa Sacrificers

The cowherd boys urged :

1. Oh Balarāma ! Oh Rāma[1] of extra-ordinary prowess ! Oh Kṛṣṇa, the annihilator of the wicked ! This hunger is sorely troubling us, indeed. It behoves you both to appease it.

Śrī Śuka said :

2. When the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, was thus requested by the cowherd boys, he spoke to them with the intention of showering his grace on some Brāhmaṇa women[2] who were devoted to him.

3. "Go to the sacrificial hall where Brāhmaṇas who are reciters of the Vedas (but who do not know the meaning and implications of the Vedic text recited) are engaged in conducting a sacrificial session, called Āṅgirasa, with a desire to attain the celestial region, (after death).

4. After arriving there, tell them the names of my elder brother and of mine, and that you are deputed by us, and request them (to give you some) cooked rice, Oh Gopas !"

5. Being thus commanded by the Lord, they went there, folded the palms of their hands, and lay prostrate on the ground like a staff before the Brāhmaṇas (by way of paying them obeisance), and begged of them :

* This is the XXI chapter in VJ.'s text. The object of this chapter is to emphasize that it is the internal capability and faith that is more powerful and effective in the devotion of Lord Kṛṣṇa and not the scholarship or knowledge of the Śāstras—VJ.

1. The Supreme Brahman—VB. He is so called as *yogins* find spiritual delight in that infinite Supreme Soul characterised by Reality, Bliss and Consciousness. He quotes :

ramante yogino'nante satyānande cidātmani /
iti Rāma-padenāsau paraṃ brahmābhidhīyate //

2. The singular *bhāryāyāḥ* is used in the sense of the plural or a class, meaning "wives"—VR. VJ.

6. "Oh Brāhmaṇas (the veritable gods on the earth)! Be pleased to listen. We are the cowherds, the servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa. We have arrived here under instructions from Balarāma. May God bless you.

7. Not far from this place, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa are grazing their cows. They are hungry and hence they desire to have food from you. If you have real faith in them, supply them the cooked rice which they seek from you, Oh Brāhmaṇas, the best knowers of *dharma*.

8. Oh excellent-most people, (as you know it), it has been decided in the *dharma-śāstra* that it does not involve any violation (of *dharma*), if food from a person who has been consecrated for sacrifices is eaten, the exception being his consecration for a sacrifice requiring animal slaughter or a *sautrāmaṇi*[1] sacrifice, (when such eating is prohibited)."

9. Cherishing petty longings (viz. life in heaven whence down-fall is certain) yet engaged in elaborate and toilsome acts (of sacrificial procedure), ignorant yet considering themselves as learned and vainglorious of their wisdom, (as they knew not that by the path of devotion which is easier than the path of *Karma* the *summum bonum* is attained) the Brāhmaṇas, though they heard the solicitations of the Lord (who out of Grace sent his friends for food to them), did not care to heed it.

10-11. Looking upon their bodies as their souls (and in their caste-pride), and being of perverted mentality, they looked upon Kṛṣṇa, that Supreme Brahman, the veritable glorious Lord, (the possessor of six excellences), that supra-sensuous Being, as merely an ordinary mortal being, though

1. It is not a *soma* sacrifice but a combination of an *iṣṭi* with an animal sacrifice (*Śatapatha Br.* XII. 7.2.10). Its chief characteristic is offering of *surā* (wine). This is performed at the end of *Rājasūya* sacrifice or *cayana*. This sacrifice frees a son from debt due to his mother. The peculiar thing about *Sautrāmaṇi* is that here wine is offered and the remnants of it are drunk by a Brāhmaṇa hired for that purpose or are poured on an ant-hill.

(*Brāhmaṇam parikrīṇīyād ucchesaṇasya pātāram* /
Āpastamba XIX, 33)
(*Brāhmaṇaṁ parikrīṇīte grahocchesaṇasya pātāraṁ...*
valmīkavapāyām avanamet /—*Satyāṣāḍha* XIII-8.28-31)

he really constituted the time and place (of the performance of sacrifices), the substances to be oblated, the *mantras* (for invoking deities), the procedure (prescribed for performing sacrifices), the priests (officiating over the performance), the sacrificial fires, the deities invoked, the performer of the sacrifice, the actual act of sacrificing itself and the religious merits accruing from that sacrifice.

12. As they said neither 'Yes' nor 'No', the cowherds became disappointed, and returning to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, reported accordingly, Oh repressor of enemies.

13. On hearing their words, the Almighty Lord of the Universe burst out laughing, and in order to acquaint the cowherds with the ways of the world, (that beggars are not choosers and that one should try till achieving success), he spoke to them again :

14. "Inform the wives (of those sacrificers—Brāhmaṇas) that I, along with Balarāma, have arrived here. They are affectionate and (with their hearts engrossed in contemplating upon me), they live in me mentally. They will give you (abundant) food, to your heart's content".

15. Thereupon, the cowherds went to the apartment reserved for the consecrated wives of the sacrificers, and saw them decked with ornaments, and seated comfortably there. Paying respects to those chaste Brāhmaṇa ladies, the cowherds respectfully submitted :

16. "Salutations to you Brāhmaṇa ladies ! Kindly listen to us. We are deputed here by Kṛṣṇa who, while wandering, has arrived (here) not far from this place.

17. While grazing the cows, he along with Balarāma and cowherds, has come far afar (from his house). May food be served to him, hungry as he is, along with his companions.

18. The Brāhmaṇa ladies who, due to their hearing (and contemplating over) the stories of Kṛṣṇa, were ever eager and anxious to see him, found themselves in a flurry, when they listened to the (news of his) arrival so near.

19-20. Like rivers flowing towards the ocean, all of them hastened to the beloved Lord Kṛṣṇa, taking with them

in vessels, large quantity of sumptuous food of four kinds,[1] even though they were prohibited by their husbands, fathers, brothers and relatives, for they, having heard of him for a long time, had fixed their hearts on the glorious Lord of hallowing renown.

21-22. There in a grove beautified with the new tender foliage of Aśoka[2] trees, on the bank of the Yamunā, the women (wives of sages) beheld Kṛṣṇa strolling leisurely, surrounded by cowherds, along with his elder brother (Balarāma)—Kṛṣṇa of dark blue complexion, wearing silken garment of golden colour (or a girdle of gold), dressed like an actor decorated with a wreath of sylvan flowers, peacock-feathers and tender shoots, beautified with mineral paints; who rested one of his hands on the shoulders of his trusted companions, and playfully dangling a lotus in the other hand; with lilies gracing his ears and locks of curly hair hanging against his cheeks, he wore a face beaming with smile.

23. They had their minds completely absorbed in him, their most beloved one, the frequent audition of whose excellent glories have rendered completely fruitful the very function (and existence) of the ears, and adorned them like ornaments. Welcoming his arrival through the gates of their eyes into their hearts, they embraced him there for a pretty long time, and got rid of all their anguish and misery (of separation from him), just as the egoistic propensities get submerged after embracing the *prājña*,[3] (the soul, that is ever awake as a witness of sleep) and forget all afflictions.

1. The kinds of food mentioned are :
(1) *bhakṣya*—easily gulpable
(2) *bhojya* —requiring mastication before swallowing
(3) *Lehya* —which is to be licked
(4) *coṣya* —which is to be sucked

2. The pun on *a-śoka* suggests that their grief for their inability to see Lord Kṛṣṇa is now removed.

3. The soul that is ever awake as a witness of sleep.

Kd. : Just as the out-going propensities return and embrace the *prājña* and forgetting all worldly afflictions, merge themselves into sleep. 23.245.

24. The Lord, being the witness of the mind and intellect of all had come to know that they had arrived there solely with the earnest desire of seeing him and had given up all hopes and longings for their husbands etc. (as they came in defiance of the orders of their men-folk) addressed to them with a smiling face.

The glorious Lord Said :

25. Welcome—very auspicious is your arrival, Oh highly blessed ladies. Be seated comfortably. What can we do for you ? That you have come with a desire of seeing us (despite the opposition of your men) is really worthy of you.

26. Discerning persons who really understand their self-interest and object in life, engage themselves directly in constant uninterrupted devotion unto me without any ulterior motive, as I am the most beloved Self.

27. Who else can be more beloved than one's own Soul through contact with whom life, vital breath, intellect, mind, body, wives, children, wealth etc. have endeared themselves to us.

28. Now that you have achieved your object in life (of seeing me), please return to the sacrificial hall, where the Brāhmaṇas, your husbands who will successfully complete their sacrificial session with your presence, and their status of being householders depends on you, your being with them.

The wives of the sages said :

29. Oh all-pervading Lord (who know everything about us) ! It does not behove you to utter such harsh words. We beseech you to fulfil your own promise (in *Vedas* viz. He, who approaches the Lord does not revert to Saṁsāra,

VR. Just as after realization of the Supreme Soul the urges and curiosities of seeing him shake off all types of anguishes and eagerness of seeing Him.

VJ. : Just as all the absorption of all sense-activities into Prājña, the knowers shake off all their affliction.

The basic *upaniṣadic* concept of Prājña is as follows : Prājña is the enjoyer of bliss (*Māṇḍ.* 4.1) of dreamless sleep.

(*Chāndogya Up.* 8. 15.1). We have approached your feet in defiance of and transgressing the wishes of our relatives and shall wear in our hair the wreaths of *Tulasī* leaves indifferently kicked off at us by you (i.e. have come to serve you even as slaves)."

30. Neither our husbands, nor our parents, sons, brothers, relatives, friends will now accept us (back), not to speak of others. Oh Subduer of the internal foes like passion, avarice etc. !

Now that we have laid ourselves prostrate at the feet of your glorious self, may you be pleased to confer or ordain that state of life (your absolute service or slavery) whereby we shall have no other go to heaven or any other world."

The Lord said :

31. Now that you have been commanded to return by me, neither your husbands, nor parents, brothers, sons and others, nor even the public shall scorn you or get angry with you. Even the gods shall approve of it (your act of coming to me).

32. (If you still feel unable to leave me, please note that) Bodily contact among men does not contribute to happiness or love in this world. If you concentrate your mind on me, you will attain to me before long.

VR. adds

32-A. Devotion unto me is engendered by listening to my attributes, by visualizing me, by contemplating on me and not so much by physical proximity. Therefore, return to your homes.

Śrī Śuka said :

33. Therefore, as directed (by the Lord) the wives of the sages returned to the sacrificial hall. Not only did the sages not expostulate them, but they carried the sacrificial session to a successful conclusion with their help.

34. One lady out of them, who was detained per force by her husband, embraced in her heart the Lord as pictured by

her through what she heard about him, and gave up her body that came to her lot by her *karma* (deeds) in past life.

35. Lord Govinda first made the cowherds feast on the four kinds of that food. The Lord partook of it only afterwards.

36. In this way, the Lord who, out of sports, had assumed a human body and imitated the ways of the world led a sportive life giving joy to cows, cowherds and cowherdessess by his charming personality, sweet words and deeds.

37.* Then remembering (their disgraceful behaviour), the Brāhmaṇas who committed that offence repented, "Alas ! We have disregarded the entreaty of the Lords of the Universe who are imitating the behaviour of human beings.

38. Perceiving the extra-ordinarily supreme devotion of their women in Kṛṣṇa and realizing that they were wanting in it, they were extremely tormented and censured themselves.

39. "Fie upon our three-fold birth,[1] our mastery of Vedic lore ! Fie upon our observance of vows (of continence during sacrificial sessions) ! Fie upon our extensive versatility of knowledge ! Fie upon our spotless pedigree ! Fie upon our expertise in ritualistic technicalities in sacrifice, when we are averse to (*lit.* have turned away our face from) the supra-sensuous Lord Kṛṣṇa !

40. Verily the *Māyā* of the Lord is capable of infatuating even experts in *yoga*. Hence we, Brāhmaṇas, the spiritual preceptors of men, are deluded with regard to our real interests.

41. Oh ! Look at the unfathomable[2] devotion even of

* Here the doubt in Parīkṣita's mind about the goodness of the Brāhmaṇas is cleared up in this verse. The Brāhmaṇas were auspicious by nature, for they were filled with remorse at the offence they committed, when they remembered, "Alas We have scornfully treated the request of the Lords of the Universe who (outwardly) imitate human behaviour."

1. According to ŚR the threefold birth is as follows :

i) Purity of heredity and family (*Śaukla*)

ii) Investiture of the sacred thread and initiation into Gāyatrī Mantra (Sāvitra),

iii) Consecration for Vedic sacrifices (*daikṣa*).

2. Ignorant, weaker sex as explained in the next verse

duranta-bhāva—Bond of devotion that brooks no separation—SS.

our women in Kṛṣṇa, the father and preceptor of the world, which cut asunder the bonds of death called the ties of the household.

42. These have not undergone the purificatory rite (known as the investiture of the sacred thread) which is regarded as the second birth (for Vedic and other studies). Nor have they stayed in the preceptor's house (for Vedic studies or Śāstric learning). They have not performed any austerities and have no grounding in the *śāstric* enquiry about the Soul. They are not characterised by any special (spiritual or external) purity or any auspicious or meritorious (sacrificial, or other rites or) acts.

43. Despite these, they entertain such firm and unflinching devotion unto Kṛṣṇa of hallowing renown, the Lord of the experts of *yoga*, a devotion not engendered in us even though we have undergone the purificatory rites (such as the investiture of thread) and have other qualifications (mentioned above).

44. Oh ! How gracious of him it was that although he himself was the goal to be achieved through sacrificial and other activities prescribed by the Vedas,[1] he, through the message sent with the cowherds reminded us[2] (of the futility of all acts if devoid of devotion to God)—who were too stupid to understand our real self interest and were negligent due to household activities.

45. To request food from us who are absolutely under his control, was a mere pretext of the Ruler of the universe who has all his desires fulfilled, and is the master who confers all blessing like bestowing Liberation from Saṁsāra.

46. His solicitation for food was merely a ruse to delude the world, as the Goddess of Affluence, giving up her proverbial fault of fickleness or inconstancy, discards others and seeks permanent resort in him, with the hope of touching his feet at least once.

47-48. He is verily that self-same glorious Lord Viṣṇu who constitutes the time, the place of sacrifice, the substances

1. *or* The refuge or main-stay of the pious saints.
2. *or* : that he has now incarnated for the protection of the good —VR.

to be oblated to fire (e.g. *caru*), the *mantras* (mystical formulae for invoking the deities), the technicalities of sacrificial procedure, the priests (engaged in carrying out various duties in sacrifice) deities to be invoked, the sacrificial fire, the sacrificer, the performance of the sacrifice and the merit accruing therefrom. We have heard that he was born in the Yadu clan. But stupid and deluded as we are, we do not recognize him.

49. How blessed-most we are in having such women as our wives due to whose devotion in him, we too have our minds firmly fixed on Lord Hari.

50. Salutations to You, Oh glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa of unobstructed (all-penetrating) intelligence ! As we have our minds deluded by your Māyā, we are wandering in the paths of *Karma*.

51. May that Ancient-most Person be pleased to condone and forgive our transgression, as we, due to our minds being infatuated with your Māyā, the deluding potency, have not been able to realize your prowess and glory.

52. Having thus recollected the sinful offence given by them to Lord Kṛṣṇa by their behaviour of disregarding him, the Brāhmaṇas, though desirous and eager to see the two Acyuta brothers (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) did not dare to stir out due to the fear of Kaṁsa.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Prevention of Sacrifice to Indra[1]

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. While living in that very locality (viz. Vṛndāvana, Vraja) in the company of Balarāma, even the glorious Lord

1. The story of Kṛṣṇa's opposition to Gopas' offering a sacrifice to Indra and his advice to offer it to mount Govardhana instead, is recorded in *VP.* 5. ch. 10 and *HV.* 2, ch. 15. These stories show that Kṛṣṇa directly

Kṛṣṇa feigned as if he did not notice the cowherds engaged in preparation for the *Indra-yāga* (worship of the rain-god Indra).[1]

2. Despite his thorough knowledge of it, the omniscient glorious Lord who was the indwelling Soul of all beings, with great humility, enquired of elderly Gopas of whom Nanda was prominent.

3. "May it be told to me, Oh father, what occasion for your hurry and flurry has arrived? (If it be a sacrifice) what is the fruit or purpose of it? Who is regarded as competent to perform it? And with what materials is it to be performed?

4-5. I am desirous of hearing it, Oh father! Please do tell it to me who am eager to learn. For there is nothing worth concealing in the case of the righteous who look upon the self-same soul as abiding in all beings also in the case of those who do not discriminate between people (or things) as their own or as of others (and are of impartial outlook), have no friends, aliens or enemies, and have nothing to hide from others. But to those who retain this discrimination, the neutrals may be avoided as enemies, but a friend or a well-wisher has been

over-rode the older Vedic gods, especially Indra, and that the Kṛṣṇa cult superseded local and contemporaneous divinities including the great god Indra of the Vedic period. Indra's attempt to punish the cowherds by downpour of heavy rains and his final discomfiture by Kṛṣṇa who protected the cowherds with their cattle and other belongings under the umbrella of mount Govardhana lifted by him, show the recession of the Vedic religion and the positive advance of the Kṛṣṇa cult.

The roots of rivalry between Indra and Kṛṣṇa cults go back to the Vedic period, if we are to accept Nīlakaṇṭha Caturdhara's interpretation of *RV.* 5.48.3 given at the beginning of his com. on *HV*, 2. ch.15. It is as follows:

āgrāvabhir ahanyebhir aktabhir variṣṭhaṁ
vajram ājigharti māyini |
śataṁ vā yasya pracaran sve dame saṁvartayanto vivartayannahaḥ ||
RV. 5.48.3 (as quoted by Nīlakaṇṭha)

"For (seven) nights, Indra sent down heavy showers like his most powerful weapon *Vajra* on *māyin* i.e. Kṛṣṇa, who had assumed a human form through His *Māyā* Potency, and who made the Gopas to use the materials (collected) for Indra's sacrifice to the sacrifice of mount Govardhana".

1. Cf. *PV.* 5.10.26.

called as one's own self[1] (and as such, nothing should be kept secret from him. I, being such, should be confided with this sacrifice affair).

6. People perform actions with or without understanding the purpose or the fruit of the act. The ignorant persons do not accomplish the fruit of that action (to that extent) as people with full knowledge achieve.

7. May it be clearly explained to me who am inquisitive about it, as to whether your present course of action (viz. performance of sacrifice to Indra) has been undertaken after enquiring into the *Śāstras* or in consultation with friends or is it a mere blind traditional function in the ways of the world.

Nanda explained :

8.* The great god Indra is (the presiding deity of) the rainfall itself and clouds are his loving manifestations. They shower water which is the very source of delight[2] and life of all beings.

9. Oh child ! We and other people like us, worship[3] Indra, the ruler of clouds and controller of the world, by performing sacrifices with materials produced with his seminal discharge viz. rain-water.

10. It is on the remnants of the sacrifice that people subsist for achieving their three purposes in life (viz. *dharma*—

1. VJ. explains : one should not keep everything secret from everybody. One should avoid a neutral party as an enemy, but not do so in the case of a friend or a well-wisher who is as good as one's own-self.

* VR. quotes the famous verse which identifies the sun-god with the rain :

aṣṭau māsān nipītaṁ yad bhūmyāś codamayaṁ vasu /
sva-gobhir moktum ārebhe parjanyaḥ kālam āgate //

But he is under Indra's control and as such, the presiding deity of rain and Indra are identified. The clouds are like so many bodies of Indra. They shower water which is so vital to the life of the people and are a source of strength and happiness to them.

2. v.l.—*prāṇanaṁ* (VJ) "infusing life and activity".

3. VT explains—Otherwise it will be ungratefulness. The 3 P. pl. *yajante* instead of *Vayaṁ yajāmaḥ* is used as Nanda felt abashed before Kṛṣṇa.

righteousness, *artha*—affluence and worldly prosperity and *kāma*—enjoyment of pleasures). The rain-god is the real bestower of fruits to persons who exert in agriculture, industry etc.

11. He who, out of passion, greed, fear or hatred, gives up the customary religious rites handed down by tradition, does not attain his real good.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. Hearing the explanatory speech of Nanda as well as that of other residents of Vraja, Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) addressed his father with a view to provoking Indra's wrath (and finally to discomfit him).[1]

The glorious Lord said :

13. A being comes into existence only by its own past deeds (*karma*),[2] and passes away through the force of its own *karmas*. It is only through the instrumentality of one's past actions, that the being experiences worldly pleasures, pain, fear or blessings (hereafter). (The favour or disfavour of a divinity is immaterial and irrelevant).

14. If there be any authority like the Supreme Ruler to dispense fruits of actions of others, and if he were to resort to confer fruits of the deeds on the doer of the actions, and he will have no control over him who abstains from committing any act.[3]

15. What power can Indra exercise on beings who follow the course of their actions (and experience the resulting fruit)? He is incapable of modifying its destined course of action of human beings according to their own individual nature. (It is the Almighty God and not Indra who can do it.)

1. Cf. *VP.* 5.10.25.

2. VJ. Here *karma* means Nārāyaṇa as He is the agent of all activities (*Nārāyaṇa eva sarvasya kartetyabhiprekṣya sarvasya kāraṇaṁ karmaivetyāha* /)

3. ŚR. : explains that this is a refutation of those who regard God as dependent on *karmas*. God is untouched by and above all *karmas*. He is the bestower of the fruit of an action to its doer.

VJ. : If it is presumed that there is a Supreme Controller to dispense weal or woe as a result of the *karma* of a person, He will be a mere helper (*sahāyabhūtaḥ*) with no independence of His own.

16. People are the slaves of their Nature and follow their own individual natural disposition and proclivities. The whole world of gods, *asuras* and human beings thus has their being established in nature and follow it.[1]

17. It is through the force of past actions (*karma*) that a being comes by and casts off corporeal forms of a high or low order. It is (nothing but one's Karma that assumes the role of) an enemy, a friend, an indifferent person, a preceptor or the Supreme Controller.

18.* Hence abiding in one's own nature (i.e. following one's natural disposition) one should do one's duty (according to one's own class or position in life), and thus respect (lit. adore) it (one's prescribed *karma*). That deed whereby one can lead a happy (and a successful) life is verily his deity.

19.† A person who, entertaining faith in one god offers services to another, does not attain happiness and welfare, just as an unchaste woman gratifying her paramour, (fails to get prosperity or happiness).

20. A Brāhmaṇa should maintain his livelihood by the study and the teachings of the Vedas; the Kṣattriya by the protection of the earth; a person from the Vaiśya community, by means of *vārtā* (as explained in the next verse); and a Śūdra by rendering service to the twice-born castes (mentioned above).[2]

21. *Vārtā* is four-fold : viz. agriculture, commerce, rearing of cattle and the fourth, usury. As far as we are concerned, cows (the cattle) have been the means of our subsistence.

1. VJ identifies Nature with Nārāyaṇa. The above verses refuse the power to secondary divinities like Indra who are mistaken for the Supreme Lord. It is Nārāyaṇa who is designated by the term *svabhāva*.

* VJ interprets *karma* as Nārāyaṇa and states : One should perform his duty prescribed as such by his *Varṇa* (caste) and *āśrama* (stage in life), and dedicate every thing to Nature i.e. God Nārāyaṇa who is the creator and supporter of the world and is involved in every religious rite. The name of any god whom a being worships (e.g. god Gaṇeśa), denotes as a matter of fact Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself.

† Verse No. 24 in VJ's Text.

2. Cf. *VP* 5.10. 16-31.

22. The attributes called *sattva, rajas*, and *tamas* are causes of the maintenance, creation and dissolution of the Universe. It is through *rajas* that the universe of various kinds of things is created by the mutual union of man and woman.

23. It is after being impelled by *rajas* that the clouds shower water all round. By means of these waters people accomplish their purpose (of growing food etc.). What has the great Indra to do with this ?

24. Father ! We have no towns, no countries or territories, no villages or no houses to dwell. We are forever forest-dwellers, living in jungles and on mountains.

25. Therefore, let a sacrifice dedicated for the propitiation of cows, Brāhmaṇas and the mount (*Govardhana*) be instituted. And let this sacrifice be accomplished with the materials collected for the worship to Indra.

26. Let different varieties of sweet dishes from rice, boiled in milk with sugar, down to boiled pulses and various puddings and cakes be prepared and all the milk collected from all the cows be brought together.

27. Let sacrificial fires be properly fed with oblations by Brāhmaṇas who are well versed in the Vedas, and let various food preparations be given to them along with cows, as sacrificial fees.

28. Food should also be distributed to all others upto the *cāṇḍāla*, the low castes and dogs as may be deemed proper. Cows should be supplied with grass and the above mentioned articles of food be offered as *bali* to the mount Govardhana.

29. After taking your meals you put on your ornaments and painting yourselves with sandal-pastes etc. and putting on excellent clothes, circumambulate by the right side to cow, Brāhmaṇas, sacrificial fires and the Govardhana mountain.

30. This is my view and religious belief, Oh father. It may be adopted if it is approved of by you. This type of worship and sacrifice will be liked by cows, Brāhmaṇas, the mountain (Govardhana) itself and by me as well.

Śrī Śuka said :

31. Hearing the exposition of (the creed as elucidated

by) the glorious Lord who, as the Time-Spirit was desirous of crushing the pride of Indra, the Gopas headed by Nanda approved of it with words, "Correct, very nice".

32-33. And they carried out everything as Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of the demon Madhu, instructed them. Having got recited the benedictory hymns (and the expiatory rites to avert evil) known as *Svastyayana*, they propitiated with great respect, the mountain (Govardhana) and Brāhmaṇas with those very materials (collected for *Indra-yāga*, the worship of and sacrifice to Indra) and offered grass to the kine. With their wealth of cattle in front of them, they circumambulated the mount (Govardhana) by keeping that mount always on their right.

34. With the gracefully adorned Gopa women singing the exploits of Kṛṣṇa, and with Brāhmaṇas pronouncing benedictions, the cowherds who also wore excellent ornaments, rode their carts with bullocks yoked to them, and went round the mountain keeping it ever to their right.

35. In order so inspire confidence and belief in the Gopas, Kṛṣṇa, on his part assumed a totally different personality. Announcing that he is the mountain Govardhana itself, he with his gigantic body, consumed the enormous quantity of the food offered.[1]

36. Thereupon, along with the inhabitants of Vraja Kṛṣṇa presented salutation to his own other form and exclaimed, "How wonderful ! Lo ! This mountain has manifested himself.

37. This mountain is capable of taking any form he likes, at will. He kills the forest-dwellers who showed disrespect to him. To him let us bow for the welfare of us as well as of our cattle."

38. The Gopas thus carried out the worship of the mountain, the cows and the Brāhmaṇas according to the directions of Lord Vāsudeva and they returned to Vraja along with Kṛṣṇa.

1. Cf. VP. 5.10.47.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Lifting up of Mount Govardhana[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Then perceiving that his worship had been stopped, Indra got enraged upon the cowherds headed by Nanda who regarded Kṛṣṇa as their Protector.

2. Being incensed, Indra directed the host of clouds called *Saṁvartaka* which bring about the destruction of the universe. Priding himself as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe he commanded :

3. "Oh ! Look at the astounding audacity and arrogance due to wealth and prosperity of those cowherds who are after all forest-dwellers, but depending on a mortal (called) Kṛṣṇa, have set at nought a deity.

4. Giving up the path of knowledge involving the meditation of the Self or self-realization, they expect to cross the ocean of Saṁsāra or worldly existence with the help of the

1. The hill called 'mountain Govardhana' is 18 miles from Vṛndāvana, in Mathura district. In the village "Paitho", Kṛṣṇa is believed to have held up the mountain on his little finger. This episode is narrated in *VP.* 5 ch. 11 and in *HV.* 2 ch. 18, the latter seems to be an enlarged version. The common verses and repetition of similar expressions in these three works indicate that these three works have used a common traditional bardic source.

Nīlakaṇṭha in his com. on *HV.* 2. 18 quotes the following *Ṛc.* :

tamasya rājā Varuṇas tam Aśvinau |
kratuṁ sacanta Mārutasya Vedhasaḥ ||
dādhāra dakṣam uttamam aharvidam |
Vrajaṁ ca Viṣṇuḥ sakhivā aporṇute||

—*RV* 1.156.4 (also *Ait. Br.* 1.30 and *Kauṣītaki Br.* 9.6)

Aundh Ed. of RV. reads *Aśvinā* for *Aśvinau*. Nīlakaṇṭha interprets : "Varuṇa and the twin Aśvinikumāras gave their consent to the sacrifice offered to the mountain (Govardhana) at his behest by Viṣṇu. When Indra got angry at the destruction of the sacrifice to be offered to him, to the Wind god and god Brahmā, Viṣṇu held up the mountain that was the recipient of the sacrifice but was capable of offering excellent protection from showers. A friend of all the inhabitants of Vraja as he was, he covered the Vraja with the mountain.

so-called unreliable boats in the form of sacrifices consisting of rituals.

5*. Similarly, taking resort to that garrulous, foolish, arrogant, ignorant mortal Kṛṣṇa who (out of pedantry) regards himself as a great scholar, the cowherds have dared to offend me.

6. Shatter down (lit. shake off) the arrogance of affluence of the cowherds who are puffed with pride of wealth and prosperity and have their minds filled with insolence through the influence of Kṛṣṇa. Destroy all of their cattle."

7**. With a view to annihilate the camp (the cattle-wealth) of Nanda, I shall follow you riding my elephant *Airāvata* and accompanied with the troop of *maruts* of enormous prowess."

Śrī Śuka said :

8. Thus commanded and freed (from their bonds) by Indra, the (*saṁvarta*) clouds vehemently harassed Nanda's *Gokula* with heavy showers.

9. Dazzling with flashes of lightning and thundering with the roar of thunderbolts and impelled by tempestuous winds, they showered hail-stones.

10. When the clouds let loose incessant downpour of showers as big as columns (in volume), the earth was inundated with torrential floods of water, and the elevations and the depressions of the ground became invisible.

11. The cattle which were shivering (with cold) under excessively driving showers and tempestuous winds, and the cowherds and their women who were afflicted with severe cold, sought refuge in Lord Kṛṣṇa.

12. Covering their heads and their children (and calves) with their bodies and acutely suffering from the torrential downpour, they approached shivering, to the feet of the Lord.

*. VT.—tries to explain the implied glorification of Kṛṣṇa e.g. *vācālam*—whose word is effective or powerful. *Paṇḍita-māninaṁ*—respected by persons who are *paṇḍitas* or knowers of *Brahman*.

VJ. Kṛṣṇa who is *vācāla* i.e. speaks what is censured by the scriptures and who regards himself as an authority (*Panditamāninam*).

** Cf. *VP.* 5.11.5 and *HV.* 2.18.5

13. "Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh highly glorious Kṛṣṇa ! The whole of *Gokula* has none else but you as its protector, Oh Lord ! You are affectionate to your devotees. It behoves you to protect us from the enraged divinity (Indra)".

14. Observing that due to the beating of the volley of the hail-stones, the Gokula had fallen senseless, the glorious Lord Hari came to know that it was the working of indignant Indra.

15. "As the sacrifice to be offered to him has been obstructed by us, Indra is pouring down for our destruction tremendously heavy showers full of hail-stones, accompanied by terrific stormy winds, out of season.

16. Now I shall employ an effective counter-measure through my *yogic* power and remove the *tamas* (darkness) in the form of the arrogance of affluence of the divinities who, through their foolishness, regard themselves as the supreme ruler of the world.

17. It is not desirable that celestials, who are endowed with the quality of *Sattva* (goodness) or devotion to me to a special degree, should be puffed up with the vain pride of being the (Supreme) ruler of the world. The humiliation of these wicked divinities at my hand will work as Grace unto them.[1]

18. With all the *yogic* power at my command, I will, therefore, protect this *Gokula* which has sought shelter in me and has accepted me as their Master and which now entirely depends on me. This is the eternal vow taken by me."

19. Observing thus (to himself), Kṛṣṇa, though a child, uprooted with ease the mount Govardhana with one of his hands[2] and held it up sportively as if it were a mushroom.

20. And quoth the glorious Lord to cowherds "Oh mother ! Oh father ! Oh residents of Vraja. Enter comfortably

1. (i) *anugraha eva*—ŚR
   (ii) Will lead to deeper devotion to me—VJ.
2. with left hand—VT. He quotes *HV* 2.18.31.
   sa dhṛtaḥ saṅgato meghair giriḥ savyena pāṇinā

VT.'s graphic description and dramatic narration of this episode deserves perusal in the original.

into the cavity beneath the mountain along with your wealth of cattle.

21. You need not entertain any fear that the mountain will slip down from my hand. Dispel all the fear about storms or (driving) showers, for protection (against them) has been already securely devised."

22. With their minds thus reassured by Kṛṣṇa, they entered into the cavity (beneath Govardhana) along with their wealth, herds of cattle, their dependants (like priests etc.) food-grains etc. according to the accommodation (which was sufficiently available).

23. Being gazed at by those inhabitants of Vraja who disregarded their pangs of hunger and thirst and thus neglected their personal comforts, Kṛṣṇa up-held the mountain for seven days and did not move from his position.

24. Observing the yogic power of Kṛṣṇa, Indra was extremely astounded. Being shorn of pride and thwarted of his design, he restrained his saṁvartaka clouds.

25. Noticing the sky cleared of clouds, the sun already risen and the terrific tempestuous winds and the downpour of hails had ceased altogether, Kṛṣṇa, the bearer of Govardhana, told the cowherds.

26. "Oh cowherds! Now that the stormy winds and showers have stopped and the waters of the flooded rivers have almost receded, you dismiss all your apprehension and go out into the open with your women, children and property (cattle)."

27. Taking with them their respective wealth (viz. herds of cattle) and all the cart-loads of their belongings, the cowherds slowly came out (of the cavity) along with their wives, children and elders.

28. The glorious Lord on his part sportfully placed the mountain on its previous position while all beings stood a-gazing.

29. Overflowing with a flood of affection the inhabitants of Vraja approached him embracing (blessing, smelling the crown of his head and doing such acts expressive of love), according to their position and relations. The cowherd women overwhelmed with affection and joy worshipped him

with curds and unbroken rice (*akṣatas*)[1] and expressed their choicest blessings profusely (out of grateful affection and not out of a sense of seniority as they knew his divine nature).

30. Yaśodā, Rohiṇī, Nanda and Balarāma, the mighty among the mightiest, were overwhelmed with affection and impatience and embracing Kṛṣṇa, they showered him with benedictions.

31. In the heavens, hosts of celestials, Sādhyas, Siddhas, Gandharvas and Cāraṇas sang his glory and out of joy showered flowers on him, Oh king.

32. Commanded by the celestials, conchs and kettle-drums were sounded in the sky and leaders of Gandharvas (celestial *artistes*) headed by *Tumbaru* participated in singing.

33. Oh king! Surrounded by his affectionate cowherd-friends and accompanied by Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa proceeded to Gokula from that place. And young cowherd women, delighted at heart, returned to their respective homes singing all the while such miraculous exploits of Kṛṣṇa (like lifting up of Govardhana) who has captivated their hearts.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Conversation between Nanda and Cowherds

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Witnessing Kṛṣṇa's miraculous feats of this type (such as lifting up of mount Govardhana) the cowherds, being unaware of his prowess, were extremely astonished and coming to Nanda, they spoke unto him (as follows) :

2. "Verily the exploits of this child are extremely marvellous. How does he deserve to be born among rustic people like us—a birth really unworthy and censurable to him.

1. VB. : The cowherd women made a circular mark of curds on his forehead on which some unbroken rice were applied and water was waved round his face and sipped.

3. How is it that a child of seven years as he is, he could hold up with ease (as if in sport) a big mountain on one hand, as an elephant king would do to a lotus (with its trunk) ?

4. Even as the god of death takes life out of the body of a living organism, he, as a babe, with half closed eyes, sucked the breast of the mighty giantess Pūtanā along with her life.

5. While a baby of only one month,[1] when he was made to sleep (and was placed) under a cart, he, while crying and kicking up his feet, turned the cart topsy-turvy by the touch of the fore-part of his foot.

6. While he was an infant of one year and was being carried away through the sky by a demon called Tṛṇāvarta, he killed the demon who was strangled to death on account of being caught by the neck by Kṛṣṇa.

7. On one occasion, when he was tied to a mortar by his mother for stealing butter, he, while crawling on his hands and feet (along with mortar) between two Arjuna trees, made them fall down uprooted.

8. While grazing calves in the forest, he, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by cowherd boys, tore open with his hands the bill of the enemy, a demon called Baka (who assumed the form of a heron) with the intention of killing him.

9. He killed the demon Dhenuka who, assuming the form of a calf, was entering the herd of calves with the desire of killing, and *hurling* with ease the (demon's) carcass against a Kapittha tree, caused Kapittha fruits fall down in great number.

10. Accompanied with Balarāma (and possessed of supreme power), he killed the demon in the form of a donkey along with his brethren, he made the forest of palm trees which were laden with abundant ripened fruit, free from fear.

11. Having made the mighty Balarāma kill the ferocious Pralamba, he rescued the cattle and cowherds in the Vraja from forest conflagration.

12. Having subdued the great serpent Kāliya of the

1. *Māsyasya*—some annotators interpret this as 'three months old'.

most virulent poison, he humiliated his pride and expelled him per force from the deep pool (in the Yamunā) and made the waters of the Yamunā free from poisonous pollution.

13. Oh Nanda, all of us, the inhabitants of Vraja cherish for this son of yours undissociable affection. And even he bears towards us all a deep love since his birth.

14. A child of seven and the feat of uplifting and holding up a great mountain ! How inconceivable it is ! Hence we entertain a suspicion (and a fear too) about (the real nature of) your son."

Nanda replied :

15. "Oh cowherds ! Hear from me what the sage Garga predicted to me with reference to this boy. And that will dispel all your doubts or fears.

16. 'Assuming different bodies in different *yugas*, He has manifested himself in bodies of three colours viz. white, red and yellow. Now he has adopted a dark-complexioned body.

17. As this son of yours was at first born of Vasudeva in some place (Mathurā), the knowers will call him distinctly as the son of Vasudeva, the Lord of the goddess Śrī.

18. Your son has got so many names and forms suitably designating his excellences and deeds that I do not know them all nor do these people at large.

19. A delight to cowherds and Gokula, he will bring about your weal. And you will easily cross over all difficulties and calamities with his help.

20. Oh Lord of Vraja ! Formerly when anarchy prevailed he protected righteous people who were troubled by the miscreant. Through his protection they prospered and subdued the bandits.

21. Those extremely fortunate persons who cherish affection to him shall not be defeated by enemies even as the partisans of Viṣṇu at the hands of Asuras.

22. Therefore, Oh Nanda, this boy is similar to Lord Nārāyaṇa in excellences, majesty or affluence, glory and prowess. Hence no amazement need be felt at his exploits.'[1]

1. VP.5.13 states that the Gopas directly asked Kṛṣṇa about his feat of lifting up Govardhana, but Kṛṣṇa out of modesty told them that he was one of them and not a superior being.

23. Exhorting me thus directly, the sage Garga returned home. Since then I took upon Kṛṣṇa, the remover of all afflictions, as an *aṁśa* (part manifestation) of Nārāyaṇa."

24. Hearing from Nanda's speech the report of the account given by Garga about Kṛṣṇa's glory and having witnessed and heard personally the great prowess of Kṛṣṇa of infinite energy and power, the inhabitants of Vraja became delighted. They respectfully honoured Nanda and ceased to feel any amazement about Kṛṣṇa's feats.

25. May that Lord of cows be gracious unto us—the Lord who finding that the Gokula with all the cowherds, cows, and women had resorted to him for shelter as they were afflicted by the driving showers of rain, hail-stones, thunderbolts and tempestuous winds let loose by the deity Indra, wrathful at the destruction of the sacrifice (to be offered to him), took compassion on them, and smilingly uprooted the mountain sportively as one would pluck up a mushroom and holding it up on one hand protected the Gokula and thus crushed pride of Indra.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Indra coronates Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. When Kṛṣṇa held up the mount Govardhana and protected Vraja (Gokula) from heavy showers, Surabhi, the wishyielding heavenly cow, came down from Go-loka[1] to Kṛṣṇa, and Indra too approached him.

nāhaṁ devo na gandharvo na yakṣo na ca dānavaḥ /
ahaṁ vo bāndhavo jāto naitaccintyam ito'nyathā // — VP. 5.13.12

1. A special heaven for cows. It is above Brahmaloka. Surabhi, daughter of Dakṣa or the divine cow, Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa's companion at Gokula and other eminent devotees of Kṛṣṇa have a place there. This divine world was granted to Surabhi by god Brahmā (MBH *Anu* 83. 29-39). It is described in glorious terms in the same chapter (*Anu* 83. 37-44).

2. Indra who felt abashed at his humiliation (by Kṛṣṇa) met him in privacy (in a solitary place) and touched his feet by his crown brilliant like the sun.

3. Having witnessed and heard the prowess of Kṛṣṇa of immeasurable lustre, energy and power, Indra with his pride of being the ruler of three worlds, subdued, spoke to him with folded palms.

Indra said :

4.* Your essential nature consists of absolutely pure *sattva* and as such it is one uniform quiescent existence full of (spiritual) knowledge untainted by *rajas* and *tamas*. This saṁsāra consisting of the stream of *guṇas* which is the product of Māyā has no place in you.

5. Oh Controller of the *Māyā* ! How could greed and other passions which characterise the ignorant and which are both the product as well as the cause of *Māyā*[1] possibly affect you (lit. have a place in you) ? It is, however, for the protec-

*(1) VR. Your abode constitutes of absolutely pure *sattva*, untinged by *rajas* and *tamas* and hence quiescent (free from love, hate etc.). It is attainable through your meditation and worship. This phenomenal existence which is the current of three *guṇas* and their products originates in your will; the causes of the assumption of a corporeal form have no place in You.

(2) VJ. I seek shelter in your Abode (which is verily yourself). In it even absolutely pure *sattva* has no place, what of *rajas* and *tamas*. It is auspicious, constituted of knowledge. The stream of three *guṇas* which is controlled by your will has no place there as it has in *jīvas* due to their attachment. *Māyā* the cause of *guṇa*-current has no place in you.

1. *tad-hetava...tat-kṛtāḥ* :

VR. : Greed and others which are the consequences after assuming the body and the causes leading to other future births.

VJ. : How can the *guṇas* which cause *saṁsāra* be imagined in the Lord.

VJ. further states that the Lord disciplines both the good and the wicked and quotes *Agni P.*

asatāṁ ca satāṁ caiva Harir evānuśāsakaḥ /
satāṁ tu śreyase saiva hyanuśāstir bhaviṣyati //

tion of righteousness and the control of the wicked (in their interest and out of grace unto them) that you exercise authority (lit. bear the sceptre for punishing the wicked).

6. You are the progenitor, preceptor and Supreme controller of the worlds. You are the undefiable Time-spirit who hold the rod of punishment.[1] It is for the welfare of the world that you act, manifesting yourself at will, your (sportive) forms and crushing down the pride of those who fancy themselves to be the masters of the world.

7.* Noticing your fearlessness and formidability in times of stress and peril, ignorant fools like me who prided themselves to be the rulers of the world, immediately shed off their arrogance, and getting rid of their egotism, betake themselves to the path of righteousness. In this way your sportive acts are meant for the punishment and discipline of the wicked as well.

8. Oh Ruler of the world! It behoves you to pardon me—your offender, who was puffed up with the pride of my affluence and was totally ignorant of your prowess. Oh Lord! May not the intellect (and mind) of a stupid fellow like me become so wicked (and perverse) again.[2]

9. This incarnation of yours in this world is for the destruction of those powerful army-leaders who are themselves a burden to the earth and whose birth has become a source of troubles to others, and for the prosperity of the followers of the feet of your Lordship. (As such, I, being your servant, deserve pardon and mercy even though I have committed a grave offence against you, Oh Adhokṣaja—Lord beyond the ken of sense-perception).

1. VB. By assuming forms of a father, preceptor and god of death you inflict punishment for the good of the people. VB. enumerates the incarnations e.g. the Fish, Tortoise etc. as representing the father, the preceptor etc. but does not completely illustrate it.

* When, at the end of our lives, we see your fearful form, we shed off our pride immediately and take to the noble path of *bhakti* consisting of remembering the name of the Lord, applying *gopīcandana*, wearing a wreath of *Tulasī* etc.—VB.

2. VT. cautions us that Indra did not pray this with a sincere and pure heart and he behaved the same way at the time of taking away the *pārijāta* tree.

10. Obeisance to you, a glorious God, who reside in the hearts of all and who are still too great-souled to be discerned;[1] you Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva and the Lord of Sātvatas.

11. Salutations to you who assume a form to comply with the wishes of your devotees; who are the embodiment of absolutely pure knowledge; who are all-pervading, the seed (the primary cause) of everything and the indwelling[2] soul of all beings.[3]

12. Oh Lord ! Flying in blind rage at the interruption of the sacrifice offered to me, I did this for destroying the Gokula, with heavy showers and stormy winds.

13. With my pride crushed and efforts to destroy Gokula frustrated, I have been favoured by you, Oh Lord. I have sought shelter in you, Oh Supreme Ruler, Preceptor, nay, my own soul itself.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. Thus extolled highly by Indra, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, replied to him laughingly, in a voice deep like the rumbling of clouds, as follows :

The Lord said :

15. Oh Indra ! Highly intoxicated as you were with the pride of the majesty of Indra-hood (kingship of the celestials), it was out of grace unto you that I interrupted the sacrificial worship to be offered to you, so that you should ever remember me.

16. Out of those who have grown blind with the arrogance of supreme power and affluence and do not recognise me as the wielder of the rod of punishment, I deprive that person of his position and wealth unto whom I condescend to show grace.

1. *antaḥsthe' pyaparicchinnāya*—ŚR.

2. You are the cause and controller of everything but are not identical as a Substance—VR.

3. Here God's being embodiment of *sat* (Existence), *cit* (Consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss), bestower of the wishes of the devotees and having a form constituted of pure knowledge are emphasized—VB.

17. You may now return, Oh Indra ! May all be well with you. Carry out my commandments. All of you should continue in your respective offices (and execute your duties) diligently without being puffed up with pride or haughtiness.

18. Paying respects, along with her progeny (cows), to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord in the guise of a cowherd, the noble-minded Surabhi (the celestial cow) submitted to him :

Surabhi said :

19. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh great *yogin* ! Oh Inner controller of the Universe ! Oh Creator of the world ! Oh Immortal Lord ! We are now blessed with a Lord in you as the protector of the world.

20. Oh Protector of the World ! You are the only Supreme Deity to us. Hence for the prosperity and success of cows, Brāhmaṇas and gods as well as of saintly persons, you be our Ruler (Indra).

21. As per directions of god Brahmā, we are going to crown (lit. give coronatory ablution to) you as our Supreme Ruler (Indra). You have incarnated for lightning the burden of the earth, Oh Inner Soul of the Universe.

Śri Śuka said :

22-23. Praying Kṛṣṇa with these words, Surabhi, the celestial cow, consecrated him by sprinkling her milk on him, while Indra, accompanied by gods and sages and instructed by (Aditi and other) mothers of gods crowned him, bathing him with waters of the heavenly Gaṅgā brought by the celestial king-elephant Airāvata, with his trunk. He proclaimed Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Daśārha as 'Govinda'.

Indra said :

23A*. I am the Indra of gods. You have attained the Indrahood of the cows (cattle). People will sing of you as 'Govinda' in this world.

* Yande's Bombay edition adds this verse in the footnote *Bh. P* vol. 7 p. 397.

24. Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas and Cāraṇas headed by Tumbaru, Nārada and others arrived there. They sang of Hari's glory that washes off all the sins of the world. Overwhelmed with joy, celestial damsels danced beautifully.

25. The prominent ones among gods glorified him and showered him profusely with wonderful flowers. At that time, all the three worlds attained the Zenith of felicity while the cows drenched the earth with their milk.

26. Rivers flowed with various kinds of delicious drinks; the trees exuded sweet honey profusely. Bumper crops were harvested from unploughed lands and mountains exhibited precious stones (on their outward parts instead of concealing them in mines).

27. When Kṛṣṇa was crowned, all animals, though cruel and ferocious by nature, shed off their enmity.

28. Having thus coronated Lord Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) as the Protector of cows and *Gokulas*, Indra, with the permission of Kṛṣṇa, went to the celestial world in the company of gods.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Nanda rescued from Varuṇa

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On the *Ekādaśī* day (the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight, so sacred to devotees of Viṣṇu) Nanda observed complete fast and worshipped Lord Viṣṇu (Janārdana). On the twelfth day, Nanda entered the waters of the Yamunā for performing ablution.

2. Nanda, being ignorant of the time reserved for the demons, entered the waters during night time. A demon (*asura*) servant of Varuṇa seized Nanda and produced him before Varuṇa.

3. Not seeing Nanda, the cowherds cried out, "Oh Kṛṣṇa, Oh Balarāma". Hearing the cry and knowing that his father had been carried off to Varuṇa, the Omnipresent Lord, who affords protection to his devotees, approached Varuṇa.

4. Seeing that Lord Kṛṣṇa (the Ruler of senses) had arrived, Varuṇa, the protector of the world, was highly enraptured and worshipping him respectfully submitted :

Varuṇa said :

5. "Today (the object of assuming) my body has been fulfilled. Though I am the Lord of ocean, which is a mine of precious stones, never before such a treasure-trove was found by me as today.

[*VR. adds* :

By the very sight of you, Oh omnipresent Lord, the (purpose of my) eyes and tongue have become fulfilled.] Those who resort to your feet achieve the end of their journey (of *saṁsāra*).

6. I salute you Oh glorious Lord, the Brahman himself and the Supreme Soul wherein the very name of the Māyā, the cause of creation of the various worlds, is not even heard of.

7. Your father has been brought here by my ignorant servant who did not know the limits and nature of his duty. It behoves your Lordship to pardon him.

8. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! The witness of everything in the Universe ! Be pleased to shower your grace on me. Oh Govinda, full of filial love ! This is your father. He may be taken back."

[*VR. adds* :

We have been fortunate to see you as your father has been brought here. We are your progeny (or subjects). It behoves you to be gracious unto us, despite our offences.]"

Śrī Śuka said :

9. Thus propitiated by Varuṇa, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Ruler of rulers, took his father with him and returned, thereby bringing delight to his kith and kin.

10. Nanda was struck with wonder at the affluence and grandeur of the protectors of the world which he had never witnessed so far, and also the submissiveness of the Lokapālas to Kṛṣṇa—with amazement he related everything to his relatives.

11. Thinking him to be the Almighty Lord himself, the cowherds whose minds were still more overwhelmed with eagerness and wonder, thought (to themselves) : "Would that the Supreme Lord grant unto us his imperceptible state (called Brahman) and take us to his eternal region ?"

12. Knowing the wish (cherished at heart) by his own people, the all-perceiving glorious Lord, out of his own accord, and out of grace, began to think with a view to accomplishing their desires.

13. "While wandering in this world in higher and lower forms of existence due to the force of the Nescience, desire and actions (*karma*), people verily do not know their own fate."

14-15. Considering this, the highly compassionate, glorious Lord Hari manifested to the cowherds his own realm which is beyond the range of *tamas* and his essential nature which is absolutely real, not subject to modification or destruction but is pure consciousness, infinite, self-luminous, eternal and perfect stage which is realized by the sages after transcending the trinity of *guṇas* (when the bondage of *guṇas* is severed).

16. They were at first transported to *Brahmahrada*[1]—pool-like deeply absorbed state in Brahman—and were made to plunge into it and were eventually taken out of it (i.e. were awakened from that *samādhi* or trance). There they beheld the divine region of Brahman by the Grace of

1. ŚR.'s 1st explanation : *Para-Brahman* is the pool in which the cowherds were made to remain immersed in a trance and again roused from the *samādhi* by Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Kṛṣṇa through which formerly[1] Akrūra also saw the divine abode.

17. Beholding in that realm Kṛṣṇa being extolled by personified Vedas in different hymns, Nanda and others were filled with supremely ecstatic delight and were greatly amazed as well.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Rāsa[2] with Gopīs

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Perceiving that those (indescribably beautiful and hence proper for indulging in delightful sports[3]) nights were

ŚR.'s 2nd explanation: The pool in the Yamunā wherein the Akrūra beheld the *Brahma-loka* (vide infra chs. 39.40-55) is also called *Brahma-hrada*. Although ŚR gives this alternative explanation that they were taken to this pool in the Yamunā by Kṛṣṇa and were shown *Brahma-loka* that is not complementary to the Almighty Lord Kṛṣṇa. Hence ŚR.'s first explanation is accepted.

1. ŚR. explains : "The word *purā* is used as the incident took place before the dialogue between Śuka and Parīkṣit took place."

2. *Rāsa* or *hallīsaka* is a dance in which one male dancer plays his part with a number of female dancers moving in a circle. Jīva Goswāmī quotes in BKS.

nartakībhir anekābhir maṇḍale vicariṣṇubhiḥ /
yatraiko nṛtyati naṭas tad vai hallīsakaṁ viduḥ //

Ch. 20 in HV. 2 is titled *hallīsaka-krīḍanam* in stead of *rāsa*. This *rāsa-krīḍā* forms a part of VP 5.13, but the *rāsa-pañcādhyāyī* which begins from this chapter is poetically superb. SG. calls these "five vital breaths"- *pañca-prāṇa-tulya-pañcā'dhyāyī*. These five chapters form the corner-stone of the warm, sensuous *madhurā bhakti*. Commentators of Bengal school of Vaiṣṇavism such as Sanātana Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī have grown ecstatically lyrical and have given full play to their poetic imagination. Vallabha also is at his best while annotating these chapters. These annotators have written so exhaustively (over and above the implication of the actual wording of the text) that it cannot be compressed here, as it will be an independent book by itself to include them all.

For the significance of *Rāsa-līlā vide* Intro. pp. XLIX-LIV.

3. *tā anirvacanīyāḥ sarva-kālataḥ śreṣṭha-tarāḥ paramānanda-rasamayīs tat-krīḍāyogyā ityarthaḥ /*

beautified with full-blown jasmines of the autumnal (*śarad*) season, even the glorious Lord, in exercise of his Supreme *yogic Māyā* potency[1] made up his mind to play (*rāsa*).

2. Like a lover, returning after a long absence (would make the face of his beloved blush into crimson-red by the touch of his hand as if he) painted the face of his beloved with

1. *Yogamāyā upāśritaḥ* : in the company of Rādhā—SG. equates Rādhā with *yogamāyā* as follows:

yogasya sambhogasya māyo mānam paryāptir yasyāṁ sā yoga-māyā śrī Rādhā—SG

"Rādhā in whom was the highest accomplishment of enjoyment"
—SG

VJ : exercising his own essential powers.

Various conjectures are expressed by annotators why Lord Kṛṣṇa exercised his yogic Māyā Potency. He used it (i) to hypnotize the minds of people in Vraja, (2) to devise a flute capable of attracting Gopa woman (Vaiṣṇava-Śaraṇa's *Siddhāntārthadīpikā*), (3) to supply the necessities of such a dance in a forest (SD.,also Rāmanārāyaṇa's *Bhāvābhāva-vibhāvikā* etc.

KD : Kandarpa, the god of love, who subdued all gods like Hari, Hara and Brahmā was elated with pride. His pride was humiliated by Kṛṣṇa in this *rāsa krīḍā* (29.57-59). KD. raises the usual moral problem of playing with women married to others and explains the words *yogamāyām upāśritaḥ* as "without touching the wife of another man, he enjoyed himself in his natural essential bliss", and quotes *ātmārāmo pyarīramat* The Lord was the subduer of the god of love (*Manmatha mathana*) and under the pretext of eroticism, these five chapters lead to the stage of spiritual renunciation (29.63-68). Dhanapati-Sūri in *Bhāgavatagūḍhārthadīpikā* endorses ŚR's view that this *Pañcādhyāyī* leads to renunciation from *saṁsāra*.

Here two currents of interpretations become obvious in the various annotations in the Vrindavana edition, one endorsing *madhurā bhakti* and the other (including ŚR., VJ.) advocating the usual non-erotic *bhakti*.

SG : As soon as the desire to play with Gopīs arose in the mind of Kṛṣṇa, the moon (the hero) was actuated with the same desire towards the Orient (the heroine), the stars being their attendants. By his balmy beams he removed the distress not only of the Orient but also of other people of the trouble caused by the autumnal sun's heat.

VJ : *carṣaṇī*—The plant-world.

BKS : Although he loved all the Gopīs of Vraja and removed their distress, he daubed the face of Rādhā with saffron paste even though he was ever present with her (*priyayā saha dīrgham sārvakālīnaṁ darśanaṁ yasya svādhīna-bhartṛkatvāt*)

saffron-paste by his extremely soothing hands, the lord of stars—the moon—arose presently making the face of the orient blush into crimson-red by his balmy beams, (simultaneously) mitigating the distress of the people caused by the scorching heat of the sun.

3.* Beholding the moon, the friend of lilies (which blossom at the touch of his rays) in full orb, reddish like fresh saffron, superbly resplendent like the countenance of goddess Lakṣmī and seeing the groves (of Vṛndāvana) lit up with its soft rays, he breathed forth such melodious music through his flute as to captivate the hearts of the beautiful-eyed Gopīs.

4. Hearing that music which increased their love for him (or rather "which enhanced their forgetfulness about their own person"[1]), the damsels of Vraja whose hearts were

Or: *dīrgha-darśana*—of large eyes. Dhanapati in *Gūḍhārtha dīpikā* : The moon was the predecessor of Kṛṣṇa. He painted the face of the Orient (which is legally Indra's direction) with his soft balmy beams and advised (by his example) Kṛṣṇa to do the same with Rādhā who was another man's wife and remain above sin like himself.

VB. : The moon is the presiding deity of the mind and he naturally emulates whatever arose in Kṛṣṇa's mind. *carṣaṇī*—Faculties. These were concentrated in highest bliss.

* VT. informs that the place where the *rāsa* play took place is known as *Rāsaulī*. SG. and VT. emphasize that all adjectives or adjectival phrases used in this verse show that the time, place etc. were quite proper and opportune for love-making.

VB. The moon, the presiding deity of the mind, was the brother of Lakṣmī and as such had facial similarity with her. And he appeared reddish like Lakṣmī's countenance at the time of her marriage awakening eroticism. He quotes a śruti text : "Women love a singer" and states that Kṛṣṇa invited all beautiful maidens of Vraja by the sweet notes of the flute.

1. *anaṅga-vardhanam*—The usual translation following annotators will be "Increasing the feeling of love of Gopīs for Kṛṣṇa is not complimentary to Gopīs or Kṛṣṇa. The word *anaṅga*—means 'bodiless'. The Gopīs were so much engrossed in Kṛṣṇa's devotion that they practically forgot themselves. This forgetfulness about their person was so much enhanced by listening to the flute-call that they left their work then and there and ran to him. Even an exponent of *madhurā bhakti* like SG., warns that the word *anaṅga* is not used in a vulgar sense : *grāmya-dharma-hetu-prākṛta-kāmāṁśābhāva-vivakṣayā.*

captivated by Kṛṣṇa, unmindful of what the other was doing, arrived hastily with their (gold) ear-rings dangling through their fast gait, at the spot where their Lover was waiting.

5. (Even hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa instantaneously makes his devotees renounce all other activities and hence the Gopīs left their work half-done as follows :)

Being extremely eager (to join the Lord), some who were milking cows, went away leaving the milking half-done; others started, placing the milk (for heating) on the oven to boil (without removing it from the oven), while others flew to Kṛṣṇa without removing the dressed dish (of wheat flour) from the hearths.

6. Some who were serving food (to the members of their family) left off without serving (any further); some others suckling their babies set them aside and fled; some others who were waiting upon their husbands suddenly stopped and departed; while others who were taking their meals, set aside their food and started.

7. Some were painting their bodies (with pigments, sandal paste), while others were cleansing their person, still others were applying collyrium to their eyes, while others were bedecking themselves with clothes and ornaments in a disorderly[1] way—All hastened to the presence of Kṛṣṇa (leaving their work half-done in the middle).

8. Though prevented and obstructed by their husbands, fathers, brothers and relatives, their hearts being lured away and robbed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs were hypnotised and they did not return.

VB. understands the destruction of the gross body and the creation of a new one by the word *anaṅga*—

aṅgaṁ tu nāśayatyeva ato nūtana utpannaḥ /

1. This is technically known as *vibhrama*. SG and VT quote the famous characteristic :

Vallabha-prāpti-velāyāṁ madanāveśa-sambhramāt /
Vibhramo hāra-mālyādi-bhūṣāsthāna-viparyayaḥ //

When the time of arrival of the Lover approaches and the mind is overwhelmed and confused with the passion of love, the wrong or disorderly way of wearing clothes and ornaments is the characteristic of *Vibhrama* (confusion).

9. Some being shut up in the inner apartment, could not manage to get out. They closed their eyes and meditated upon Lord Kṛṣṇa with their minds absorbed in his devotion.

10-11.* Their inauspicious *karmas* being consumed by the fire-like intense agony of unbearable separation from their dearest Lord, and with their auspicious *karmas* being exhausted by the ecstatic bliss of the embrace of the Immortal Lord enjoyed in their meditation on him, the cowherd women who became united with[1] that Supreme Soul, even as a beloved would do with her paramour,[2] and with all the *karmic* bonds of mundane existence being instantaneously sundered off, they cast off their mortal coil constituted of three *guṇas*.

*. VJ. explains that even *sañcita karma* (Potential *karma* which did not begin to give its effect) is destroyed by the knowledge and realization of God.

SG. The Gopīs lost all the bonds of hopes of participating in the *rāsa* by retaining their bodies (as pointed out in the *Bhāgavatāmṛta*). There is more intense joy in separation from a lover as it gives rise to more fervent love.

Alternately SG. explains: By their attachment (*saṅgam āsaktim*) to the Supreme Lord as their paramour, they, by their suffering intense agony at the unbearable separation from their dearest Lord, destroyed the inauspicious sufferings of three types (physical: elemental etc.) of the world and had enhanced the auspiciousness of the world (*akṣīṇamaṅgalaḥ—akṣīṇaṁ puṣṭaṁ vṛddhiṁ gatam, jagatāṁ maṅgalam*) by their bliss of the happy embrace of Lord Kṛṣṇa attained by them in their meditation, gave up the various states of mind (*Bhāva*).

SG concludes : Liberation (*mokṣa*) is attained by knowledge, attainment of the region of Vaikuṇṭha, by loving devotion of the Lord; the Lord is won over by *sakhya prema* (friendly affection); by intensity of love and always regarding him as the dearest Lord, leads to union with him at Vraja.

1 *Saṅgata*—Who properly realized Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Lord —VJ.

2 VT. raises the point whether the Gopīs united with the Lord as a paramour (in illicit sexual relations) and ably refutes the moral charge. It is the intensity of passion of a beloved for the paramour which is implied here.

12.* They (the damsels of Vraja) knew him only as a Supreme Lover and could not recognize him as the *Brahman* himself. How did the cessation of the flow of *guṇas* (in the form of continuity of the cycle of birth and death, take place in the case of those women whose minds were under the influence of *guṇas*.

Śrī Śuka explained :

13. It has been previously[1] explained to you that as Śiśupāla, the king of Cedis, attained the *summum bonum* (absorption in the person of Lord Kṛṣṇa), there is no problem at all how the beloveds of the Supra-sensuous Lord should do so.

14. Even though the Lord is not subject to any modification or change; is beyond the ken of intellect, and infinite; transcends all the *guṇas* yet controls them; he manifests himself for the good (Final beatitude) of people.

15. Persons who always cherish love, anger, fear, affection, identity and friendliness unto Lord Hari, ultimately attain one-ness with him.[2]

*ŚR correctly explains the nature of Parīkṣit's doubt. The husbands or sons of those Gopīs were, as a matter of fact, *Brahman* himself. But as they had no knowledge or capacity to recognize that *Brahman* in them, they could not attain Liberation (*Mokṣa*). Similarly they did not look upon Kṛṣṇa as the *Brahman* but only as a Lover. Hence how could their association with him be the cause of *Mokṣa* ?

SG. endorses the question raised above by ŚR. but adds : To the Gopīs or devotees, *Mokṣa* (Liberation) is quite insignificant as they were more interested in the excellences such as superb beauty, sweetness, love etc. of the Lord. He, however, clarifies that King Parīkṣit had personally no such doubt, but it is for the knowledge of others that he asked this question.

VJ. explains in the next verse that Liberation (*Mukti*) is attained by direct realization through uninterrupted devotion, but not due to *Kāma* (desire, sexual or otherwise). If *kāma* is amalgamated with *Bhakti* (devotion), it brings in the Grace of the Lord. But this love of the Supreme Being cannot be regarded as the paramour-beloved relation. (It seems VJ. treats Vr. 11-13 as a unit and explains the *api* in v. 11 as implying this explanation.

1. Vide Supra 7. 1-30.
2. VR and VJ reject the notion of *Mokṣa* as absorption of the

16. It does not behove your Majesty to entertain such feeling of wonder in the case of the birthless glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Ruler of all the masters of *yoga*, through whose Grace, the entire (mobile and immobile) creation gets emancipated (from *saṃsāra*).

17. Seeing that all the damsels of Vraja[1] have approached him, the Lord who was the foremost among the eloquents, addressed them, hypnotising them with the most fascinating or loving expressions.

The glorious Lord said[2] :

18. Hail to you, Oh highly blessed ladies ! You are welcome. What pleasant services can I render to you ?[3] Is everything well with Vraja ? Please explain to me the cause of your hasty arrival.

19.* Oh ladies with beautiful waists ! This night is of frightful appearance. It is infested with ferocious beasts (and demons). Please do return to Vraja. This place is not fit for women to stay out at night.

individual soul with the Supreme Soul. Naturally VR interprets *tanmayatām yānti* as "attain similarity to Him"—*tat-prakāratāṁ tat-sādharmyaṁ yānti*

VJ. states that due to cherishing Love etc. for the Lord, the souls of such persons become saturated with those very feelings even in the final stage, but they do not become identical with Hari.

Harau kāmādikaṁ vidadhata upāsate te tan-mayatām yānti kāmādyātmatām āpnuvanti, na tu bhagavan-mayatām.

1. All women of Vraja young and old who should have stayed at Vraja instead of coming into the forest—SG.

2. SR : Noticing that all the damsels of Vraja have hastened there in an agitated state of mind, Kṛṣṇa expresses anxiety and asks.

SG. : Kṛṣṇa pretends indifference.

VB. : In the following ten verses Kṛṣṇa wards off the *tāmasa, rājasa* and *sāttvika* categories of characters in the following order : *tāmasa*-cum-*sāttvika, tāmasa*-cum-*rājasa* and *tāmasa*-cum-*tāmasa.*

3. By serving the cause pious ladies like you, I shall attain special merit—SG.

* SG. explains the *double entendre* thus :

This full-moon-night is delightful to people (*janān rañjayati ti rajanī*). (Due to absence of darkness) it is quiet and beautiful in appearance (*aghora-rūpa*). It is inhabited (and visited) by beautiful creatures (*a-ghora-*

20. Not seeing you in Vraja, your mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands must be searching for you. Do not create fear and anxiety in your relatives.

21. You have now seen how the forest is adorned with floral beauty and illuminated with the silvery beams of the full moon, and beautified with the tender foliage of trees dancing sportively with the gentle breeze blowing from the Yamunā.

22. Oh ye virtuous ladies! Please return to Gokula without delay. Wait upon your husbands as ideal wives. Your children and calves are crying, suckle them and milk the cows.

23. Or if you have come as your heart is attached to me out of deep affection to me, it is quite natural (that you should have done so) for all creatures are affectionate to me.

24. But it is the supreme duty of women to wait upon and render service to husbands with sincerity of hearts, to look after the well-being of relatives and to nourish children.

25. The husband may be ill-natured or quarrelsome unfortunate, decrepit with age, dull-witted, sickly or penniless but women desirous of the heavenly world should not desert him if he be morally not fallen.

26. Resorting to illicit intercourse with a paramour by women of noble families, is a hindrance to the attainment of the heavenly world; it is scandalous, base, fraught with miseries and dangers, and it is abhorred everywhere.

27. Devotion to me is truly engendered by hearing about me, by looking at me, by meditating upon me and glorifying my sportive and noble deeds, and not by physical proximity. Therefore, please return home.

sattva-niṣevitā) like deer and peacocks (which awaken erotic sentiment), or it is being enjoyed by a person like me who am quiescent and pleasant by nature (*aghoraṁ sukhadaṁ śāntam svabhāvaḥ yasya tena mayā niṣevitā*) Therefore, please do not go back to Vraja (*pratiyāta Vrajaṁ na*). As you are beautiful women, you please stay on here (*ihāstheyam*).

SD : As you have by chance come here, please return. It is night time, it is not desirable that women should stay with me now.

Śrī Śuka said :

28. Having heard that unpleasant speech of Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd women grew despondent as their expectations were frustrated, and they were immersed in deep anxiety out of which they could not extricate.

29. With their faces down-cast (in disappointment), and their *Bimba*-like red lips parched with hot breaths of grief, scratching the ground with their toe-nails and washing the saffron-painting on their breasts with tears mixed with collyrium, they stood silent, heavily burdened with distress.

30. The Gopīs who discarded all their cherished desires for his sake, and who were still deeply attached to him, wiped out their eyes sore with weeping, and with their voice chocked up with anger resulting from frustration, and in faltering accents, they addressed to their dearest Kṛṣṇa who talked to them as if he bore no love to them.

Gopīs urged :

31. "It does not behove, you, Oh Omnipresent Lord, to speak so harsh to us, your devotees, who have renounced all objects of enjoyment and have resorted to the soles of your feet. Pray do not abandon us your earnest devotees but accept us as does the Deity (Viṣṇu), the most ancient person, accept his devotees desirous of Liberation from Saṁsāra.

32. Knower of the principles of righteousness as you are, it may be as you say it, that the natural duty of women is to attend upon and render service to their husbands, children and friends or well-wishers. May this be so in the case of you, Oh dear Lord, who are the origin and object of such precepts. For, you being the Soul, the most beloved relative of all embodied beings, are dearest to all.[1]

1. KD. explains that just as a coin of the highest denomination contains within it the coins of lower denomination (e.g. a rupee consists of one hundred paise. When you possess a rupee you have with you one hundred paise, similarly) when you, who are the soul of all creatures, are served well, other beings like husbands, sons etc. are automatically served properly. You form the basis of our desired objects as well as their accomplishments. This being the case, enough of your precepts of *dharma*

33. Persons who are well-versed in *dharma* direct all their love (and devotion) to you, Oh *ātman* (soul) of all. For when you, the eternally dear Lord are available, what purpose can be served by husbands, sons and other relatives who are nothing but a source of trouble. Therefore, Oh Supreme Ruler ! Be pleased to be gracious unto us, Oh Lotus-eyed God !

34. Our heart which uptil now used to be engaged happily in our homes, has been easily enticed away by you; so too our hands which were occupied with our domestic work. Our feet refuse to move away a single step from the soles of your feet. Under these circumstances, how can we return to Gokula and (even if we are carried there) what possibly can we do there ?

35. Extinguish, Oh darling, with the flood of the nectar of Your lips[1] the conflagration (of passion) set ablaze in our hearts by you, with your beguiling smiles, sideglances and melodious music, otherwise, with our bodies consumed by the fire of separation, we shall, by meditating upon you (like *yogins*), attain to the position of your feet.

36. Oh lotus-eyed Lord who are affectionate and favourable to persons (like *yogis*, sages and cowherds like us) who dwell in forests ! Since the moment we happened somewhere (at some unknown place) to touch (but once) the soles of Your feet which are the delight of goddess Lakṣmī[2] we have been blessed by You and are now not at all able to stand before any other person, Oh dear Lord !

37. Although Śrī (the goddess of affluence and beauty) —to bask in whose favourable glance (at least once), gods make strenuous efforts,—has already secured a place on your bosom, she still aspires with Tulasī (the presiding deity of the

1. SG. clarifies that the fire of passion set ablaze is so intense and enormous that it requires a *flood* and not sprinkling of the nectar-drops for extinguishing it.

(ii) *SG.'s second interpretation* : Let the nectarine flood of your lips be crystallized into words and let it enter our ears and put out the fire of passion enkindled in our hearts.

2. Or which condescend to give (occasional) opportunity of touching the goddess Lakṣmī.

basil plant) and loves to secure the dust on Your lotus-like feet which it is the privilege of Your servants to enjoy. We also have similarly sought the dust under Your feet.

38. Do be propitious unto us, You soother of all afflictions. It is with the hope of (getting the opportunity of) adoring You that we quitted our homes (like *yogis*) and have approached the soles of Your feet, Oh adornment of mankind! Grant us who are burning with intense longing, excited by Your charming smiles and enchanting glances, the privilege of serving You.

39. Looking at Your countenance covered with curling locks of hair, with cheeks shining with refulgent earrings and with lips full of ambrosia, and with sideglances accompanied by charming smiles, and beholding Your mighty arms reassuring protection (to Your devotees) as also Your bosom that excites passion in the heart of goddess Śrī, we would like to be Your menial servants (lit. your slaves).

40. Oh darling! Breathes there a woman in all the three worlds who would not swerve from the noble path approved by the elite, when (she happens to be) enchanted with the ravishing melodious (modulations of the) music of Your flute and (chances to be) be-witched by gazing of Your form, the most charming in all the (three) worlds, even a glance which sends a thrill of joy through cows, birds, trees and beasts.

41. It is certain that your honour has specially incarnated for dispelling the fear and afflictions of Gokula even as the First Divine Person—god Viṣṇu—did as the Protector of the Celestial Region. Therefore, Oh friend of the distressed, place Your lotus-hand on love-fired breasts and (aching) heads of Your maid-servants."

Śrī Śuka continued :

42. Listening to the piteous prayer of the Gopīs, the Ruler of the Masters of Yoga laughed loudly. Although he was ever-revelling in his own self, out of mercy and grace he conferred bliss on them.[1]

1. VB. emphasizes the aloofness of Lord Kṛṣṇa who Himself being immersed in His own spiritual bliss, proceeded to delight the Gopīs (with no personal involvement).

43. With their countenances blooming under the gaze of their beloved Lord, the Gopīs gathered around Lord Kṛṣṇa (Acyuta) of glorious deeds, whose charming smiles radiated the splendour of his jasmine-like teeth. And he looked like the full moon surrounded by stars.

44. Being praised in songs (by the Gopīs) and himself bursting into a loud song, Lord Kṛṣṇa, adorned with the Vaijayantī wreath and leading a bevy of hundreds of beautiful damsels, wandered over the forest, gracing it (with his hallowed and charming presence).

45. Surrounded by Gopīs, he entered the cool sandy bed of the river and sported with them, while pleasant gentle breezes cooled by (their contact with) the waves of the Yamunā and charged with the fragrance of water lilies (blooming by the moonlight) were blowing.

46. Exciting amorous sentiment in the beautiful damsels of Vraja by stretching out his arms, embracing them, touching their hands, locks of hair, thighs, waists, bosom, by indulging in jokes and by pricking them gently with his nails, by his sportive glances and smiles, Kṛṣṇa gave delight to Gopīs.

47. Recipients of such a high honour from the noble-souled Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs got puffed up with pride and (each one of them) regarded (herself) as superior to all other women on the earth (in beauty).

48. Perceiving their conceit at their fortune (of being associated with the Lord) and their pride (of being the most beautiful woman), Lord Kṛṣṇa disappeared then and there, for curing them of that pride and showering Grace on them.

CHAPTER THIRTY*

Search after Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. When the Lord suddenly disappeared, the damsels from Vraja, like she-elephants which have missed the leader of their herd, were deeply distressed, when they could not see him.

2. With their hearts captivated by the graceful movements, loving smiles, lustful glances as also by delightful discourses, amorous dalliances and frolics of the Lord of goddess Lakṣmī (Kṛṣṇa), those young damsels mentally identified themselves with him and began to emulate his various acts and sports.

3. Identifying themselves with Lord Kṛṣṇa and exhibiting Kṛṣṇa's sportful movements and amorous dalliances, the Gopīs, the beloveds of their darling (Kṛṣṇa), whose persons had become (as it were) the duplicates (of Kṛṣṇa) in deportment, graceful smiling, glancing, speech etc., declared (to each other) "I am Kṛṣṇa."

4. Singing aloud of Kṛṣṇa's glory in a chorus, they sought for him, like lunatics, from forest to forest, enquiring of trees about that Lord (the Supreme Man) who, like ether, was pervading all the creatures from within and without.

5. "Oh Aśvattha ! Oh Plakṣa ! Oh Nyagrodha ! (varieties of Indian fig trees). Have you seen the son of Nanda who has absconded, stealing away our hearts by his captivating smiles and bewitching glances ?

6. Oh Kurabaka, Aśoka, Nāga, Punnāga and Campaka trees ! Did the younger brother of Balarāma who humbles the pride of proud women by his smiles pass this way ?

7. Oh blessed Tulasī (Basil plant) to whom the feet of Lord Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) are so dear ! Have you seen Acyuta, so very beloved of you, wearing you (in a wreath) swarming with bees.

* This is ch. No. 28 in VJ. This ch. shows that none but Lord Hari by His nature possesses all *yogic* powers. It also shows the intensity of devotion of the Gopis—VJ.

8. (Addressing various flowering trees) Oh Mālatī ! Oh Mallikā ! Oh Jāti ! Oh Yūthikā ! Was Mādhaya (Lord of Lakṣmī, Kṛṣṇa) seen by you giving you delight by the touch of his hands, while passing by the way ?

9. (Invoking other trees) Oh mango tree (of the *cūta* variety) ! Oh Priyāla, Panasa (Jack-fruit tree), Asana, Kovidāra, Jambū (Rose-apple tree), Arka (the sun plant), Bilva (the wood-apple tree), Bakula, Āmra (a variety of mango tree), Kadamba and Nīpa trees and other trees on the bank of the Yamunā—Born as you are for the benefit of others ! May you direct the path of Kṛṣṇa to us whose minds are vacant (due to separation from Hari).

10. What austere penance have you performed, Oh Earth, inasmuch as you appear resplendent with your hair standing on their ends through the thrill of joy, at the touch of the feet of Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) ! But is this ecstasy due to (the touch of) Kṛṣṇa's feet just now or is it due to your being best-ridden (formerly) by Lord Trivikrama (Viṣṇu, as Vāmana who covered the universe in three steps) or is it caused by the embrace of the Lord when incarnated as a boar (even before Vāmana-incarnation) ?

11. Oh female deer ! Here is permeated the fragrance of our leader's—Lord Kṛṣṇa's—garland of Kunda flowers tinged with (the scent of) saffron applied to the breast of his lady-love (when he hugged her). Did Kṛṣṇa pass this way along with his beloved, giving delight to your eyes by his graceful limbs Oh friend ?

12. (To trees which bent low with the load of fruits) Oh trees ! Did the younger brother of Balarāma, placing one (i.e. left) hand on the shoulder of his beloved and holding a lotus in the other (i.e. right) hand (to protect his beloved by warding off) the swarms of bees attracted by (the fragrance of) Tulasī and blinded by the intoxication (caused by the fragrance) which followed him—did Kṛṣṇa (ever) come here and was pleased to accept your low bows with glances full of affection (and appreciation) ?

13. (Oh friends !) Ask these creepers which have embraced the arms (i.e. branches) of their husbands, the trees, as they certainly exhibit the thrill (sprouts or flowers) of joy at

the touch of his finger-nails while plucking a flower for his beloved)."

14.* Thus the cowherd women became bewildered in their vain search of Kṛṣṇa and raved in this way. With their hearts engrossed (and as if identical) with him, they began to emulate the divine sports of the Lord.

15. One of the Gopīs who imitated Kṛṣṇa sucked the breast of another Gopī who played the part of Pūtanā. Another Gopī emulating Kṛṣṇa, the baby, began to cry and kicked another Gopī who acted the part of a cart (*Śakaṭa*).

16. Acting the role of a demon (viz. Tṛṇāvarta) carried away another Gopī who behaved like an infant Kṛṣṇa, while a third crawled on all fours dragging the feet and thereby making a jingling sound of the anklets.

17. Two Gopīs enacted[1] the role of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa while others played the part of cowherds. Out of them one struck a third gopī that played the part of *Vatsāsura* (a demon in the form of a calf), while another (acting as Kṛṣṇa) struck another (fourth) Gopī who enacted the role of the demon Baka.

18. One imitated Kṛṣṇa shouting out at cows from a distance, while another emulated him and played upon the flute, while others applauded her saying "Well done."

19. Another Gopī who mentally identified herself with Kṛṣṇa placed her arm on some other Gopī and while following her, told the other "Lo! I am Kṛṣṇa. Look at my graceful gait."

20. "Don't be afraid of tempestuous winds and (driving) shower. Protection against them has been provided by me". Saying so, another Gopī strained herself and held up (a part of) her garment with one hand (as if it were the mount Govardhana[2]).

21. Treading on the head of another Gopī and mounting thereon (one Gopī) ordered, "Now that I, the wielder of

*VJ.'s text does not include 10 verses from this verse (i.e. vv. 14-23 both inclusive).

1. Historical present is used in some of these verses but for consistent use of tense, past tense is used in translation.

2. Cf. VP. 5.13-28.

the rod of punishment to the wicked, have incarnated, get out from this place, Oh wicked serpent."[1]

22. (Imagining that all the Gopas are surrounded by forest conflagration and to vouchsafe their protection) another Gopī said, "Oh cowherds ! Lo that raging forest fire. Shut up your eyes quickly. I shall speedily accomplish your welfare (rescue from fire)."

23. Tied to (a Gopī who represented) a mortar with a wreath by another (Gopī who acted the part of Yaśodā).

23-A* ["Now I bind the thief who has stolen butter and broken a number of (earthen) pots"]. And the lady with beautiful eyes (who was thus bound) covered her face (with hands) and feigned fear (put up a show of trembling with fear).

24. While they were enquiring of the creepers and trees of Vṛndāvana about Kṛṣṇa, they noticed in a certain part of the forest, the foot-prints of the Supreme soul (Kṛṣṇa).

25. "It is obvious that the footprints are definitely those of the noble-souled son of Nanda, as they are identified by the marks such as a flag, a lotus, a *vajra*, a goad and a barley seed"[2]

26. While they went ahead tracing his path by following those footprints, the poor women were sorely distressed at heart to find them interspersed with those of a young woman and spoke to each other.

27. "Whose foot-prints possibly these can be? Who can be this woman who walked in his company with his hand resting on her shoulder, even as a she-elephant with the trunk of her mate on hers.

28. Certainly the Supreme Ruler, the glorious Lord Hari, has been propitiated[3] by this lady. Hence, being pleased with her, Lord Kṛṣṇa took her to a rendezvous abandoning us all.

1. Cf. VP. 5. 13. 27.

* VR's text adds this half-verse.

2. Cf. VP. 5.13-32.

3. SG. : Here the name of that Gopī is Rādhā is indicated by the text : *rādhayati ārādhayati iti śrī-Rādhā iti nāmakaraṇaṁ darśitam'*. Although the text of the Bh.P. is silent on this point, all commentators of the Bengal school of Vaiṣṇavism presumed that she was Rādhā and have written interesting extensive commentaries on these verses.

29. Oh friends ! How blessed are the particles of dust under the Lotus-feet of Lord Govinda—the particles which god Brahmā, Śiva, and goddess Lakṣmī bore on the crowns of their head, for absolving themselves of the sins (which separated them from him. Let us do so, so that by placing the dust on our heads we shall be united with Kṛṣṇa).

30. But these foot-prints of hers cause distress to our hearts inasmuch as only she (out of all Gopīs) has stolen away Kṛṣṇa (who belongs to all of us) and enjoys his kisses in a secret place.

31. But here her foot-prints are not visible. Most probably, seeing that the tender soles of his beloved's feet are pricked with sharp and pointed blades of grass, her darling Kṛṣṇa has carried her on his shoulders.

31 A.* These foot-prints have been sunk more deeply (in the soil) as he was carrying the young woman. Have a look at these foot-prints of love-lorn Kṛṣṇa (obviously) weighed down under a heavy load.

31 B. (Going a few paces ahead, they observe :) It appears that here he set her down for gathering flowers (for putting them in her braid of hair).

32. (Proceeding still further) Here flowers are gathered by the Lover for his beloved. Behold these foot-prints which are not entire as he stood on tip-toe.

33. (Most probably) on this spot the lust-ful Lord has performed the decoration of the hair of his lady-love. He must have certainly taken his seat here for fastening the flowers in her braid.

34. It is with a view to demonstrate to the world the wretched plight of the love-stricken as well as the stone-hearted nature of women that the Lord sported with the lady even though he is ever delighted in his own blissful self, self-sporting Perfect Person unattracted by the amours of women.

35-36. Showing to each other the traces of Kṛṣṇa's foot-prints in this way, the Gopīs wandered in a despondent mood (concentrating on Kṛṣṇa). And the Gopī whom Kṛṣṇa

* 31-A Not found in the Text of ŚR and VB.

(in preference to other Gopīs, and) leaving others in the forest, had brought there, now began to regard herself as the most beautiful of all women. Thought she to herself, "the beloved Lord resorts to me only, abandoning all other Gopīs who too love him."

37. Thereupon, after going to a certain place in the forest, she, being affected with pride, told Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "I am not able to walk any further. Therefore (give me a lift and) take me whither-so-ever you please".

38. When requested thus, he told his beloved, "Mount on my shoulder" and he disappeared. And the lady lamented in repentance.

39. "Oh Lord! My darling! Oh most beloved one! Where have you gone? I am your miserable slave. Be pleased with me to reveal your Presence, Oh mighty armed Lord!"

40. While the (other) cowherd women went on tracing the path of the Lord, they noticed from a distance, their distressed friend bewildered through her separation from her darling.

41. Listening to her report as to how she was received with honour by Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa) and was humiliated by him through her own wickedness, they were extremely astonished.

42. They further probed into the forest (for Kṛṣṇa) so long as the moon-light was available. Seeing that darkness was setting in, they returned from that spot.

43. With their minds absorbed in him, they talked about Kṛṣṇa only; they imitated his movements and sang about his excellences. They became oblivious of their persons, as well as of their homes.

44. Returning to the sandy bank of the Yamunā, the Gopīs contemplated on Kṛṣṇa only. Anxiously waiting for his arrival, they sang of Kṛṣṇa in a chorus.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE[1]

Gopis' song[2] *(prayer for Kṛṣṇa's return)*

Gopis sang :

1. It is due to your birth here that the goddess of affluence and beauty (Lakṣmī) abides here permanently and the Vraja outshines in progressive prosperity. But dear Lord ! We, your beloveds, who have with difficulty managed to be alive for your sake (in the hope of visualizing you) are searching for you in every direction. Be pleased to reveal yourself to us, Oh darling.[3]

2. Oh Lord of amorous enjoyment ! Is this not killing us *en mass* by disappointing us, your gratuitous maid-servants, with your eyes that surpass (lit. steal) the splendour of the interior of a beautiful full-blown lotus in a translucent lake in the autumn, Oh Bestower of boons ?

3.* Oh mighty Lord (lit. Bull among men) ! We have been so often protected by you from death through drinking of poisonous water, from Aghāsura, the demon disguised as a boa-constrictor, from heavy showers, stormy winds and the fire of lightening, from the demon[4] (Ariṣṭa) in the form of a bull) and from the son of Mayāsura (the demon Vyoma)[5]

1. Ch. 29 in VJ.'s Text. According to VJ, this chapter shows that for those who are not eligible to study the *Vedānta* and yet aspire after *Mokṣa*, singing His glory is the way of propitiating the Lord. It brings about His Grace. This chapter describes Gopis' (women, not eligible to Vedic studies) way of propitiating the Lord. The Gopis are addressing Kṛṣṇa directly, as He is all the while present in their hearts.

VR. The request for revelation may be treated as the burden of the song.

2. This is not a chorus but one Gopī after another (or one group of Gopis after another) is expressing herself.

3. SG. states modestly that he explains the "crumbs" of the noble-soul ŚR who has deeply drunk the essence of the nectarlike song. SG quotes a Prākrit verse (Text corrupt) which means that a beloved does not survive her separation from her lover, but as their lives are entrusted to Him, they are alive.

*In VJ.'s text, ŚR's 6th verse is 2nd and ŚR's 2nd verse as 3rd.

4. Vide infra 10.36.16

5. Vide infra 10.37.28

and from perilous situations all over. (Why are you so indifferent to us now ? We still hope to secure your protection.)

4*. Oh friend ! As a matter of fact you are not the son of a Gopī (Yaśodā) but you are the witness, dwelling in the soul (i.e. hearts) of embodied beings. When prayed by god Brahmā for the protection of the universe, you appeared in the clan of Sātvatas (or the family of devotees). (Hence, it is improper for you to show indifference to your devotees).

5. Oh Leader of Vṛṣṇis ! Place on our head your lotus-like palm that graciously assures protection to those who resort to your feet through fear of *saṁsāra*—Your palm which bestows all desires and has espoused the hand of Śrī, the goddess of prosperity, Oh Beloved.

6. Oh Mighty Hero ! The Annihilator of the afflictions of the inhabitants of Vraja ! Oh friend whose beguiling smile humiliates the pride of your people (votaries) ! Be pleased to accept us who have been your bonded servants. Show unto us—poor women—your charming lotus-like countenance.

7. Be pleased to place on our bosoms your lotus-feet which totally dissipates the sins of those who prostrate themselves (in complete submission) at them (your feet) that (affectionately) follow the herbivorous animals (cows), which are the abode of Śrī, the goddess of beauty and prosperity, and which were placed on the hoods of the serpent Kāliya—and thereby remove completely the pangs of passion from our hearts.[1]

The anachronism is obvious. SG. defends it by saying that Gopīs developed omniscience due to their devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Hence, these future acts are quoted here. VB asserts that Gopīs being omniscient, the chronological sequence is not binding on them!

*. This is verse 5th in VJ. (as per Vṛndāvan edt.).

VJ : You are verily the delight of the Gopīs, Oh friend ! For the protection of the universe you have appeared in the family of Yadus (i.e. Sātvatas). You are the Inner Controller of all embodied creatures and witness to all (or you are ever realizing your ownself). You are worshipped by god Brahmā, the creator or the preceptor of the Universe.

1. ŚR, VR & VJ unanimously explain *Kṛndhi hṛcchayam* as *Kāmaṁ chindhi*—'cut down, destroy the passionate love in our hearts'. VB's imaginative explanation is interesting. For example—The Gopīs submit : 'Our breasts are not soft but you have trodden upon the hard hood of Kāliya. We may be uncultured but your feet followed cows. The request is made by all Gopīs and hence plural *kuceṣu*.

8. Oh lotus-eyed Lord ! With your melodious words consisting of charming expressions delightful (and appealing even) to the minds of the wise and with the nectar from your lips, revive us who are charmed with you and are swooning for you—and are but your slaves doing your biddings, Oh Valiant hero !

9. (We did not die of separation from you but are alive due to listening to your nectarlike stories).

Highly meritorious (due to their liberality in the previous existence) must be those persons[1] who extol your nectarlike stories which are not only life-giving to the afflicted but are superior to the nectar (itself), inasmuch as, they are highly eulogized by the knowers of the Brahman (to whom nectar is negligible) and which remove all sins, are the most auspicious to hear, and the source of all prosperity and are spread all over the world.[2]

10. Darling Kṛṣṇa ! Your hearty laughs, your loving oglings, your sports and pastimes so auspicious to contemplate on, and your enchanting jokes and acts in privacy all go down into our heart and agitate it, Oh Deceitful Love !

11. Oh Loving Lord ! When you go out of Vraja to graze the cattle, our heart gets agitated (with the thought that) your lotus-like beautiful feet will be pricked and pained by the gravel and stubs and blades of grass, Oh Darling.

12. When at the close of the day you now and then present your countenance overhung with dark-blue curly locks of hair, soiled with the dust raised by cows (in the forest), it appears like a lotus (surrounded by black bees and overstrewn with pollen), and thereby you provoke the passion of Love in our hearts (and do not satisfy it) Oh Cheat !

13. Oh delightful Enchanter ! Pray be pleased to place on our bosom your lotus-feet, bestowers of desires[3] to prostrating supplicants, worshipped by the lotus-born deity,[4] the very ornament of the earth (enhancing its beauty by footprints),

1. They are the most liberal persons on the earth (ŚR.)

2. *or* Those who sing of your glory broad-cast all over the world are the most munificent donors.

3. VB—*Kāmaṁ dyati khaṇḍayati* cuts down, removes *kāma*

4. God Brahmā—ŚR; goddess Lakṣmī—SG.

the most blissful ones which ought to be meditated in times of distress, Oh Remover of mental anguishes.

14. Oh Hero![1] Pray, condescend to grant to us the nectar of your lips which enhances the charm of amorous enjoyment and destroys all griefs—the nectar which has been enjoyed fully by the flute kissed by you in sounding, making people forget all other passions and attachments.

15. During day-time, while your Lordship is away wandering in the woods, and we are not able to see you, even a quarter of a moment is felt by us as an age. (But when you return in the evening we feel that) god Brahmā must be dull-witted in creating our eye-lashes which, while winking, deprive us even for a moment of the joy of looking at you, when we are eagerly gazing at your beautiful countenance, graced with curly locks of hair.

16. Oh crafty Deceiver! Who would abandon poor women like us who, being enchanted by the loud melodious music of a musical expert like you and who know that we are sure to come to you—us who have completely set at nought our husbands, children, followers, brothers and relatives and knowing your way, have sought your presence, Oh Acyuta!

17. Remembering your secret amorous promises and beholding your smiling countenance provoking the passion of love in our heart, your loving glances, your broad chest, the abode of Śrī (goddess of affluence and beauty), our hearts get excited with excessive longing every now and then, and becomes infatuated.

18. Darling Kṛṣṇa! Your incarnation is for dispelling the sins and miseries of the inhabitants of Vraja (viz. Gopas) and of the forests viz. sages, as well as for conferring the highest auspiciousness on the universe. Be pleased, therefore, to impart to us who entertain a strong yearning for you in our hearts, something of that balm (of your company) which will relieve all the mental anguish of your people (votaries).

19*. As your Lordship constitutes our very life, our

1. Hero in erotics—SG.
Hero in munificent gifts like *puruṣārthas*—VB.
*Deleted in VJ's text.

mind reels to think whether your lotus-feet on which you wander in the forest, are not pained while walking on the gravels etc., for (on our part) we, being afraid (of injuring your tender feet) place them gently on our hard breasts, Oh tender Darling !

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Kṛṣṇa comforts Gopīs

Śrī Śuka said :

1. In this way (as described in the previous chapter), the Gopīs, yearning strongly to see Lord Kṛṣṇa went singing loudly, wailing loudly and at times raving incoherently, they wept loudly and piteously, Oh king.[1]

2. And (surprisingly enough) in their very midst appeared Lord Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of king Śūra, with his lotus-face beaming with smile, wearing a yellow garment, adorned with a wreath of flowers, capable of fascinating the god of Love (cupid) himself (with his charm).

3. Seeing their belovedmost Darling arrived,[2] all those women, though emaciated and weak at once sprang to their feet, with their eyes wide open with rapturous delight, even as the limbs of the body do on the return of the vital principle (*Prāṇa*).

3-A. *VR.'s Text* :

The more they drank the nectarine beauty of his countenance with the drinking vessels (in the form) of their eyes, the more unsatiated they grew (lit. they were not satiated at all), just as men of spiritual wisdom feel about his feet.

1. The beginning of the chapter shows that just as the Lord manifested Himself to the Gopīs, He reveals himself to the possessors of spiritual means of getting divine wisdom—VJ.

2. SG. quotes VP. *tato dadṛśur āyāntaṁ vikāsi-mukha-paṅkajaḥ* and states that Kṛṣṇa revealed himself at a distance and then approached the Gopīs. The above quotation is not traceable in the Gītā Press etc. of VP.

4. One of the Gopīs, in her ecstasy, clasped the lotus-hand of Kṛṣṇa with her palms, while another placed on her shoulder his arm smeared with sandal-paste.

5. Another slim and emaciated Gopī received in the hollow of her palms, the betel chewed by him, while another Gopī, feverish with love, placed his lotus-feet on her bosom.

6. Being beside herself with the agitation of unrequieted love, another Gopī knitted her eyebrows and continued to bite her lip and was looking at him as if she was subjecting him to a volley of side-glances.

7. Another Gopī gazed at his lotus-face with fixed unwinking eyes. Although she drank (his nectar-like face) to the full, she did not feel satiated like saintly persons who are never satiated serving his feet.

8. A certain other Gopī got him established in her heart through the pupils of her eyes, and closed the eyes (so as to prevent his exit). Then she (mentally) embraced him, and through that thrill, had all her hair standing on their ends like a *yogin* immersed in spiritual bliss.

9. All of them became satisfied and happy by the high festival of having the look of Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) and had their fever born of separation subsided, just as people do when they attain God-head or meet a person who has realized the Brahman or who reach Prājña in deep sleep.

10. Surrounded by the ladies who had shed off their sorrow (due to the separation from the Lord), the glorious immortal Lord Kṛṣṇa shone more brilliantly like the Puruṣa (Supreme Spirit) endowed with his spiritual powers[1].

11-12. The Supreme Lord repaired with them to the sandy bed of the Yamunā where swarm of blackbees were attracted by the gentle breeze charged with the fragrance of fully blossomed jasmine and *Mandāras*. The darkness of the night where-of was dispelled by flood of rays of the autumnal

1. These are variously enumerated by different commentators :
(1) ŚR—(a) *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*
(b) spiritual knowledge and (physical and mental) strength essential for meditation.
(2) VR. : 24 *tattvas* forming the part of the astral body of a *jīva*.
(3) VJ. : various forms of Lakṣmī attending upon the Lord.

moon, rendering the scene all the more delightful; the soft sands whereof were (evenly) spread by the handlike ripples of the Yamunā[1]. (In this way, the Lord surrounded by the Gopīs appeared still more beautiful).

13. With their mental anguish completely dissipated by the extreme joy of seeing him, the Gopīs accomplished their desires to their heart's content, just as *Śrutis* (*Vedas* which pertain to the *karmakāṇḍa* or sacrificial and other rituals, are unsatisfied due to their inability to see the Lord but) have their purpose achieved (in the portion containing *jñāna-kāṇḍa* or spiritual knowledge leading to and resulting) in God-realization. With their upper garments coloured with the spots of saffron applied to their breasts, they prepared a seat for Kṛṣṇa, who was dearer to them than their self (or their indwelling soul).

14. The glorious Almighty Lord who is enthroned in the hearts of the masters of *yoga* took his seat on it. Assuming a personality which was the only receptacle of all the splendour and beauty in the three worlds[2], he shone splendidly in the congregation of Gopīs[3].

15. Offering warm respectful welcome to him who enkindled the passion of love, the Gopīs, with their eyebrows the sportfulness of which was enhanced by their smiles and playful oglings, and praising him while pressing his hands and feet placed on their laps, spoke to him slightly feigning anger.

Gopīs said :

16. Some show favour (in response) to those who resort to them, while others behave to the contrary (and favour those

1. VJ. reads : *Kṛṣṇehdyasta* etc. and interprets :

The sands whereof were scattered and made uneven by the sports of Kṛṣṇa—

(*Śrī Kṛṣṇa-mūrtikrīḍayā āyastāni ca taralāni cāta evācitāni itastato vikīrṇāni /*)

2. VJ. : Worthy of being enjoyed only by the goddess Lakṣmī who is adored and served by the three worlds.

VB : He assumed the best of the form suitable to the time, place etc. and manifested whatever was the worthiest.

3. SG. suggests that Kṛṣṇa assumed different forms each per Gopī and occupied the seat prepared by her and made her feel that it is her special privilege to receive Kṛṣṇa that way.

who do not resort to them), while (still) others do neither (and confer grace of favour on none). Oh Lord ! Be pleased to explain to us clearly about this.

The Lord replied :

17. Oh friends ! Those who love or resort to each other (the reciprocity of their love is with a selfish motive), strive to achieve purely their own purpose. Neither friendliness nor righteousness plays any part therein. This love is just for self-interest and nothing else[1].

18. Those who love even those who do not resort to them (or love them) in return, are really compassionate like parents. Here lies pure, blemishless righteousness as well as good will, Oh charming damsels (with beautiful waists).

19. There are some who do not love those who resort to them. How can they be expected to favour them who do not resort to them ? These belong to the following categories :

(1) They are sages immersed in the spiritual delight of *ātman* (the soul) (and are unconscious of the external world).

(2) They have accomplished the objects of their desires (and as such have no interest or longing for enjoyment and hence indifferent, though conscious of the external world).

(3) They are ungrateful (and incapable of appreciating obligations done to them).

(4) They are bent on hating their elderly people (father or teacher).

20. (When Kṛṣṇa dodged the implied accusation of Gopīs against him in explaining the above categories, the Gopīs smiled. Kṛṣṇa noticed it and explained).

As far as I am concerned, Oh friends (I do not belong to any of these categories because I am an extremely compassionate and the best friend of all), I do not respond immediately to their love and devotion (I do not reveal myself to them), so that they would ever continue to meditate upon me, just as a penniless man who has lost the money he

1. KD refuses to regard this as real worship or love : It is naked self-interest 32.17.172-80.

has earned, is absorbed in thinking about his lost treasure and would not be aware of anything else.

20.A *VJ's Text* adds :

In the same way both (the categories described above) continue to get from me the fruit or return in great or small measure (according to the intensity of their devotion to me) even as one obtains fruit from the *kalpa taru* (wishyielding tree).

21*. Oh fair damsels ! In this way, it is with a view of seeing the intensity and constancy of your devotion to me that I remained with you invisible (and stayed with you listening to your expression of love about me) as you have, for my sake, renounced the conventional worldly sense of decorum, the injunction of the Vedas (for righteousness or otherwise) and your kith and kin. Oh beloved ones ! It does not behove you to blame me, your Darling.

22. Even if the long life of celestials[1] be granted, it is not possible for me to repay adequately your devoted service to me with whom your relations are pure and faultless. And you have resorted to me and adored me cutting asunder the unbreakable ties that fetter you to your home. (The only way is:) May your righteousness be rewarded by your good deeds only.

*VJ : The Lord explains how to serve him on the plea of Praising the service rendered by Gopis :

Just as a penniless fellow who lost his wealth he could earn, is too much submerged in deep sorrow to be cognisant of anything else, you have dedicated to Me everything—worldly way of life, injunctions of the Vedas and your relatives; your devotional service shall not be fruitless. By nature I am beyond the ken of senses and hence was invisible to you—But it does not behove you to find fault with Me who am your darling.

1. The life of a god is 36000 human years but KD interprets *vibudhāyus* as the life-span of god Brahmā which is one *parārdha* years i.e. 100,000,000,000,000,000 years—32.22.260.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Description of Rāsa Krīḍā

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Listening to these soft fascinating words of the Lord, the Gopīs forgot the agony caused by separation from him and their bliss was enhanced by personal contact with him, Oh dear king.

2. There (on the sandy bank of the Yamunā) Lord Govinda inaugurated his *Rāsa Krīḍā*[1] (the play called *Rāsa*) with those jewel-like damsels (of superb beauty) who were so devoted and affectionate to him and who formed a circle with their arms interlocked (with those of Kṛṣṇa)[2]

3. Then commenced formally the festive dance called *rāsa*, beautified splendidly by the (moving) circle of Gopīs with Kṛṣṇa, the great Master of Yoga of inconceivable mystic powers (assumed as many forms as there were Gopīs and) entered in between every two Gopīs and with his arm placed around the neck of the adjacent Gopī, made each of the damsels consider to be nearest to him (and being embraced by him).

1. SG. quotes from Bharata's *Nāṭya- śāstra* : The dance in which a number of female dancers dance with their hands interlocked in the company of men who place their arms round the neck of the women-partners :

naṭair gṛhīta-kaṇṭhīnām anyānyāttakara-śriyām/
nartakīnām bhaved rāso maṇḍalībhūya nartatām//

2. SG. quotes *Bilva-maṅgala* which describes how Kṛṣṇa accompanied each Gopi as her dance-mate : "A circle of dancers was formed with Kṛṣṇa between two dancing ladies and a lady between two Kṛṣṇas. In the middle of such a circle of dancers Kṛṣṇa stood and played upon His flute.

aṅganām aṅganām antarā Mādhavo /
Mādhavaṁ Mādhavaṁ cā'ntareṇāṅganā //
itthaṁ ākalpite maṇḍale madhyagaḥ /
saṁjagau veṇunā Devakī-nandanaḥ //

This is possible only to *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa with His *yogamāyā*. Hence the significance of the words *bhagavān* and *yogamāyām upāśritaḥ* in *Supra* 10.29.1

Vide infra V. 20 which states that Kṛṣṇa assumed as many forms as there were the cowherd-women.

Kṛtvā tāvantam ātmānaṁ yāvatīr gopa-yoṣitaḥ /

4. (As soon as Lord Kṛṣṇa thought of beginning the *rāsakrīḍā*) there thronged in the sky hundreds of heavenly cars of celestials along with their wives whose minds were carried away with curiosity (of seeing the *rāsa* dance).

5. At that time, kettle-drums were sounded and showers of flowers fell. The heads of Gandharvas accompanied by their consorts sang the noble and hallowing glory of the Lord.

6. There arose in the ring of *rāsa* (dancers), the (orchestral) din of the jingling bangles and anklets and the tinkling of the small bells of girdles of the ladies accompanied by their darling Lord.

7. Exceedingly beautiful shone the glorious Lord, the son of Devakī, in the midst of those pairs of damsels like unto a highly precious emerald[1] embedded in between a pair of gold beads.

8. With their measured treads of feet and (artistic) movements of their hands (in dancing), with their smiles and (gracefully) amorous dance of eyebrows, with bending waists and shaking breasts, with the fluttering of their garments, with ear-rings rocking on their cheeks, with drops of perspiration trikling down their face and with their braids of hair and girdles getting loosened (in the course of dancing), the dancing-mates of Kṛṣṇa glorified the Lord in songs and appeared beautiful like flashes of lightening illuminating a circle of clouds (as Kṛṣṇa assumed as many forms as the Gopīs in that circular movement of *rāsa*).

9*. In the course of dancing, the Gopīs, enamoured of loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa and thrilled with delight at the touch of Kṛṣṇa, sang at the pitch of their voices sweetened with different musical modes (*rāgas*) filling thus the whole universe with the music (of their song).

10. A certain Gopī sang in chorus with Kṛṣṇa in a higher pitch. Even though her notes of the gamut (*svara-jāti*) did not harmonize with that of Kṛṣṇa, she was applauded by him

1. SG. explains that although Kṛṣṇa was of sapphire-blue complexion, the brilliant-golden complexion of the Gopīs, He embraced, made Him appear like emerald.

*Commentators quote names of Gopīs. These names of the Gopīs involved in the dance are imaginary-unsupported by the text of the Bh.P.

with the words "Well-done", as he was pleased with her performance. When she proceeded to reach her highest pitch to the measured beat (*tāla*) well-known as *Dhruva* (*pada*), Kṛṣṇa showed great regard for her.

11. Thoroughly exhausted by (participation in) the *rāsa* dance and with her bangles slipping (from her wrists) and jasmine flowers dropping (from her braid), another Gopī caught hold by her arm, the shoulder of Kṛṣṇa who was standing by (i.e. flung her arms round him).

12. (It is reported that) another Gopī smelt how Kṛṣṇa's arm placed on her shoulder, was fragrant like a lily and was anointed with sandal paste, (and losing herself) she (actually) kissed it and was thrilled with it (with her hair standing on their ends).

13. To another Gopī who rested on Kṛṣṇa's cheek her own which was glowing with the brilliance of her own earrings rocking in the course of dancing Kṛṣṇa gave his half-chewed betel.

14. Another Gopi, standing by his side was fatigued with singing and dancing, making all the while a jingling sound of her anklets and girdle (while dancing) pressed to her bosom his blissful lotus-hand.

15. Obtaining Acyuta (the immortal God—Kṛṣṇa), the sole Darling of the goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī) as their beloved, the cowherd women with his arms round their neck extolled him in song and played (danced) with him.

16. The Gopa women with the beauty of their face enhanced by lotuses adorning their ears, cheeks beautified with their curly locks of hair, and drops of perspiration, with wreaths of flowers dropping from their (braids of) hair, danced with the glorious Lord accompanied with the musical instruments in the form of jingling bangles and anklets, at the ring of the *rāsa* dance where humming blackbees acted as songsters.

17*. Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of goddess Lakṣmī, sported with the beauties of Vraja by embracing them, pressing their palms, winsome oglings with free amorous gestures and hearty (loud)

* VJ. God is absolutely independent and above all prescriptions and prohibitions and can violate all canons of conduct !

laughter, even as a child would play with its own reflection (in the mirror).

18. Their senses were so overwhelmed with ecstatic joy at the contact with that Divine Personality that the women of Vraja whose wreaths and ornaments were loosened and falling, were too much beside themselves (with joy) to re-adjust their dishevelled locks of hair, their garments and brassiers, Oh Prominent Kuru!

19. While witnessing Kṛṣṇa's love sports, the celestial damsels were smitten with love and fainted. And even the Moon-god along with his retinue (of stars or *nakṣatras*) was too much amazed (to proceed with his movements and halted).

20. Though a reveller in his own Supreme bliss, the Lord assumed as many forms as there were Gopīs and delightfully disported[1] with each of them.

21. The merciful Lord wiped out affectionately, the sweat off their faces with his most blissful comforting hand as they were fatigued with overdancing with him, Oh dear king.

22. Adoring the Supreme Lord with the splendour of their cheeks enhanced by the brilliant gold ear-rings and curly locks of hair and with glances accompanied with nectar-like smiles, the Gopīs who (despite their fatigue in the *rāsa* dance) became enraptured by the touch of his finger-nails, burst out in singing his hallowing deeds.[2]

23. Like unto a king-elephant breaking down the dams and entering water in the company of she-elephants, the exhausted[3] Lord Kṛṣṇa who had transgressed the restraints (laid down by the Vedas and public decorum) became desirous of getting over the fatigue, and in the company of the Gopīs, entered the waters of the Yamunā (where he was) closely

1. VJ. reads 'rarāma'. The *Parasmaipada* form indicates the aloofness of the Lord in that *rāsa*

rarāmeti Vyatyayena para-dārābhimarśaṇena doṣo nāsti iti vakṣyamāṇam artham ihaiva sūcayati

2. These songs suggested the conclusion of the *rāsa* (Ve.)

3. SG. imagines that this adj. is used to indicate that the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's countenance was enhanced by droplets of swea appearing on it through fatigue.

followed by black-bees (humming melodiously) like the chiefs of celestial songsters, the Gandharvas, (as they were) allured by his garland (of *Kunda* flowers) squeezed by contact with the persons of the Gopīs (while embracing etc.) and was coloured with saffron applied by them to their breasts.

24. Oh dear Parīkṣit ! The Lord, who ever revels in his own blissful state, sported here like a king-elephant as he was profusely sprinkled over with water on all sides by the youthful damsels who were casting amorous glances at him, and were heartily laughing, while he was being praised by gods who were showering on him flowers from their aerial cars.

25. Like unto a young elephant exuding temporal fluid sauntering in the company of female elephants, the Lord, surrounded by a swarm of black-bees and a bevy of young ladies, roved in a grove on the bank of the Yamunā, where blew on all sides a gentle breeze bearing the fragrance of acquatic flowers as well as of the flowers on lands.

26. In this way, the Lord of accomplished desires to whom the bevy of young damsels were deeply attached and devoted, enjoyed all those nights (without losing a single minute without enjoyment—the night[1] illuminated by the rays of the moon and which formed the basis for all charming poetical works specially appropriate for autumnal season—but he controlled all his energy within himself (such was his control over Eros.)

King Parikṣit said :

27. The Almighty Lord of the Universe along with his aṁśa-part (Balarāma) incarnated here to establish Dharma (righteous way of life) and the suppression of the vile way of life.

28. He is the Promulgator of the moral order. He is the ideal model of ethical standard and the Protector thereof. How did he act in direct contravention of it, in seducing sensually the wives of others ?

1. The plural number indicates that throughout His *Kiśora* period (from 11 to 15 years of age), Kṛṣṇa enjoyed the *rāsa*-dance every night-SG. This is a better interpretation than imagining that Kṛṣṇa extended that particular night for many days while Gopīs felt it to be a single night.

29. Oh holy sage of sacred vows ! Be pleased to resolve our doubt as to with what intention the Lord of Yadus who is said to have accomplished all his desires, perpetrated such censurable deed.

Śrī Śuka explained :

30. Transgression of the canons of righteousness and over-adventurism are found to have been committed by mighty rulers. But that does not amount to a blemish for a noble heroic soul, as in the case of omnivorous fire (which does not get polluted by consuming impure things).

31. An incapable weakling (dependent on his body) should never commit this (transgression) even mentally. A person imitating him foolishly meets destruction like a person other than Rudra (but imitating Rudra) does by swallowing the (*Halāhala*) poison churned out of the sea.

32. The words of the possessors of divine wisdom and might are always correct and authoritative, but not necessarily, so their acts (which may be emulated on certain occasions only). Hence an intelligent person should practice such course (of conduct) which is consistent with their own precepts.[1]

33. Such authoritative persons who are devoid of ego (*ahaṁkāra*) have no selfish ends to serve by virtuous behaviour or have no stakes to lose by acting to the contrary.

34. Need it be told that the Lord, the controller of all beings like the sub-human creation (birds, beasts etc.), human beings and celestials who, being fit to be governed by him (and are subject to his control), is not concerned with piety or impiety of the acts (the moral code of conduct of ordinary beings is not applicable to the Almighty).

35. The sages who are completely satisfied (and have become desireless) by serving the pollen-like dust of his

1. VR. : Therefore, an intelligent person should follow those acts of God which are consistent with His precepts. *OR* A prudent man should not emulate the acts of God which are against His precepts.

VJ. : An intelligent person should not practice what is said or regarded as contrary to Vedic injuctions.

lotus-feet and who have absolutely freed themselves by shaking off all the bondage of *karmas* by virtue of their Yogic Powers, behave according to their free will and are not bound (by their acts). How could there be any bondage to the glorious Lord who has assumed a personality at his own free will ?

36. He who dwells not only in these Gopīs but also in their husbands—nay in all embodied beings (as their Inner Controller), and who presides over all these, has as a sport, assumed the form of Kṛṣṇa in this world.

37. It is for showering Grace on all creatures that the Lord has put on a human form and participated in those sportful activities (like the *rāsa krīḍā*). By listening to these, a person may become attached to him exclusively (as a devotee).

38. The male inhabitants of Vraja were so much spell-bound by the deluding potency of the Lord that they always considered their wives ever present by their sides and they never felt any jealousy against Kṛṣṇa.

39. At the approach of the *Brāhma muhūrta* (i. e. dawn) the Gopīs, the beloveds of the glorious Lord, returned reluctantly to their homes with the permission[1] of the Lord.

40. He who reverentially listens to and rehearses the account of the amorous sport of Viṣṇu (i. e. his incarnation Kṛṣṇa) with the damsels of Vraja, conceives intense devotion to the Almightly Lord, attains spiritual wisdom and self-control, and soon overcomes the maladies of the heart (like lust and other passions).

1. SG.—*anu-moditāḥ*—who were all the while—(every minute of that night)—filled with joy by Kṛṣṇa (hence their reluctance to return).

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Sudarśana emancipated and slaying of Śaṅkhacūḍa

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On one occasion, the cowherds had their curiosity aroused in participating in a pilgrimage to god (Śiva) and they set out in carts drawn by bullocks to a place known as Ambikāvana (the grove of goddess Pārvatī).

2. Having performed ablutions in the river Sarasvatī, they devoutly worshipped the god Śiva as well as the goddess Pārvatī with various articles of worship.

3. Most reverentially, they donated cows, gold, garments, honey, sweet-meats to Brāhmaṇas as gifts, praying "May god Śiva be propitious unto us."

4. The highly fortunate Nanda, Sunandaka and others observed a vow of subsisting on the waters of the river (the whole day) and passed that night on the bank of the Sarasvatī.

5. A certain big boa-constricter of that forest, being pinched with extreme hunger, came there by chance and began to swallow up Nanda who was asleep.

6. While being swallowed by the serpent, Nanda screamed out "Oh Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, this big serpent is devouring me, Oh child! please save me who have approached you for rescue."

7. Hearing his shriek, cowherds suddenly awoke. Beholding Nanda swallowed by the serpent, they got bewildered and struck the serpent with fire-brands.

8. Though it was scorched by burning fuel, the serpent did not let go Nanda. At that time Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Sātvatas, approached the reptile and touched it with his foot.

9. With all his sins absolved by the touch of the glorious Lord of Lakṣmī, he cast off his serpentine body and assumed a form that was worshipped by Vidyādharas.

10. The Lord (of senses), Kṛṣṇa, asked the man with resplendent personality decorated with a wreath of gold, as he reverentially bowed down to him.

11. "Who are you of miraculous form resplendent with supreme splendour ? How is it that you lost your self-control and were forced into this disgustful form of life ?"

The serpent (now a Vidyādhara) answered :

12. "I am a certain (famous) Vidyādhara known as Sudarśana. Endowed with divine splendour and excellent beauty, I ranged in my aerial car in all directions.

13. Puffed with pride of my beautiful form, I jeered at the ugly forms of the sages Aṅgiras. For my sin of deriding them, I was brought down to this species by them.

14. I now find that this curse was pronounced upon me to show me grace, by those merciful sages, inasmuch as I am absolved of all sins by being touched with foot by the preceptor of the world.

15. Oh destroyer of sins ! I am relieved of the curse by the touch of Your foot. You are the dispeller of the fears of beings who resort to you through fear of *saṁsāra.* Kindly give me permission to take leave of You.

16. Oh great *yogin* ! Oh supreme Person ! I approach you most humbly, Oh Protector of the righteous people ! Oh resplendent God ! Oh Supreme Ruler of the rulers of worlds ! Be pleased to grant me permission (to return to my region). Oh Acyuta ! Instantaneously at your very sight, I am released from the curse of the Brāhmaṇa.

17. A person who utters your name at once purifies all the listeners (of the Name) as well as himself. What more need be said that a person who is touched by your foot gets absolved of all his sins instantaneously."

18. Taking leave of Kṛṣṇa (the descendant of Daśārha) with these words, circumabulating him and playing obeisance to him, Sudarśana went to heaven and Nanda was thus rescued from that precarious situation.

19. Having seen the special personal glory of Kṛṣṇa, the inhabitants of Vraja with astonished minds, completed their religious observance of Śivarātri. They returned to Vraja reverentially discussing his glorious exploits.

20. On another occasion, Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) and Balarāma of wonderful prowess, sauntered in the forest at night in the company of damsels of Vraja.

21. Being melodiously extolled by damsels, who were deeply attached to them, with their persons well adorned and

beautifully painted with sandal-paste and pigments, they wore beautiful wreaths and were dressed in fine garments.

22. They hailed the advent of the night, as the moon and the stars were rising and appeared in view and as a gentle breeze was blowing over the bed of lilies to which were attracted swarms of bees intoxicated with the fragrance of jasmine flowers.

23. Going simultaneously through the whole scale of musical notes with modulations of their voices, both of them presented vocal music which was auspicious and delightful to the mind and ears of all beings in the world.

24. Hearing that ravishing music, the cowherd women fell in a trance and were not aware of their garments slipping away from their persons, loosening of their braids and dropping of wreaths from them, Oh Protector of the people !

25. While they both were thus sporting as they pleased and singing at will like intoxicated persons, a servant of Kubera known as Śaṅkha-cūḍa approached them.

26. Before their very eyes (and in defiance of them), he dauntlessly drove the screaming young women who were under their protection, towards the north, Oh king !

27. Beholding their women crying out (for their succour), "Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Oh Balarāma" like cows when seized by a robber, the two brothers rushed in pursuit.

28. Shouting out the promise of protection, "Don't be afraid" the two brothers armed themselves with a Śāla tree and rushing hastily, they overtook the wretch of a *Guhyaka* (Yakṣa)

29. Terrified to see them both close on his heels like the time-spirit and god of death *incarnate*, the foolish fellow let the women go and took to his heels with the intention of saving his own life.

30. In order to deprive the Yakṣa of the jewel on his head, Kṛṣṇa pursued him wherever he ran, while Balarāma stayed on protecting the women.

31. Within a short distance, the Lord confronted him and with a blow of his fist sundered off his head along with the jewel.

32. Killing Śaṅkhacūḍa in this way and taking from him the brilliant gem, Kṛṣṇa gave it, out of affection, to his elder brother, before the very eyes of the damsels.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Gopīs' Song (in pairs of verses)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When Kṛṣṇa departed to the forest (to tend the cattle), Gopīs whose hearts followed him, spent their days in great misery, loudly singing of his sportful pastimes.

The Gopīs said:

2-3. Oh Gopīs when Mukunda with his left cheek inclined to the joint of his left arm and with dancing eyebrows, applies the flute to his lower lip and begins to play on it with his tender fingers placed on its holes, the Sidddha damsels passing through their aerial cars along with their husbands, feel disconcerted with amazement at the melodious music, and feeling bashful to find that their hearts have been hit by the shafts of love, become infatuated and are not aware of the loosening of their garments.

4-5. Oh delicate ladies ! How wonderful is the phenomenon ! Listen. When this child of Nanda, with his smiles beaming like a wreath of sparkling pearls[1] and with the lightening-like (fickle yet lustrous) goddess of wealth (Lakṣmī) permanently abiding on his chest (as *Śrī-Vatsa*, plays melodiously) on his flute to bring solace and delight to the afflicted people, bulls in Vraja, deer and kine in their herds, from far afar, have their hearts captivated with the enchanting music of the flute and stand (listening to the music) with their

1. OR (1) smiles reflecting from the garland of pearls on His chest as His countenance is inclined towards it. (2) Whose laugh shines like a wreath of pearls on His chest (3) The lustre of which was spotlessly white like the laugh of pearls (*hārāṇāṁ hāsa iva viśadā sphūrtir yasya*)—ŚR.
VJ. reads.—*hāra-bhāsaḥ*—Looks brilliant with the pearl-garland.

ears erect and (holding unswallowed) half-chewed morsels of grass between their teeth (and look) as if they are asleep or drawn in picture.

6-7. (The melodious music of Kṛṣṇa's flute hypnotises even the non-sentient creation.)

When Lord Kṛṣṇa dresses himself like a wrestler with a tuft of peacock-feathers and tender leaves and anointed with mineral paints, and sometimes accompanied by Balarāma and cowherds calls the cows (through the melodious notes of his flute), (even the non-sentient) rivers stop flowing as if they are strongly longing to receive the dust of his louts-feet borne by the breeze. But they possess poor merits like us, inasmuch as, they (instead of getting the much-yarned-for dust) keep waving their arms in the form of waves and have the flow of water stopped (as we have our eyes bedimmed with tears).

8-9. When Kṛṣṇa,[1] who like the Ancient-most Person Nārāyaṇa, possesses unfading eternal splendour[2], (and whose heroic exploits were celebrated by his followers, (the cowherds[3]), ranges[4] in the forest, calls the cows which are grazing on the slopes of the mount Govardhana by uttering their names (musically) through his flute, the creepers and trees in the forest[5] as if mainfest the All-pervading Lord Viṣṇu abiding in them, by exhibiting their floral richness and wealth of fruit, laden wherewith the boughs of the trees are bowing down low and with their bodies thrilled with intense love spray forth a shower of honey.

1. This describes the effect of Kṛṣṇa's flute on the immovable or stationary creation like trees—ŚR., VR.

VJ. : Just as the most Ancient *puruṣa* Nārāyaṇa who lies on the cosmic waters, is being praised by sages like Sanaka with the Vedic *mantras* which are profusely evolved out of the mouth of Vāyu etc.

2. Or : the ever-lasting abode of Lakṣmī, the goddess of affluence, splendour and beauty.

3. Or : Gods and sages (in the case of viṣṇu)

4. VJ : The adj. *vanacara* includes all the incarnations including the Fish.

5. VJ. : applies this to the sages and *Yogis* in the forest who perform austere penance in the forest; who realizing Lord Viṣṇu within their hearts, bow to Him with their hands and are imbued with eternal bliss.

10-11.* Lo ! Look here when Kṛṣṇa with a charming *Tilaka* (a sacred mark on his forehead) heartily appreciates the enchanting high pitched humming-song of the swarms of black-bees intoxicated with the honey in the Tulasī flowers woven in his *Vanamālā* and emitting ethereal fragrance, and applies the flute to his lips (to breathe a song in response to their music), the cranes, swans and other acquatic birds living in the lake, with their hearts enticed away by the captivating music, approach Lord Hari and with their eyes closed and minds under perfect control, meditate on him (lit. sit close to him) in perfect silence.

12-13. When accompanied by Balarāma and beautifully decorated with floral ear-rings[1], Kṛṣṇa stands on the summits of mountains and that Lord of eternal Bliss fills the whole Universe by the fascinating music of his flute, Oh beautiful ladies of Vraja, even the cloud, being afraid in mind of showing disrespect to the great Lord, rumbles softly keeping time with the tune of his flute, spreads himself over him as an umbrella and covers the friend (of theuniverse) with a flower-like spray (or the invisible gods spray him with flowers).

14-15. (To Yaśodā who has joined these Gopis :)

Oh chaste lady ! Your son is expert in the various games and sports played by cowherds. But when he applies his flute to his Bimba-fruit-like red lips and plays out varied original tunes in the art of flute-playing, the chiefs of gods of whom Indra, god Śiva and god Brahmā are prominent, listen to the delineation of the music in different pitch again and again.[2] Although these gods were experts in music, they failed to grasp the heart (the underlying principles or the nature of the fine points) of the music and stood confused.

16-17. When Kṛṣṇa of the noble gait of the king-elephants moves on playing on his flute, and soothing the pains caused to the earth at Vraja due to the *hoofs* of the cattle, by means of his feet similar to lotus-petals and beautified with the marks of a flag, a vajra (thunder-bolt), a lotus and a goad, we, with the stormy passion of love enkinded in

* This describes the effect of the music of Hari's flute on birds.

1. or with pearl necklaces.

2. or inclining their neck and mind to the direction whence the musical notes were coming—VR.

us by his sportful oglings, are reduced to the (stationary) state of trees and out of infatuation are not aware of the loosening of the braids of hair and the garment.

18-19. Sometimes, when wearing a wreath of beads[1] and counting the cows (in his charge thereby (with the beads), Kṛṣṇa, wearing a garland of Tulasī the fragrance of which is specially liked by him, sings playing on his flute, resting his hand on the shoulder of his affectionate friend, the she-deer, the mates of black-antelopes, with their hearts enticed away by the music of the flute, follow Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of excellences, and renouncing all desires to return home, stay by his side like the cowherd-damsels.

20-21. Oh sinless Yaśodā ! When your child, Nanda's son, picturesquely dressed with the wreaths of *Kunda* (jasmine) flowers and surrounded by the cowherds and the wealth of the cattle, plays on the bank of the Yamunā, joking with his intimate friends, a gentle breeze (from the south) blows agreeably and pleasantly and offers him respect with its cool touch charged with the fragrance of sandal. And bands of demigods (like Gandharvas) performing the function of bards and minstrels, wait around him worshipping him with instrumental and vocal music and articles of worship.

22-23. Being compassionate to the people of Vraja and the cows, he held up the mount Govardhana. When after collecting his entire wealth of cattle, he returns home playing on his flute, his panygeric is being sung by his friends and his feet being worshipped by the old (gods like Brahmā and others) on the way, with his garlands covered over with the dust raised by the hoofs of the cows, here comes the Moon (the Lord of stars) born of Devakī's womb—a veritable feast to the eyes of Gopīs by his splendour, even in a fatigued condition,—he does so solely with the desire of fulfilling the wishes of his friends.

24-25. With his eyes slightly rolling with ecstatic joy, showing great regard to his friends and well-wishers, adorned

1. Adorned with jewel *Kaustubha—VJ.*

with a wreath of sylvain flowers, with his face pale like a slightly ripening *badara* fruit, and his tender cheeks beautified with the splendour of his gold ear-rings, here comes in the evening, like the Moon (the Lord of the night). The Lord of Yadus (Kṛṣṇa) with the sportive gait of an elephant-king, with a cheerful face relieving the day-long endless agony (of separation) of the cow-like Gopīs of Vraja (to relieve the cows of the daylong—as if interminable—heat of the sun).

Śrī Śuka said :

26. In this way, the highly fortunate damsels of Vraja with their minds and hearts absorbed in him, used to spend their days in delight singing the sportful activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Oh King Parīkṣit.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Akrūra deputed to bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā

Śrī Śuka narrated :

1. Some time after this (festive occasion described in the last chapter), there arrived at Vraja, Ariṣṭa, a demon having the form of a bull, with a huge body and a big hump, tearing up and shaking the earth with his hoofs.

2. Bellowing with terrific harshness and breaking the earth with his hoofs, he rushed with his tail upraised, turning up mounds of earth with the ends of his horns.

3-4. Discharging dung and urine in small quantities at intervals, he came with his eyes fixed and staring. Oh dear Parīkṣit ! At his violent and terrific roar, cows and women were so shaken with fear that they prematurely delivered their off-spring in miscarriage.

5. Noticing that demonic beast with sharp horns, cowherd men and women got terrified. And the cattle ran away in fear, deserting Gokula, Oh king.

6-7. Calling upon Kṛṣṇa, "Oh Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa", all of them sought the shelter of Govinda for their protection. Noticing the Gokula overwhelmed with fear and fleeing, Kṛṣṇa reassured them with the words, "Don't be afraid", and challenged that demon in the form of a bull, "You stupid wretched-most fellow ! What do you gain by terrifying the poor cowherds and cattle ?

8. When I am here to crush down the pride of strength of the wicked and evil-minded brutes like you." Challenging him thus, Kṛṣṇa stroked his arms and provoked the wrath of Ariṣṭa, by clapping his hands.

9. Kṛṣṇa waited spreading out his serpent-like mighty arm on the shoulder of a friend. The demon Ariṣṭa who was thus enraged, dashed at Kṛṣṇa in fury, furrowing the earth below with his hoofs and dispersing the clouds with his tail upraised.

10. Thrusting forward the ends of his horns and staring fixed with blood-shot eyes, the demon, trying to cow down Kṛṣṇa with his side-glances, darted at him even as the thunderbolt discharged by Indra.

11. Catching hold of the Asura by his horns, the glorious Lord pushed him back to a distance of eighteen paces as an elephant would do to drive back its rival.

12. Although pushed backward by the Lord, Ariṣṭa who was perspiring all over, and heaving sighs, sprang to his feet and in a wrathful frenzy, speedily dashed at Kṛṣṇa again.

13. As he rushed towards Kṛṣṇa, the Lord seized the demon by the horns and hurled him on the ground. Pressing him down with one foot, he wrung his body as one would wring and twist a drenched cloth. Pulling out one of his horns, he struck him and the demon dropped down on the earth.

14. Vomiting blood, discharging urine and dung, kicking up his legs and with eyes rolling under excruciating pains, he went to the abode of death. Thereupon, the celestials, showering flowers on him, sang hymns in praise of Hari.

15. Having slain the demonic bull and glorified by his

people (Gopas and gods), He, along with Balarāma, entered Gokula giving delight to the eyes of Gopīs.

16. When the Asura (demon) Ariṣṭa was killed by Kṛṣṇa of miraculous feats, the worshipful divine sage Nārada who was endowed with divine vision, intimated to Kaṁsa as follows :

17. "By Vasudeva who was apprehensive (about the safety of his children) were given in charge of his friend Nanda, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī and Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, while the daughter (you tried to kill) was born of Yaśodā. It is by them both that your men (deputed to kill Kṛṣṇa) were slain."

18. Hearing that (revelation) Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas whose mind was agitated with wrath caught hold of a sharp, sword, with a view to kill Vasudeva.

19. He was prevented from taking that action (lest knowing of their father's death Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma should abscond). But realizing that his (Vasudeva's) sons are (ordained by Providence as) the cause of his death, Kaṁsa got Vasudeva and his consort fettered with iron chains.

20. When the divine sage (Nārada) departed, Kaṁsa sent for Keśin and commissioned him with the order, "Let Balarāma and Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) be killed by you."

21. Then Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas, summoned his ministers like Muṣṭika, Cāṇūra, Śala, Tośala and others, conductors of elephants and spoke to them :

22-23. Listen to this, Oh warriors, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika. In the Vraja of Nanda dwell Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the two sons of Vasudeva. It is ordained that I should meet death at their hands. When both of them are brought here, they are to be done to death by you in the game of wrestling.

24. Let galleries of various designs, suitable to the arenas of wrestlers, be constructed. Let all people in the city (of Mathurā) and the villages, witness this freestyle wrestling.

Additional verses in the Text of VR and VJ.

24.1. Oh highly intelligent superintendent (or keeper) of my elephants ! Listen to this command of mine. Our Elephant, Kuvalayāpīḍa has the rut flowing from its temples.

24.2. It should be placed at the entrance of the arena with a heavy iron bar in its trunk. The two sons of Vasudeva (Ānaka-dundubhi) are to be killed.

24.3. But even the conductor of the elephant got agitated in mind and submitted, "How can I kill the two sons of the sister of His Majesty, the Lord of the earth ?"

24.4. When addressed thus by the elephant-driver, the wicked-minded Kaṁsa ordered him again, making all the assembled persons hear it for compliance.

Kaṁsa said :

24.5. Carefully listen to this command personally given by me. You should all hear it and bear it in mind. Listen to the reason why from the start, I have been a sworn enemy of these, even though they are my relatives.

24.6. On one occasion, my highly fortunate lotus-eyed mother who was in her youth, was wandering about in the garden of the palace, when a gentle cool breeze was blowing.

24.7-8. It was the spring time when the garden was beautified with full-blown Aśoka, Bakul, areca nuts and Punnāga trees, with humming and hovering swarms of black bees, resounded with the sweet cooings of cuckoos. It was attractive with the group of dancing peacocks and the herds of playful monkeys; it was lined with rows of Sāla trees.

24.9. While my mother of auspicious vows was sauntering there, she, who was well adorned and had taken her bath after menstruation, and was agitated with the passion of love, contemplated of her husband.

24.10-11. At that time a certain Gandharva, Drumila by name, was going through the garden, unseen by others. He noticed that she was alone and ready for the occasion. He being able to read the thoughts and intentions in the minds of all, understood what she was thinking about. He assumed the form of Ugrasena and resembled him in speech and smiles.

24.12. The Gandharva who entertained a lustful passion about that chaste lady and was love-striken, got her consent. Being perfectly ignorant about the reality, she accompanied and had a pleasant time with him in that forest grove.

24.13. That chaste lady somehow came to discover him to be somebody else during the act of intercourse. She was extremely distressed at heart and with her mind and eyes agitated demanded, "Who are you, Oh wretched cheat ? That a wicked person like you has perpetrated this deed condemned by the noble ?"

24.14. The long-armed Drumila tried to console her who demanded this of him. He gently explained, "Oh good lady ! We belong to a family of Gandharvas. We are equal to the celestials and are there beloved attendants.

24.15. Oh auspicious lady ! Please note that we (Gandharvas) are not easily accessible to females of the human species like you who are fit to be enjoyed by human beings only. And there is a lot of difference between men who are subject to birth, death and such other physical and mental ailments and the celestials (who are unaffected by them), Oh pretty woman !"

24.16. While he was talking thus, the lady with her mind overwhelmed with rage, interrupted, "Do you want to appease me now after perpetrating that nefarious act ?

24.17. In defiance of the deities presiding over water, fire, earth, air, the ether, the moon, the sun, and disregarding the presiding divinities of the cardinal points, Time-Spirit, the two twilights (the dawn and the dusk) and the Dharma itself, you have adulterated with me.

24.18. Like unto a restraint-less elephant emitting ichor and blind with passion, you, wretched fellow, have made me, who was like a pure, translucent lotus-pond in a forest, turbid and impure. You wrethed-most vile immortal ! Do you again dare to try to conciliate me ?"

24.19-20. While she was censuring him thus, he, being afraid of being imprecated, urged through fear, "Oh Lotus-eyed lady ! Sexual relation between immortals and women is of the regular order while that between men and celestial women is of the irregular order and is unnatural.

24.21. Hence, Oh lady with lotus fragrance, please note that I have not committed an offence. My semen shall not go waste. A son will be born to you.

24. 22-23-24. He will be affluent, intelligent, highly energetic and daring. My words shall not prove vain and untrue." While he was speaking thus, my enraged mother who was deeply distressed at the loss of her irrecoverable chastity, exploded in wrath : "You have transgressed the bounds of *dharma* and have taken to different (sinful) course of conduct, and are a wicked sinner, a follower of the wrong (immoral) path, your son shall be cruel, characterised by criminality and void of good qualities. He will never receive the blessings of gods, Brāhmaṇas and sages".

24.25. While the lady was giving vent to her wrathful expression, the Gandharva became afraid that she would curse him and uttering the words. "He will be an enemy of your relatives", he disappeared.

24.26. After his departure, my blessed mother came back to her palace from the garden. And nobody else knew the incident.

24.27. In due course she became pregnant and delivered me at the proper time. On one occasion, the worshipful sage Nārada told me all this.

24.28. Since that time I hate these relatives who are wicked. You yourself are a witness here how they are always inimical to me.

24.29-30. As I am born of a Gandharva, it will not be sinful to kill the wickedly disposed Ugrasena, the evilminded Devaka, the crafty Vasudeva and their partisans and dependants. I, therefore, issue a command to you that they both (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) should be ruthlessly killed.

24.31. By performing the worship of god Yama, the deity of the other world with the offerings of the two boys (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) crushed to death by the mighty elephant, let them (Vasudeva, Ugrasena and others) follow their path (to the abode of death).

24.32-33.* Let Vasudeva, Ugrasena, that Nanda and Devaka, the cowherds and Yādavas and all of their followers and partisans witness with tearful eyes the killing of their own

* Vṛndāvana edition gives these 33 additional verses.

sons. Let all the people in the country be invited and let them witness the free style wrestling[1] (*svaira-saṁ-yugam.*

25. Oh conductor of my elephant! You are a good man: The elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa is to be posted by you at the entrance of the arena. See to it that my two enemies (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) are killed by it.

26. Let the sacrifice connected with the bow (*dhanur-yāga*)[2] be commenced with due formality on the fourteenth day (of the dark half[3]). Let the priests offer sacrificial animals as victims to the king of *bhūtas* (goblins) i.e. god Śiva who is the *bestower* of all boons (to god Śiva the bestower of boons and the ruler over all beings).

27. Having thus passed the orders, Kaṁsa who was adept in the technique of achieving his purpose sent for Akrūra, the prominent member of the Yadu clan. Taking his palm in his hand, he spoke to Akrūra.

28. "Oh leader of charitable persons![4] Devoted as you are to me, please do a friendly turn to me; for there is nobody else either in my clan of Bhojas or those of Yadus who will guard my interest.

29. Hence, Oh gentle friend, I depend on you as a means of accomplishing an important mission even as the mighty Indra does, depending on god Viṣṇu, achieve his object.

30. Go to the Vraja of Nanda. There dwell two sons of Vasudeva. Please fetch them both here in this chariot. Let there be no delay.

31. It is reported that gods who are dependents of Viṣṇu have ordained my death (at the hands of one of them). Bring both of them along with cowherds headed by Nanda (lest the boys should refuse to come). Instruct Nanda and others to bring

1. but *pauruṣam*— 'my prowess' interprets VR.

2. VB. explains : As against the Viṣṇu-power of Kṛṣṇa, Kaṁsa wanted to counter-balance it by propitiating god Śiva. The worship of god Śiva as presiding over the bow (which would thereby be victorious in fighting) is called *dhanuryāga* in *Śiva-tantra.*

3. VB states it to be the *Śivarātri* day.

4. VB. : Akrūra used to give cows as gifts to Brāhmaṇas every day for a period of twelve years and his mother gave food in charity. Hence he is designated as *dānapati* (the leader of donors).

the tribute (curds, ghee etc.) so that they would be convinced that the *dhanur-makha* (sacrifice to Bow) is real and not a ruse to bring them.

32. When they are brought here, I shall get them killed by an elephant which is like the god of death. If they happen to escape (death from the elephant), I shall get them despatched by two wrestlers who are like thunderbolts.

33-34. When both of them are finished, I shall put to death Vasudeva and his brothers who will be grieving (the death of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) and massacre the clans of Vṛṣṇis Bhojas, Dāśārhas, and also my aged father Ugrasena who still dotes for sovereignty and his brother Devaka as well as all other enemies of mine.

35. It is after that that this earth will be rid of all thorns (free from enemies). My father-in-law Jarā-sandha will be like a father unto me and Dvivida (the monkey chief), a dear friend.

36. Śambara, Naraka and Bāṇa have entered into friendly alliance with me. Having killed all the kings siding with gods, I shall enjoy the earth.

37. In view of (the knowledge of) these facts, quickly bring the youngsters Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa inducing them to witness the bow-sacrifice as well as the beauty of Mathurā, the capital of Yadus.

Akrūra replied :

38. Oh king ! What you intend to do is all for the good inasmuch as you try to avert the evil (viz. death). But one should maintain equanimity and try one's level best whether it results in success or failure. For it is the Providence which is the real cause (instrument) of success.

39. A man builds castles in the air (lit. one entertains very big plans) even though they are thwarted by the Destiny and thus experiences joy and sorrow. I shall, however, carry out your order.

Śrī Śuka said :

40. Having directed Akrūra (to go to Vraja) and sent away his counsellors, Kaṁsa entered his palace and Akrūra his home.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Slaying of Asuras Keśin and Vyoma

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Demon Keśin who was deputed by Kaṁsa, assumed the form of a gigantic horse with the speed of the mind. Furrowing the earth with his hoofs, overcrowding the sky with clouds and heavenly cars dispersed by the waving of his mane and terrifying all creatures by his neighing he came to Nanda's Vraja.

1-A*. With big eyes, a terribly vast cavern-like mouth, an enormous neck resembling a large dark-blue cloud, the wicked-hearted Keśin, desirous of achieving the desired object of Kaṁsa, rushed to the Vraja of Nanda, making it tremble with fear.

2. Occupying a forward position, the glorious Lord challenged Keśin who was creating a panic among the inhabitants of his Gokula by his neighing and was disturbing the formation of clouds in the sky by his tail and was seeking a fight with him—at which Keśin roared like a lion.

3. Beholding Kṛṣṇa confronting him, that unapproachable formidable beast of terrific speed rushed at him with extreme rage, drinking up the heavens, as it were, with his wide open mouth (and turning round) kicked hard with his hind legs the Lord with lotus-eyes.

4. Dodging the Kick, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord (who is supra-sense perception) angrily caught hold of his two hind legs with his hands and whirling him round threw him contemptuously to a distance of hundred bows (cubits), even as Garuḍa would fling (an ordinary) serpent, and stood as before.

5. Regaining his consciousness, Keśin sprang to his feet. Opening his mouth wide in violent wrath, he fiercely attacked Hari. Smiling fearlessly, Hari thrust his left arm into Keśin's mouth as a serpent enters a hole.

* Not found in the text of ŚR but recorded in the texts of VR., VJ., VB. and SD. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava annotators follow ŚR and do not comment on it.

6. When Keśin tried to bite Kṛṣṇa's arms his teeth dropped down at the touch of the Lord's arm as if at the touch of red-hot iron. And the Lord's arm thrust in the interior part of his body went on growing immensely like dropsy, when neglected.

7. With his breath (passage) choked by the (disproportionately) swelling arm of Kṛṣṇa, he kicked up his legs, perspired profusely all over the body, and with its eyes rolling, discharging excretion, he fell down dead on the ground.

8. Extricating his arm from out of the body of Keśī (which was burst open at various places) like a ripe cucumber, the mightly-armed Kṛṣṇa was not even slightly touched with pride, even though he effortlessly killed his enemies, but was glorified in songs and showered over with flowers by the wondering gods.

9. Oh king! Thereafter the divine sage Nārada, the foremost of devotees of the Lord, approached Kṛṣṇa of noble behaviour and conferred with him in privacy as follows:

10. "Oh Kṛṣṇa (the enchanter of the world)! Oh Kṛṣṇa of incomprehensible nature! Oh Lord of *yogī*! The absolute Ruler of the world! Oh Vāsudeva (the pervader of the universe) and the abode of all! Oh the most prominent among the Sātvatas (the Yādava clan)! Oh Almighty Lord![1]

11. Like unto fire lying dormant in fuel, you alone are the Inner Controller of all beings. Remaining unrevealed, you abide in the hearts of every being as a witness to everything. You are the Supreme Person, the Controller of the universe.

12. Depending entirely upon your own Self, You evolved *guṇas* through your *Māyā* potency. The Almighty Lord of unfailing will power as you are, you create, protect, and devour (destroy) this universe with those *guṇas*.

13. Such as you are, you have incarnated yourself on the earth for the annihilation of the *daityas* (demons), goblins

1. ŚR. : Nārada glosses over the disclosure about Kṛṣṇa to Kaṁsa by telling Him, "You are the Almighty Lord specially incarnated for relieving the earth of its burden of Daityas. Now You be active, finish with them and protect the Universe."

and *rākṣasas* that have been born as kings and for protecting those who abide by the canons of righteousness (or your votaries.)

14. Fortunately enough this demon Keśin who assumed the form of a horse and terrifically frightened at whose neighing, gods (the eye-lid-less beings) deserted the heaven, has been easily killed by you, as in a sport.

15. Oh Omnipresent Lord! Day after tomorrow, I shall witness Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika and other wrestlers, as also the elephant (Kuvalayāpīḍa) as well as Kaṁsa slain by you in broad day-light.

16. Thereafter I shall see the slaying of the demon Pañcajana (who was a conch-dweller) Kālayavana, Mura and Naraka as well as bringing down (from heaven the celestial tree) Pārijāta after defeating Indra.

17. After that I shall witness your marriages with the daughters of warriors (like Bhīṣmaka, Rukmiṇī's father) by offering your personal valour as the dowry (i.e. by defeating the opposition) as also the absolvement of Nṛga[1] from sin at Dvārakā.

18. Thereafter I would see the recovery of the jewel Syamantaka and a spouse (Jāmbavatī) along with it and the restoration of his son to a Brāhmaṇa from the abode of Death.

19. (I shall see later) the destruction of Pauṇḍraka.[2] and burning down the city of Kāśī, the death of Dantavaktra and slaying of Śiśupāla, the king of Cedi in the great sacrifice Rājasūya, performed by Yudhiṣṭhira).

20. It will be my privilege to see whatever other heroic deeds your Lordship would perform while dwelling in Dvārakā and they shall be eulogised in songs by poets on the earth.

1. Nṛga—A king of Ikṣvāku race, famous for his gifts of cows to Brāhmaṇas. One day, due to oversight and without being aware of it, he gifted a cow which was already given by him to another Brāhmaṇa. For this sin, he was born as a Chameleon but was absolved of all sins at the touch of Kṛṣṇa and went to heaven—vide *infra* 10.64.10.

2. *Pauṇḍraka* : King of ancient Kārūṣa. His name was Vāsudeva. On hearing of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, he sent him a message to surrender all his special royal emblem and worship him. Kṛṣṇa invaded Kārūṣa with a big army and killed Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva who used to wield artificial Sudarśana discus etc. like Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.—vide *infra* 10.66.7-21

21. After that I shall see you in the form of Death or time-spirit intent on destroying the whole universe and the annihilation of Akṣauhiṇīs (Divisions) of armies with you in the role of Arjuna's charioteer.

22. We approach, for protection, the glorious Lord who is entirely constituted of perfectly pure knowledge and has all his purposes accomplished as he is well-established in his own blissful nature; whose will is never futile; and due to whose spiritual refulgence the stream of *guṇas* originating from Māyā is ever warded off.

23. I lay prostrate before you, the leader of Yadus, Vṛṣṇis and Sātvatas—the leader (yourself) who are the supreme Ruler, and who have brought forth all this varied creation (the phenomenal world of differences) through his own Māyā and have assumed a human form for the sake of sporting.

Śrī Śuka said:

24. In this way, the sage Nārada, the foremost among the votaries who was delighted to see him, paid obeisance to Kṛṣṇa, the Chief Yadus and departed with his permission.

25. And Lord Kṛṣṇa also, having killed Keśin in a fight, tended the cows along with other cowherds who were highly pleased with him for his heroic act and enhanced the joy and happiness of the inhabitants of Vraja.

26. On one occasion, while they were grazing the cattle on the table-land high up on the mountain, the cowherd boys played the game of hide and seek in which some *gopas* became thieves (or cattle-lifters) and others guards (or policemen).

27. At that time, some played the part of thieves while others became guards, while some others played the role of sheep (to be lifted). In this way they indulged in the game fearlessly, Oh King!

28. Vyoma, the son of the Asura Maya who was a past-master in black magic, assumed the form of a cowherd and playing the role of a cattle-thief carried away a great many cowherd-boys who acted the part of goats.

29. The mighty Asura threw each cowherd-boy so carried in the cave of that mountain, and closed its entrance

with a rock. In this way four or five boys remained (outside the cave).

30. Noticing the vile act of that Asurā, Kṛṣṇa, the protector of the righteous, forcibly caught hold of him while kidnapping the cowherds, even as a lion would do to a wolf.

31. The mighty demon resumed his original form big like a mountain. Being suffocated with his grip, he wanted to extricate himself but could not do so.

32. Catching hold of him by both his hands, he dashed the Asura to the ground and killed him in the way of sacrificial beasts, while gods were witnessing it from heaven.

33. Having broken open the rock that blocked the entrance to the cave, he brought the cowherds out of that perilous situation. Glorified by gods and cowherds, he returned to his own Gokula.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Arrival of Akrūra to Gokula

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having stayed at Mathurā that night[1] the highly intelligent Akrūra mounted a chariot and proceeded to Nanda's Vraja.

2. On his way, the highly fortunate Akrūra who was filled with extreme devotion to the lotus-eyed Lord reflected to himself as follows :—

3. "What auspicious act has been done by me ! What austere penance I have performed ! Or what gift to a deserving person has been donated by me, by virtue of which I am going to see Lord Kṛṣṇa today.

4. Just as recitation and study of the Vedas is impossible to a person born in the Śūdra class, I consider that gaining even the sight of Kṛṣṇa of excellent renown is very

1. Vide Supra 10.36.40.

difficult for me, inasmuch as my mind is addicted to sensual pleasures.

5. Perhaps that may not happen that way. Even though I may be a vile person, I may be blessed with the sight of the Immortal Lord Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes a person carried along with the current of time, may get to the other shore of *saṁsāra.*

6. To-day all my evils (sins) are destroyed, and my birth has achieved its highest objective in that now I shall bow down to the glorious Lord's lotus-feet which are contemplated by *yogins.*

7. Verily Kaṁsa has shown a great favour to me as, being deputed by him, I shall see the lotus-feet of Lord Hari who has now incarnated in this world and by the lustre of whose circle of toe-nails, people in the former ages have got over the darkness of *Saṁsāra* which is so very difficult to cross.

8. The Lord's feet are worshipped by gods Brahmā, Śiva and others, by goddess Lakṣmī, by sages and by Sātvatas (Yādavas or his devotees)—feet which wandered in the forest along with his companions for grazing the cows and which are tinged with the saffron applied to the breasts of Gopīs.

9. Verily, as the deer go round by my right side (an auspicious omen), I believe I shall certainly behold today the face of Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) with its charming cheeks and shapely nose, its smiling glances and reddish lotus-eyes, covered over with curly locks of hair.

10. How strongly I do yearn that today I shall be blessed with the audience (vision) of god Viṣṇu, the abode of beauty and excellence, who by his own Divine will has incarnated as a human being for lightening the burden of the earth. In case it so happens, it will be undeniable that the very existence of my eyes has achieved its fulfilment.

11. Though he is merely the witness of the Cause and the effect, he is devoid of egoism. By virtue of his lustre (lustre-like Spiritual Knowledge), he has dispelled the darkness of ignorance or Nescience and the consequent notions of differentiation and misapprehensions resulting from it. By his will, he is, however, found to be sportively engaged in the

houses (of Gopīs, arbours of trees in the Vṛndāvana forest) in the company of Jīvas created in himself through his Māyā Potency which, under his supervision and control, invests them with the life-spirit, the senses and mind or intellect.

12. The words describing his excellent attributes, exploits and incarnations which are capable of destroying all the sins of the world and of conferring auspicious blessings, resuscitate, contribute to the beauty and secure sanctity to the world. But words which do not describe them (howsoever ornamental and elegant they be) are like decorations of a dead body.

13. The Almighty Lord who brings about the felicity and blessings to the great gods who abide by the injunctions laid down by him[1], has descended into the clan of the Sātvatas. It is reported that the Supreme Ruler now stays at Vraja spreading all around his glory, which, due to its being auspicious to all beings, is sung by gods.

14. Inasmuch as I have been witnessing auspicious omens from the dawn, I believe that to-day I shall certainly behold him—the one great goal of the noble souls, the Father (or the Preceptor) of the world, the most lovable and charming to the three worlds, a veritable grand feast to those who are blest with a sight—manifesting a form which is the coveted-most abode of the goddess Śrī.

15. And as soon as I see them, I shall immediately get down from the chariot and will certainly bow down directly to the feet of those two Almighty rulers of the Universe, the Prime Personalities—Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma whose feet have been merely intellectually grasped and meditated upon for Self-realization even by *yogīs* (but have never been able to visualize them actually). Along with them I shall pay respects to their cowherd-friends and to all the beings residing in the forest of Vṛndāvana.

16. (Now he covets the touch of the Lord's hand and hopes that the Lord would fulfill his longing.) Will not that Omnipresent Lord place his lotus-palm on the head of mine who have prostrated myself at the soles of his feet—his hands

1. ŚR specifies these as *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

which have afforded protection to all men who being terrified of the serpent in the form of Time (or Death) seek resort to them ? (I heartily yearn for this favour).

17. By offering worship to those very palms Kauśika (Indra who is reported to have worshipped it on an occasion) and the demon-king Bali (who offered water in token of the gift of three paces of land to the Dwarf-Viṣṇu) attained sovereignty over the three worlds and which, by their very (cool and) fragrant touch like the *Saugandhika* lotus (noted for its specially sweet smell) alleviated the fatigue of the damsels of Vraja during the *rāsa*-sport and thus refreshed them.

18. Though deputed by Kaṁsa, I am sure, he will entertain no hostile attitude to me as his enemy. For the Immortal[1] Lord is Omniscient and can see everything in the universe. Being the Supreme Soul (*Kṣetrajña*) he will see with his pure (unclouded and unprejudiced) vision what is desired inside and outside of the heart of everyone.

19. How strongly I yearn for it ! If he, with a merciful eye, looks smilingly at me who am prostrate at his feet, who with folded palms have concentrated on the soles of his feet, I shall instantaneously get thoroughly absolved of all sins, and with all my fears of *saṁsāra* dispelled, shall enjoy exquisite joy and Supreme bliss.

20. Would that when he would, with his mighty arms, embrace me, his best friend and well-wisher, his clansman who look upon him exclusively as my God, my soul (body) will be highly sanctified immediately and the fetters of *karman* lie shattered thenceforth.

21. When, after enjoying the privilege of being embraced by him (lit. having a personal contact with him), I shall stand bowing down to him with folded palms and he will address me, "Uncle Akrūra", I shall feel that our coming into life (birth) has achieved its purpose. Fie upon the life of that being who is not respected in such a way by the worshipful Lord.

22. No one is beloved of him or an intimate friend of him nor is any one disagreeable, hateful or worthy of indiffe-

1. Lord with unfailing knowledge—VT.

rent treatment to him[1]. He however, attends upon his devotees just as the celestial wish-yielding tree grants[2] the desire of a person when he is resorting to it.

23. And moreover, his elder brother Balarāma, the best in the Yadu-clan, will embrace me with a smile. When I shall be humbly bowing with folded palms, he would take me by my hands and usher me into his house. When I shall be received with due formalities by all his relatives, he will enquire of Kaṁsa's behaviour towards his relatives and clansmen.

Śrī Śuka said :

24. Oh King, while Akrūra, the son of Śvaphalka was contemplating about Lord Kṛṣṇa, he arrived by his chariot at Gokula, when the sun was reaching the setting mountain (the western horizon)

25. In Vraja, he noticed the foot-prints of the Lord, the sacred dust of whose feet is respectfully received with their crowns (i.e. heads) by all the protectors of the worlds—foot-prints which are distinguished with the marks of a lotus, a barly seed, a goad and such other characteristics and are auspiciously ornamental to the earth.

26. His impatience heightened to its climax through the ecstasy of delight at their sight, his body thrilled with the excitement of love with his hair standing on ends, with his eyes bedimmed with tears (lit. tear-drops), he jumped from the chariot and exclaiming, "How blessed and rare are these particles of the dust from Lord's feet", he prostrated himself and rolled over them.

27. This is the real ultimate purpose of life (*puruṣārtha*) of all beings invested with a body that they emulate the ecstatic mental state and behaviour of Akrūra since the moment he received Kaṁsa's order to bring Kṛṣṇa, without any hypocrisy, fear or worry at the sight of Hari's image, hearing his glory etc.

1. Cf. *samo'haṁ sarva-bhūtesu na me dveṣyosti na priyaḥ* etc. —BG. 9.29.
2. grants according to merits the deserving fruit—VJ. (*sva-sva-yogya-phaladānena*)

28. There, in the enclosure meant for milking cows, he saw Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wearing yellow and blue garments respectively and with eyes beautiful like lotuses in the autumn.

29. They were *Kiśora* (lads between eleven to fifteen years) in age, dark-blue and white in complexion (respectively), the abodes of beauty and affluence (also bearing *Śrī-vatsa* mark in the case of Kṛṣṇa), with mighty arms and charming countenance, prominent among the beautiful, possessing the might and prowess of young elephants.

30. The noble-souled pair of brothers ornamented the (ground in) Vraja with (the prints of) their feet marked with the (figures of) a banner, a Vajra, a goad and a lotus and their smiling eyes expressed compassion.

31. They had taken their bath and had their person besmeared with fragrant pigments (such as sandal-paste). They wore wreaths of flower and *Vana-mālās* and were immaculately attired. They expressed noble yet attractive playfulness.

32. They were the Foremost and the first ancient-most Persons, the cause of the world and the protectors thereof. They had descended on the world in their personal rays (*aṁśas*) as Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa for the good of the world.

33. By their personal splendour they dispelled the darkness of the directions (all over the world). They appeared respectively like a mountain of emerald and a mount of silver both chased in gold[1], Oh King!

34. So overwhelmed with devout affection was that Akrūra that he quickly jumped down from the chariot, and fell prostrate like a stick near the feet of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

35. With his eyes flooded with tears of joy at the sight of the glorious Lord and with hair standing all over his body, he was not able even to introduce himself to them as his throat was choked with love and emotion.

1. The problem is how could the dark-blue Kṛṣṇa dispel darkness. VJ. says Kṛṣṇa was like the sun and the 'dark-splendour' (*Kṛṣṇa-prabhā*) of the sun dispels darkness.

VR. differs : Kṛṣṇa was like a big emerald set in the middle of gold while Balarāma was like a diamond inlaid in a dark background.

36. Being affectionate to those who have completely surrendered themselves to him, the Lord who understood him (as to who he was and the purpose of his arrival etc.), drew Akrūra near him with his hands, characterised with the mark of discus, and embraced him as he was pleased with him.

37. The noble-minded Balarāma embraced Akrūra who was bowing low before him. Holding his clasped palms by his own, he led him to his house along with his younger brother Kṛṣṇa.

38. After enquiring about his journey (whether he faced any troubles etc.) and offering him a high seat, Balarāma washed his feet with due formality and offered him articles of *Madhuparka* (such as honey, ghee, curds, water).

39. Having presented a cow to the guest and after massaging him as he was fatigued, the powerful Lord served to him with reverence, preparation of pure food with a variety of excellences.

40. When his meal was over, Balarāma, the expert in the highest *dharma* (viz. proper reception of guest) again delighted him by offering articles like fragrant betel-leaf, scenting his mouth, perfumes and sweet-smelling garland.

41. When the customary formalities were over, Nanda enquired : "Oh Dāśārha (Descendant of Daśārha) ! How do you manage to get on with the regime of ruthless Kaṁsa—you who are now no better than sheep tended by a butcher.

42. That blood-thirsty wicked Kaṁsa has killed the children of his cousin (sister) even while she was bitterly crying. We wonder what safety or happiness there could be to you, his subjects.

43. Having thus been honoured by Nanda in sweet words, Akrūra recovered from the fatigue of the journey by such polite enquiries.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Akrūra returns with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Seated comfortably on a couch and received with high respect by Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, he (Akrūra) realized all the aspirations he cherished on his way to Gokula.

2. Is there anything unattainable to a person when the glorious Lord, the very abode of goddess Śrī, becomes propitious? However, those who are exclusively devoted to him expect nothing from him, Oh King !

3. When the supper was over, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, enquired about the treatment meted out by Kaṁsa to his Kinsmen and his further plans in the matter.

The glorious Lord enquired :[1]

4. Oh gentle-natured uncle ! It is good that you have come. I hope you had a comfortable journey. May be well with you all. Are all our (near and distant) kinsmen[2] and friends un-harassed (by Kaṁsa) and free from ailments ?

5. Dear uncle ! It is certainly not very consistent on my part to enquire after the welfare of our kinsmen and that of their descendants (or of the subjects in general), so long as this co-called maternal uncle Kaṁsa, the very bane (lit. disease) of the family, is prospering.

6. Alas ! It is for my sake that my venerable parents, despite their innocence, had to undergo immense sufferings. It is for me that their sons were murdered and they had to remain in chains in the prison.

7. It is our good fortune that today we could have a sight of our relative—a sight I had been coveting for long, Oh gentle-natured uncle ! Be pleased to explain to us the purpose of your visit. Oh uncle.

1. The following four verses (4,5,6 and 7) are not found in VJ's text.

2. ŚR. explains : *jñāti*—near relatives. They are *sapiṇḍa*; *bāndhavas* are distant and hence *a-sapiṇḍa*

Śrī Śuka said :

8. When thus enquired by Lord Kṛṣṇa, Akrūra, the descendant of Madhu, described in details the history and rationale of Kaṁsa's deep-rooted hostility to the Yadu clan, his attempts on the life of Vasudeva.

9. He reported to Kṛṣṇa the message (inviting them on the pretext of *dhanur-yāga* and the proposed attempt on their life through Cāṇūra and others) and the mission for which he had been deputed as an emissary by Kaṁsa and what Nārada had narrated to Kaṁsa about his (Kṛṣṇa's) birth from Vasudeva.

10. On hearing the message from Akrūra, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the vanquishers of hostile warriors, laughed loudly, and they communicated to their foster-father Nanda the command of the king Kaṁsa.

11. He (Nanda) on his part ordered the cowherds.: "Let all the yield of cows (such as milk, ghee) as well as presents (of various kinds) as tribute, be taken with you. Let the bullock-carts be kept ready.

12. Tomorrow we have to go to Mathurā where we shall be paying as tribute the choicest products of our cows' yield to the king. We shall also witness there a very grand festival for attending which (it is reported that) all the people from the country (of Śūrasena) are going." Nanda, the Gopa chief, got this order proclaimed all over his Vraja, through the security officer of the Vraja.

13. The cowherd women (to whom Kṛṣṇa was their very life) were deeply distressed at heart on hearing that Akrūra had come to Vraja to take away Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa to the capital city (Mathurā).

14. Some had the splendour of their countenance withered by the hot breaths due to the agony of heart caused by hearing that news. Some became so much beside themselves through overwhelming grief that they got their garments loosened, bangles dropping and braids of hair dishevelled.

15. Through their concentrated contemplation on Kṛṣṇa, some Gopīs got all the functions of their sense-organs ceased and became insensible to this external world, as if they had ascended to the realm of the Supreme Self.

16. Some other Gopīs lost their consciousness as they remembered the wonder-fully phrased speeches of Kṛṣṇa touching their very heart and expressed with warm loving smiles.

17-18. Musing over Kṛṣṇa's extremely graceful gait and manner of behaviour, his amiable smiles and loving glances, his witty repartee dispelling sorrows and his extra-ordinary exploits, the Gopīs terrified and distressed at the very thought of impending separation, met together in groups and with tears flowing over their cheeks (faces) and hearts absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they complained :

Gopīs said :

19. Alas ! Oh Creator ! You have not the slightest compassion anywhere in you, inasmuch as, you bring together embodied beings in friendliness and love and unnecessarily separate them before they have accomplished their desired object. Your whimsical behaviour is childish (lit. like the purposeless behaviour of a child).

20. It is not a good act (in fact a wicked) act on your part that you, having first manifested to us the countenance of Kṛṣṇa covered over with ringlets of dark hair, charming due to its beautiful cheeks and prominent nose, beautiful with a beaming smile that dispelled all grief, now takes it away from our view.

21. You are really cruel as (disguising yourself) under the nomenclature Akrūra[1], you like an irrational person, are depriving us of our very eye given by you to us. It is with that we visualized the excellence of your creative capacity (completely exhibited) even in a part (limb) of Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Madhu.

22. Alas ! What a pity ! The friendship of Nanda's son is of a momentary nature. He is so much fond of new company that he does not condescend to cast a glance at us who have been eagerly longing for him and who, being

1. You will say it is Akrūra and not I, who is taking away Kṛṣṇa. It is not possible for others to do this. It is you who have come here under the name Akrūra—ŚR.

beguiled by his enchanting acts, have openly accepted his slavery forsaking our homes, relatives, sons and husbands.

23. For the ladies of the city (Mathurā), their night will dawn very happily. All the benedictions have been (i.e. will be) definitely realized by them. For as Kṛṣṇa enters the city, they will drink (with their eyes) the countenance of the Lord of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) full of intoxicating (yet) nectar-like smiles, the charm of which is enhanced by lovely side-glances.

24. Oh ladies ! Even if Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) is self-controlled and independent and has his relatives in Vraja, how can he ever return to us, poor rustic women, when his mind is captivated by the sweet, soft words, and fascinated by the bashful smiles and amorous deportment of the ladies of Mathurā.

25. Today, certainly there will be a high feast to the eyes of Dāśārhas, Bhojas, Andhakas, Vṛṣṇis and Sātvatas and those who will see passing by the road (in the chariot) Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, the consort of goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī), the very abode of excellences.

26. As this fellow wants to carry off Kṛṣṇa who is dearer than life itself to us, beyond the known paths (to a far-off land beyond our reach), without (in any way) consoling deeply-grieving persons (like us), Akrūra (not cruel) ought not to be the name of such a ruthless fellow who is (as a matter of fact) extremely cruel.

27. Look ! without feeling the slightest feeling (lit. witness) of sympathy or mercy he (Kṛṣṇa) has comfortably occupied his seat in the chariot; following him the haughty Gopas (cowherds) are hastily speeding up in their bullock carts. (This departure of Kṛṣṇa) is treated with indifference by the elders (of Vraja). It appears that hostile Destiny is working against us today.

28. Approaching Kṛṣṇa (the Lord of Lakṣmī) We shall dissuade him (from going). What can the elders of the family and relatives do unto us whose hearts have been rendered afflicted and melancholy by Fate, by bringing about separation from Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) which is unbearable even for half a minute, (under such circumstances even death is no terror to us.)

29. Oh cowherd women! How can we get over without him the unending darkness of separation from him, with whom we felt like a moment the nights indulged in rāsa dance (and similar other sports) the charm of which was enhanced by his warm love, charming smiles, sweet whispers, playful glances and embraces?

30. How can we (even manage to) live without Kṛṣṇa who at the even tide, with Balarāma (the incarnation of Śeṣa) as his compassion, and surrounded by cowherds, used to enter Vraja, playing on his flute, and with his curly hair and wreaths of flowers soiled heavily with dust raised by the hoofs of the cattle, and captivate our hearts by casting at us his smiling side-glances?

Śrī Śuka said :

31. Talking to each other in this manner, and extremely distressed at the thought of separation from Kṛṣṇa, the women of Vraja whose hearts were deeply attached to Kṛṣṇa threw to winds their sense of bashfulness and cried loudly, (uttering his various names:) "Oh Govinda ! Alas Dāmodara! Oh Mādhava".

32.* When it was sun-rise, Akrūra finished his morning *Sandhyā* (prayer to the sun) and other religious duties, and drove his chariot (along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) without paying any heed to the lamentations of womenfolk.

33. Cowherds, headed by Nanda, followed them closely in their bullock-carts taking with them abundant tribute in the form of pitchers full of the yield of cows (such as milk, curds, ghee).

34. The cowherd women also followed their beloved Kṛṣṇa feeling a bit delighted when he turned round and cast an affectionate glance at them and waited[1] for his command not to follow him.

*A ŚR. gives an additional verse here :

Krūram Akrūrataḥ śrutvā Kaṁsaṁ Kaṁsaniṣūdanaḥ /
gopī-manoratharāmaḥ sa-Rāmaḥ svapuraṁ yayau //

Having heard from Akrūra (the report about) cruel Kaṁsa, Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Kaṁsa, the delight of the Gopīs (by fulfilling their desires) went to his capital (Mathurā) along with Balarāma.

1. Waited for his reply to the message sent by them through an emissary and stood on an eminence within the range of his view—VT.

35. Perceiving that the Gopīs were deeply tormented at his departure, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yadus, comforted them through a messenger that he would return soon.[1]

36. As long as the flag (of the chariot) was visible and as long as the dust raised by the chariot could be seen, they stood motionless like figures painted in pictures, as they had deputed their minds after him.

37. At long last, being disappointed at the return of Lord Kṛṣṇa, they too returned and for relieving themselves of the sorrow of separation, they spent days (and nights) in glorifying his deeds and pastimes in songs.

38. In his chariot swift in speed like the wind, the Lord along with Balarāma and Akrūra arrived (at noon) on the bank of the Yamunā that absolves one of all sins.

39. After (washing his hands and feet) performing the Ācamana (ritual sipping of water), he drank the sweet crystal-clear water of the Yamunā. Going near a grove of trees (where the chariot was standing), he got into it alongwith Balarāma.

40. Akrūra on his part seated them (comfortably) in the chariot, and (requesting them not to leave their seats as he was afraid of enemies) he took leave of them. Coming to the pool of Yamunā (known as 'Ananta tīrtha'), he performed ablution according to *śāstric* injunctions.

41. As he plunged into the river water reciting the ancient Vedic *mantras* (of *Agha-marṣaṇa*), that Akrūra (being of purified mind) saw therein both Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa together.

42. 'How is it that the two sons of Vasudeva who were seated in the chariot are down here? In that case they must not be in the chariot.' With this suspicion, he emerged out of water and looked for them.

43. Perceiving both of them seated (in the chariot) as before, he took, a plunge again thinking, "Was my vision of them both in the water unreal?"

1. VT. strongly objects to the interpretation : "I shall be sending you messages and thus see you through messengers though personally I cannot come", for this contradicts the words of Kṛṣṇa's special emissary Uddhava :

āgamiṣyatyadīrgheṇa kālena Vrajam acyutaḥ /

44-45. Again he saw in that very water, Śeṣa, the Lord of Serpents—a resplendent God with one thousand heads, with crowns adorning his one thousand hoods, wearing a blue garment, white as lotus-fibers, (enormous) like the white snow-clad mountain Kailāsa with its (golden) peaks. He was being praised by Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas as well as by Asuras, with their heads bowed down in salutation.

46. He saw on Śeṣa's lap (coils) another (Supreme) Person (Lord Viṣṇu) bluish dark like a cloud in complexion, clad in yellow silken garment, with four arms, eyes reddish like lotus-petals and very serene and gentle in appearance.

47. He had a beautiful and gracious countenance with enchanting smiles and glances, well-shaped eyebrows, prominent nose, beautiful ears, charming cheeks and reddish lips.

48. He had long and mighty arms, high shoulders and broad chest—the home of the goddess Śrī, a conch-shaped neck, a deep navel and stomach shaped like a tender leaf with three folds.

49. He had well-formed loins and hips, pair of well-developed thighs like those of an elephant and a pair of beautiful knees and shapely shanks.

50. His ankles were prominent and were surrounded by the halo of light radiating from his reddish toe-nails. His lotus-feet were specially charming with petal-like tender toes and (a pair of) big toes.

51-52. He was shining brilliantly with a diadem, bracelets, armlets decked with the most precious jewels as well as with a girdle, a sacred thread, necklace, anklets and ear-rings. He held a lotus, conch, discus and a mace in each of his hands. He had the *Śrī vatsa* mark on his chest, and a resplendent *Kaustubha* gem was shining at his neck. He wore a garland of special sylvain flowers (called Vanamālā).

53-54. He was being praised in hymns with distinct words expressive of different sentiments, by his attendants, the prominent among whom were Sunanda and Nanda, by sages like Sanaka (and his three brothers Sanandana, Sanātana, Sanat kumāra), by the rulers of gods like god Brahmā, Rudra and others, by nine foremost of Brāhmaṇas (such as Marīci, Kāśyapa and others) and by the most prominent of the Lord's

pure-hearted devotees like Prahlāda, Nārada and Uparicara Vasu.

55. He was waited upon personally by the deities like Śrī (presiding deity over affluence), Puṣṭi (goddess of nourishment), Sarasvatī (presiding over speech), Kānti (goddess of beautiful complexion and splendour), Kīrti (presiding deity of fame), Tuṣṭi (goddess of contentment), Ilā (the Earth goddess), Ūrjā (goddess of energy and strength), Vidyā (goddess presiding over spiritual enlightenment), Avidyā (the goddess of Nescience), by Śakti (Power) and Māyā (the deluding potency of the Lord).

56-57. He was extremely delighted to have the vision of that Lord and overwhelmed with intense devotion and thrilled with joy (with his hair standing on their ends) his eyes wet with tears of love, Akrūra of the Sāttvata clan summoned courage, and bowed down with his head. And folding his pair of palms, with concentrated attention, he slowly began to praise in voice choked with emotions.

CHAPTER FORTY

Akrūra's Hymn (in praise of the Lord)

1A. *VJ.'s Text adds* :

At this vision of the Lord, Akrūra's heart and senses became filled with divine joy and serenity. Bending his neck (head) down with devotion, he praised the Lotus-eyed Lord.

Akrūra said :

1. I bow down to you as you are the Prime cause of all causes (like *Mahat* etc. from which the Universe evolved). You are the veritable Nārāyaṇa (the Deity reposing over the cosmic waters), the In-dweller in all bodies, the First Principle not subject to change or modification. It is from the lotus sprouted from his navel that god Brahmā, the Creator of the Universe appeared. It is from him (Brahmā) that the universe was evolved.

2.* All the causes of the evolution of the world such as (the elements) the earth, water, fire, air, the sky and its originator-*ahaṃkāra*, the principle of cosmic intelligence called *mahat*, *prakṛti* (Primordial matter) and the cause thereof (viz. *Puruṣa*, the mind, the senses (and organs) and their objects and all the gods presiding over them, are all evolved out of your Supreme Person (*Śrī mūrti*).

3. These—god Brahma[1] and others—being material (or other-than-the spirit) do not know the essential nature of yours who are the real *ātman* (Supreme self). For god Brahmā is conditioned by or enveloped in the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. As such he is unable to congnize your essential nature which is beyond all *guṇas*.

4. Certainly, the righteous and practitioners of yoga worship you directly as the Supreme Person, the Ruler of the Universe-as the Indweller of the body (*Or* in the senses and organs of the bodies of every *jīva*), presiding over all material bodies (or the great elements like the ether, air, fire etc.), presiding over the bodies of god.

5. Some twice-borns (e g. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas) follow the path of action—*Karma mārga*, and betake themselves to the course of sacrificial performance. With the help of the knowledge of three Vedas (*Ṛk*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*), they worship none but you under the names and forms of different divinities in extensive sacrificial sessions.

6. Having renounced all activities[2] (pertaining to (*karma-mārga*, they have attained tranquillity and control of senses.[3] Such men of spiritual wisdom worship the Embodiment of

*. VR presents the *viśiṣṭādvaita* stance : He shows that this verse described the Lord both as the material cause as well as the efficient cause. "From Your Person Brahman characterised by *mūla-prakṛti* as his body is transformed into *mahat, ahaṁkāra.*"

1. VJ : Jīva and others—Like inanimate things, even *jīva* cannot cognize your nature. The *jīvas* are observed with the false notion that the body and soul are identical or they themselves are the absolute masters.

VJ. These—Brahmā and others cannot cognize Your real nature as they are distinct and different from your self.

2. VR. : give up all Vedic rites performed for attaining their desires which give rise to egotism and passions

OR : realize that Vedic rites are a form of worshipping the Lord.

3. VJ. : Unswerving devotion of the Lord exclusively.

Knowledge through sacrifice in the form of spiritual knowledge i.e. meditation on the Lord).

7.* According to the injunctions laid by you (in the (*Pañcarātra āgama*) some consecrate their person[1] become absorbed in you and worship you as per procedure laid down by you (in the *Pañcarātra āgama*), as the One Deity abiding in many emanations (*Vyūhas* such as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa. Pradyumna and Aniruddha) or as one form (viz. Nārāyaṇa).

8. Others (i.e. devotees of Lord Śiva) adore you only in the form of Śiva[2] as per procedure ordained by god Śiva (*in Śaiva āgamas*) but with difference of details according to the teachers (of various Śaiva sects like *Kāpālika Kālāmukha, Pāśupata* etc.), Oh glorious Lord!

9.* Those who are votaries of other deities and have thus reposed their faith and devotion unto them (thinking these deities as different from you), all of them really worship you who pervade them all, Oh Supreme Lord.

10. Oh Lord ! Just as rivers with their sources in mountains and flooded by raining clouds enter into the sea from all directions, similarly all paths (of devotion and worship) lead ultimately unto you.

11. *Sattva, rajas* and *tamas* are nothing but modifications of your *Prakṛti* (potency). And everything from inanimate immovables to the highest deity Brahmā, are the products of Prakṛti and are woven warf and woof in Prakṛti[3] (and therefore not different from you. You pervade them all)

* After describing the paths of Karma, Sāṅkhya, and Yoga, he mentions *Pañcarātra* and *Śaiva* systems in verses 7 and 8.

1. ŚR. : as per Vaiṣṇavite and Śaivite procedures.

VR. : By the five consecrating rites prescribed in the *Pāñcarātra āgamas.*

SD.: quotes a verse enumerating the five *saṁskāras*: *Tāpaḥ puṇḍraṁ tathā nāma mantro yāgaś ca pañcamaḥ*

tāpa is branding with representations of discus etc., *Puṇḍra*—mark on the forehead (the rest is easy).

2. VB. In *Tāmasa Kalpa* Viṣṇu assumes the form of Śiva.

*. Cf. *Yepyanya-devatābhaktā yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ |*
tepi māmeva Kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam ||

BG. 9.23.

3. ŚR : *Or* : and ultimately they merge into *Prakṛti* and *Prakṛti* unto you. In this way all gods etc. are absorbed in you.

12. Hail to you whose mind is perfectly unattached to everything even though you are the In-dwelling soul of everybody and witness to the intellects (minds) of all. This stream of *guṇas* (*saṃsāra*) created by your Nescience operates powerfully on gods, men, and subhuman beings.

13. Fire is regarded as your mouth, the earth as your feet, the sun as your eye, the sky as your navel, cardinal points as your ears, the celestial region (the firmament) as your head, Indra, the ruler of gods your arms, and oceans as your belly and the wind as your vital strength[1].

14. Trees and herbs are the hair on your body; the clouds are the locks of hair on your head; mountains are the bones and nails of your transcendental self; days and the nights are your winking; god Brahmā, the Creater of the world, is your generative organ, and rain shower is regarded as your semen.

15. Oh Immortal Supreme Self! You are the perfect immutable Person who can be comprehended by the mind only. On you are projected worlds teeming with beings along with the protectors of those worlds, just as acquatic beings move in water or insect exists in the *Udumbara* fruit (Indian fig).

16. Whatever forms you assume for your sportive activities in the world, dispel the afflictions and sorrows of people. Hence they sing your glories in joy.

17. I bow to you the Fish incarnation, the cause of the world who moved freely in the cosmic waters of the ocean of deluge. Hail to you who assumed the form of *Hayagrīva* (horse-necked god) for killing the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

18. Salutations to you Oh gigantic Tortoise, the bearer of mountain Mandara (at the time of churning the ocean for nectar). I bow to you who have assumed the Boar form for the sportive activity of uplifting the earth (from the bottom of the ocean).

19. Oh Lord! The Dispeller of the fear of the righteous! I bow to you the wonderful man-lion. My salutations

1. VT. The verse shows how the Lord pervades all gods.

to you Oh Vāmana who have crossed the three worlds (in one step).

20. Salutations to you Paraśurāma, the chief of Bhṛgus who cut down the forest in the form of haughty Kṣatriyas. I salute to you, Oh Rāmacandra, the best of Raghus, who have killed Rāvaṇa.

21. Hail to you the Lord of Sātvatas ! Who manifested yourself in four divine emanations of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa (Balarāma), Pradyumna (Kṛṣṇa's son) and Aniruddha (Pradyumna's son).

22. Hail to you Lord Buddha ! Who are absolutely pure but who deluded Daityas and Dānavas (by your anti-Vedic teaching). I bow to you who assumed the form of Kalki and killed the kṣatriyas who were reduced to the stage of Mlecchas (*non-Aryans*).

23. Oh Glorious Lord ! This world of beings is deluded by your māyā potency and wanders in the path of *karma* (*saṁsāra*) with the false notion of me-and-mine i.e. of the body being his own self and property as his own.

24. And I am such a stupid person, Oh Lord Kṛṣṇa ! That I too wander (move in) my body, sons, house, wives, wealth, kith and kins etc. who are really unreal like dream but thinking them to be real.

25. I entertain a contrary notion towards things which are not eternal (e.g. fruit of *karmas*), are not the real self (viz. my body) as well as which are full of troubles (e.g. house, property) and regard them as eternal, real-self and full of happiness). I am enveloped in the darkness of ignorance and take pleasure in the opposite pairs like pleasure and pain and I do not know that you are the most dear to me.

26. Just as an ignorant person does not know that it is really water that is covered by weeds and other water-plants, and abandoning the real water, runs after a mirage, similarly I have turned my face away from you (and am pursuing unrealities like my body, house etc.)

27. Being of poor intellectual capacity and understanding, I am not able to control my mind which is perturbed by desire for enjoyment and activities to attain it, and am dragged here and there by uncontrollable senses.

28. Oh Lord ! I (who am as described above) have approached your feet which are not easily accessible to the unrighteous, regard (the accessibility of your feet) as an act of Grace on your part. Oh God with a lotus in the nevel ! Release from the cycle of births and deaths is possible if one's mind becomes attached to you through the service of saintly persons[1].

29. I bow to you who are the embodiment of Pure Consciousness and the Source of all knowledge. You are the Ruler (of factors e.g. Time-Spirit, Nature, Destiny) that control *Jīvas*; you are the very Brahman of infinite power.

30. Salutations to Lord Vāsudeva, the asylum of all beings. Oh Lord of sense-organs ! I bow down to you. Oh Lord ! Be pleased to protect me who have approached your feet.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Kṛṣṇa's Arrival at Mathurā

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having manifested his (original Viṣṇu) form in the water to Akrūra, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa withdrew it again, even while he was glorifying him,[2] like an actor (who instantly retires) after playing his role.

2. Noticing that the vision had disappeared, Akrūra emerged from water. He hastily performed the (mid-day) religious duties. He then returned to the chariot still wondering at the vision.

3. Lord Kṛṣṇa (the Controller of Senses) enquired, "have you seen anything miraculous either on the land or in the water or in the sky? I surmise (from your appearance) that you have perceived some such wonder.

1. ŚR. : It is through Your Grace that one gets the opportunity of rendering service to saintly persons which leads to attachment to you, resulting in Final Emancipation from *Saṁsāra*.

2. Despite Akrūra's continuation of praise. This shows Kṛṣṇa's indifference to praise (*anādare ṣaṣṭhī*) —VT

Akrūra replied :

4. "Whatever wonders are there on the earth, in the sky or in the water in this world exist in you who constitute the whole of the universe. What marvel can remain un-witnessed by me who have a direct vision of you?

5. Oh Supreme Lord ! When I directly perceive you who accommodate all the marvels within you, what wonder, either on the earth, in the water or the sky could be witnessed by me."

6. Replying him in these words, Akrūra, the son of Gāndinī, drove the chariot and at the end of the day, he brought Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā.

7. People in the country-side who assembled at various stages on the way, became delighted to see the sons of Vasudeva (Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa) and were not able to take away their eyes from them.

8. In the meanwhile, Nanda, the cowherd, and other inhabitants of Vraja who came ahead of them (by a short-cut) stood waiting for them in a park near the city (Mathurā).

9. After joining them (Nanda and his group of cowherds) the glorious Lord of the world took Akrūra by hand while Akrūra was modestly bowing, and spoke to him as if with a laugh.

10. "You may go in advance with the chariot to the city and return home. We shall get down here and after resting for some time, shall go to the city."

Akrūra requested :

11. Oh Lord ! I shall not enter Mathurā leaving you both here. It does not behove you, Oh Protector (of the world) who are so kind to your devotees, to forsake me who am your votary.

12. Be pleased to come. Let us go together. Oh Lord ! You transcend sense-perception. Oh best of friends ! Visiting our house along with your elder brother (Balarāma), with your friends and cowherds bless our home with your august presence.

13. Be gracious to sanctify our houses with the dust of your feet as we are after all householders (inevitably committ-

ing five types of sins[1]). For the ancestors and gods including the Fire-god get satisfied and propitiated with the water used for washing your feet (which is kept in a vessel or small reservoir in the courtyard of the house).

14. By washing the pair of your feet the great king Bali attained sanctifying fame, incomparable affluence and supreme sovereignty) as also the goal reached by absolute votaries.

15. The sacred waters (viz. the river Gaṅgā) that washed your feet have sanctified the three worlds, were borne by god Śiva on his ḥead and by contact with which the sons of Sagara attained to the heaven.

16. I bow to you, Oh God of gods, Oh Lord of the universe, the listening and recital of whose glory bring spiritual merit; On the foremost one in the Yadu clan, Oh Nārāyaṇa of glorious reputation."

The glorious Lord replied :

17. It is after slaying Kaṁsa who is the enemy of our Yadu clan, that I shall visit your house in company of my elder brother (Balarāma) and shall bring delight to my friends.

Śrī Śuka said :

18. Akrūra who was thus replied, became rather disappointed. He, however, entered the city, reported (to Kaṁsa) the account of the mission assigned to him and returned home.

19. The next day in the afternoon, Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by the cowherds, entered Mathura with a view to see the city.

20. He saw the city Mathurā with high gate-ways and entrances made of crystals, with huge doors of gold beautified with gold arches. The granaries thereof were made of copper and brass. It was inaccessible due to deep moats around it. Its outskirts were made attractive with parks and beautiful gardens.

1. Manu enumerates five types of inevitable sins caused in the household work such as 'cooking on a stove', 'pounding', 'crushing', 'brushing up of vessel' etc. as follows:

pañca sūnā gṛhasthasya cullī peṣaṇyupaskarāḥ /
kaṇḍanī coda-kumbhaśca-Manu 3.66

21-22. It appeared beautiful with its quadrangles (where four roads meet) decorated with gold and with mansions of gold with suitable pleasure gardens attached to each of them. It was decorated with guild-halls of different classes of artisans and with buildings of other citizens. It was filled with the joyful cooing of pigeons and joyous notes of the peacocks perching on the window-grills and platforms, eaves (awnings) and seats (under trees) all inlaid with Vaiḍūrya (cat's eyes) diamonds, crystals, sapphires, corals, pearls and emeralds. Its streets, market places and quadrangles were profusely sprinkled with water and were strewn with flowers, sprouts, parched paddy and unbroken rice-grains.

23. He saw that it appeared beautiful for the entrances of houses were decorated with (auspicious objects such as) artistic pitchers full of water, sprinkled with curds and sandal, graced around with flowers and with rows of lamps and with tender foliage, inserted in the pitchers, with trunks of plantain trees and areca nut trees with bunches of fruit on the branches, and festive flags and buntings hoisted over them.

24. Oh King ! When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the sons of Vasudeva, surrounded by their friends, entered the city by the royal road, women of that city hastily came out to have a look at them, and some eager ones climbed the terraces of their houses.

25. Out of haste some dressed themselves and put on ornaments in the wrong way; some forgot to wear the ornament in pair and put on one ear-ring (leaving the other ear ornamentless), and one anklet (leaving the other foot anklet-less); while others started (with only one eye painted with collyrium) without applying collyrium to the other eye.

26. Hearing the noise (as the sons of Vasudeva approached), some were so overjoyed that they set aside their dishes while taking meals; some besmeared with oil (preliminary to bath) came out (with oily appearance) without taking bath; some rose from sleep (and without taking any wash, ran up to see), while mothers suckling babies hurried forth (leaving their babies half-fed and crying).

27. With his noble gait and deportment like a mighty elephant in an intoxicated stage (exuding ichor), and with

his personality delighting (his consort) the goddess Śrī, the Lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa provided a sumptuous feast to their eyes and captivated their hearts with his noble sportive smiles and glances.

28. The women of Mathurā whose hearts were already deeply attached to him (lit. were melted and rushed after him) through the reports they frequently heard about him, (regarding his excellences, prowess etc.) now espied him personally. They were honoured by being sprinkled with the nectar-like glances and fascinating smiles by him. They embraced that Embodiment of Bliss (mentally) as he entered through the gate-way of their eyes, occupied their hearts (and was in their 'possession'). They were so thrilled with joy that the hair on their body stood on their ends. They felt relieved of the endless agony of their hearts through pangs of separation (from him), Oh subjugator of enemies (e.g. lust, passions etc.)[1]

29. Climbing to the highest terraces of the mansions and with their lotus-like faces blooming with delight, the young damsels showered flowers on Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

30. At every stop Brāhmaṇas, being overwhelmed with joy, worshipped them with pots of water (to wash their feet), curds and rice-grains (to be applied to their fore-heads as an auspicious mark) and with wreaths, sandal-paste, perfumes and suitable presents (e. g. fruits, sweetmeats etc.)

31.* The ladies of the city (Mathura) remarked to each other, "Oh ! What great penance must have been performed by cowherd women on account of which they had the privilege to behold at will these two brothers who are themselves a joyous festival to the eyes of the human world.

32. Beholding a certain washerman who was a dyer too coming that way, Kṛṣṇa, the elder brother of Gada[2] asked him to give the excellent, well-washed clothes.

33. "Please give us both suitable clothes becoming to our worthy status. The highest prosperity will certainly be yours for offering us these as gift."

1. ŚR adds : Oh King ! Don't be immersed in the erotic sentiment.

* Not found in VJ's Text.

2. Name of Kṛṣṇa's step-brother, son of Vasudeva and Deva-rakṣitā (Devakī's sister)—Supra 9.24.46-52.

34. Though requested by the glorious Lord who was perfect and possessed of plenty in every respect, the highly arrogant servant of the king (Kaṁsa) got angry and retorted with scorn.

35. "You ill-mannered, rustic hill-dwellers and foresters ! Do you always ever wear such fine clothes ? How do you have the audacity to overstep your limits and to desire to have the royal clothes.

36. Get ye gone, you childish fellow. If you really wish to live, you should never make such requests. Take care. The king's men verily arrest insolent people, beat them (soundly) and strip them of their belongings."

37. While he was thus swaggeringly boasting, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, got enraged and with his finger-tips he severed his head from his trunk.

38. All the servants of the washerman threw down the bundles of clothes and took to their heels in all directions. Kṛṣṇa took the clothes (he wanted).

39. Kṛṣṇa as well as Balarāma put on two pieces of garments (an upper and lower one) of their choice. They distributed the remaining to the (accompanying) cowherds and threw the rest on the ground.

40. Then a weaver was pleased with them and elegently dressed them both with rich multi-coloured clothes in a manner worthy of them.

41. With the variety of excellent clothes and decorations, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma appeared brilliant and most beautiful like two young elephants, one white and the other dark, tastefully adorned for some festivel.

42. Being pleased with him, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa conferred on him the type of liberation called "similarity of godly form" (in the next world), and superb affluence, strength, wealth, memory and acuteness of sense organs in this world.

43. Then they proceeded to the house of a florist called Sudāman. Seeing them he respectfully rose to receive them and bowed, placing his head on the ground (i. e. lying prostrate before them).

44. He offered them seat and water to wash their feet. He worshipped both of them along with their followers (cowherds) by offering the articles of worship, wreaths of flowers, betel leaves and sandal paste.

45. He submitted, "The very object of our life has been fulfilled, Oh Lord, My race has been sanctified by you. And by your arrival my ancestors, gods and sages have been pleased with me.

46. Both of Your Honour are the ultimate cause of this Universe. It is by your rays that you have descended on this earth for its prosperity and protection.

47. Both of you are the friends and the soul of the world. Even though you are favourable to your devotees, you do not entertain discriminating outlook. You are equal unto all beings.

48. Therefore be pleased to lay down a command on Your servant as to what I should do for you. It is a high favour upon a human being that you direct him to do your service."

49. Oh Great King, Sudāman who was greatly pleased in mind, divined the wishes of them both and he presented them garland made of specially fragrant flowers.

50. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who were excellently decorated by the garlands, were greatly pleased with him and they, the great bestowers of boons, conferred on him, blessings as he bowed them respectfully and sought their protection.

51. He sought from them the boon of entertaining unswerving devotion unto them who constituted the soul of all, as well as friendship to their devotees and great compassion to all beings.

52. Having given him the boon as well as bestowing on him prosperity that would increase with his descendents and having conferred on him strength, longevity, glory and splendour, the Lord departed with his elder brother.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Description of the Wrestling Arena

Śrī Śuka said :

1. While proceeding ahead on the royal road, Kṛṣṇa espied a deformed young woman of charming countenance carrying a vessel containing sandal-paste and other unguents (for smearing and beautifying the body). He asked laughingly just to humour her.

2. "Who are you, Oh lady of shapely thighs? For whom is this vessel of unguents intended? Tell us the truth. Give us both some excellent unguents (out of these). (By this act of yours) you will soon be blessed with good luck."

The maid-servant said :

3. "Oh beautiful youth! I am a maid-servant called *Tri-Vakrā* (Deformed at three places viz. at the neck, the breast and the waist), but I am esteemed by (His Majesty) Kaṁsa in (the technique of) preparation of unguents). For the pastes and ointments prepared by me are very much liked by the king of Bhojas.-who else other than you both deserves to be anointed with this ?"

4. Her heart being thoroughly captivated by their beauty, comeliness, bewitching smiles, sweet words and loving glances, she besmeared them thickly with the unguent.

5. Then with the upper part of their bodies painted with the unguent, the colour of which was different from that of the complexion of their persons, they both (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) appeared very much effulgent.

6. The glorious Lord who was very much pleased with her, decided to straighten up perfectly the hump-backed woman deformed at the three different places, though possessed of a charming countenance, and thereby to show (to the world) the fruit of having a sight of him.

7. Pressing the front part of her feet with his own feet, he held her chin with two fingers of his raised open palm and made her body perfectly straight.

8. Instantly, at the very touch of Kṛṣṇa, she became the loveliest young damsel with all limbs straight and proportionate and shapely, with big buttocks and heavy breasts.

9. Being thus gifted with excellent beauty and noble qualities, she thereupon felt the passion of love enkindled in her. And drawing him by the end of his upper garment, she requested him, beaming with a smile.

10. "Come, Oh hero ! Let us go home. I cannot bear (the idea of going away) leaving you here, now. Please be propitious unto a woman whose mind has been agitated by you, Oh prominent one among men."

11. When solicited thus by the woman, despite the presence of even Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa cast a glance at him and at the faces of cowherds, laughed loudly and spoke to her.

12. "Oh lady with beautiful eye-brows ! After accomplishing the object of my coming here (viz. killing of Kaṁsa) I shall certainly visit your house which relieves the pangs of hearts of men. You are the only resort of homeless wayfarers like us.[1]

13. After taking leave of her in sweet words, as he proceeded through the commercial area of the town (lit. through the streets of the Vaiśya community), he, along with his elder brother and followers was worshipfully received with various presents, betel-leaves, garlands of pearls and precious stones and perfumes by the guilds of merchants.

14.* The minds of the ladies of the merchant communities were so much agitated and overwhelmed with love that they forgot themselves. With loosened garments and braids of hair and slipping bracelets, they stood motionless as if painted in a picture.

15. Thereupon, enquiring with the people about the venue of the Bow-(Sacrifice), the Immutable Lord (Kṛṣṇa) entered the sacrificial-hall and saw the wonderful bow, beauti-

1. VJ. : God is not attached to anyone. But his devotees worship him and become his resort.
VR. : You deserve to be enjoyed.
* Untraced in VJ.'s Text.

ful (and big) like the rainbow (as it was studded with precious stones).

16. It was guarded by many men-at-arms, as it was worshipped and decorated with precious stones and valuables. Though he was prohibited by the attending guards, Kṛṣṇa forcibly caught hold of it.

17. Sportively picking it up with his left hand and fixing its string, Kṛṣṇa of formidable prowess, stretched it to the full and snapped it asunder in two in a second, as an intoxicated elephant would do to a sugarcane. And all men stood a-gazing (in astonishment).

18. As the bow was being broken, the crashing sound filled the sky, the space between the earth and heaven and all the quarters. Hearing that sound, even Kaṁsa was seized with terror.

19. The guards of the bow along with the attendants got enraged. Armed as they were, they were anxious to arrest him. Shouting "Let him be seized and bound down", they encircled him.

20. Perceiving those fellows of wicked intentions, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa flared up in rage, and grasping the two pieces of the broken bow stick, soundly drubbed them all.

21. Having destroyed the battalion of soldiers despatched against them by Kaṁsa, they came out of the gate of the sacrificial hall. As they roamed along, they were delighted to see the affluence of the city.

22. Witnessing their marvellous prowess, splendour, fearlessness and handsome personality, the citizens of Mathura regarded them as two foremost ones among gods.

23. While both of them were thus wandering at will, the sun set. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma surrounded by cowherds, returned from the city to the camp of their carts.

24. All the auspicious blessings anticipated (to happen to the citizens of Mathura) by the Gopīs who became afflicted with the pangs of (impending) separation from Kṛṣṇa at the time of his departure (from Vraja), materialised to be true at Mathura, in the case of those citizens who could gaze at the splendour of the elegant personality of Kṛṣṇa (The Supreme Person), the ornament of Manliness to whom Śrī, the goddess

of beauty and affluence, resorted for shelter disregarding other gods who sought her.

25. After washing their pair of feet, they partook of rice boiled in milk. With full knowledge what Kaṁsa intended to do the next day, they spent that night quite happily.

26-27. Kaṁsa, however, was struck with panic when he heard the report of the breaking of the huge bow and the massacre of the guards of the bow and the contingent of the army (deployed against them), and the marvellous sportive acts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The wicked-minded fellow, being terrified, remained sleepless for a long time, and saw both in sleep and while awake, many evil omens portending death.

28. Though his reflection in water or mirror was visible, he could not see his head in that reflection. Though no second luminary was in existence, he saw every planet (or lamp) in duplicate.

29. He espied holes in his shadow. Nor could he hear the whizzing sound of vital breath when the ears were closed. He felt that the trees he saw were of gold. Nor his footprints (in dust or sand) as he walked, were visible to him.

30. In dreams he saw himself clasped in embrace by dead persons (or goblins) and that he rode a donkey and gulped poison. He saw that he was wandering along with a garland of red flowers, and was smeared all over with oil and was naked.

31. He perceived such and other similar portends foreboding death, both in his dreams and in the waking state. Being terribly afraid of death, he did not get any sleep at all through anxiety.

32. When the night was over and the sun came up from the eastern waters, Kaṁsa caused (i.e. gave orders for) the grand celebration of athletic sports (such as wrestling of athletes etc.).

33. Men worshipped the wrestling arena. There was a fanfare of trumpets and beating of drums. The galleries were decorated with garlands, flags, buntings and ornamental arches.

34. Citizens and country people headed by Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas entered and were comfortably seated, each

according to his position. Princes and royal personages also occupied their respective seats.

35. Surrounded by his ministers and at the centre of his tributary princes sat Kaṁsa on the throne, though his heart was aching with anxiety.

36. While the flourish of trumpets was being (occasionally drowned by the stroking of arms by athletes[1], the well adorned proud athletic champions occupied their seats alongwith their trainers.

37. Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kūṭa, Śala and Tośala as well —all highly cheered up by the exciting music of the instruments presented themselves into the arena.

38. Cowherd Nanda and other cowherds who were invited by the king of Bhojas and who had offered their presents to him, took their seats on a separate dais.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Killing of the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The next morning, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who had taken their bath and performed purificatory rites (as if to expiate the sin of killing their maternal uncle who, despite warnings of breaking the sacred bow, did not release their parents but wanted to kill them, heard the sound of the kettledrums and the shouting and beating of arms by wrestlers, went to see the tournaments, Oh repressor of enemies !

2. Arriving at the entrance of the arena, Kṛṣṇa beheld the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa stationed there under the direction of the controller of the elephant.

3. Preparing himself for action by tightening the cloth worn round the loins, and tying up tightly his curly locks of

1. *mallānāṁ tāla-śabda*
sva-bāhu-mūlaghātaḥ—VT

hair (with his upper garment) he spoke to the conductor of the elephant in a voice deep like thunder.

4. "You conductor of the elephant ! Make way for us. Hurry up. Clear out instantly. Else I shall send you along with your elephant to the region of Death."

5. Threatened thus, the driver of the elephant got enraged and goaded that already infuriated elephant looking like the god of Death at the end of the universe, to charge against Kṛṣṇa.

6. The big elephant vehemently dashed at Kṛṣṇa and seized him with his trunk. But slipping out of the coil of his trunk, Kṛṣṇa dealt him a blow and concealed himself betwixt his legs.

7. The enraged animal could not find Kṛṣṇa. Guided by his sense of smell, he reached his trunk to Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) who forcibly disengaged himself and rushed out of his grip.

8. Catching hold of the tail of that extremely mighty elephant, Kṛṣṇa easily dragged him to a distance of twenty-five bows (or one hundred cubit) even as Garuḍa would do to a cobra.

9. With his firm grip on his tail, he turned him to the contrary direction when he tried to turn to the right or to the left to catch hold of Kṛṣṇa, just as a boy would do to a calf to revolve it either this way or that.

10. Then he confronted the elephant at the very front and struck him down with his hand. He ran before the elephant with that much speed that he thought Kṛṣṇa to be in his grasp at every step and he made him tumble down.

11. While running sportively, Kṛṣṇa fell down on the ground, and promptly jumped aside. Thinking that Kṛṣṇa had fallen down (and lying there), the infuriated elephant struck the ground with his tusks (as Kṛṣṇa was not there).

12. Extremely enraged at the futility of his attack and being goaded on by the drivers, he dashed in rage towards Kṛṣṇa.

13. The glorious Lord, the slayer of demon Madhu, approached the attacking elephant, caught hold of his trunk and felled him on the ground.

14. Like a lion, Lord Kṛṣṇa pressed down the fallen elephant with his foot and extracting a tusk of that elephant killed him as well as his drivers.

15. Leaving the dead elephant there, Kṛṣṇa with one tusk in hand, entered the arena. With one tusk on his shoulder, with his body stained with drops of ichor and blood, Kṛṣṇa shone beautiful with his lotus-like face decked with pearl-like drops of perspiration'

16. Surrounded by several cowherds, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa armed with an excellent weapon in the form of the tusk of the elephant, entered the amphitheatre.

17.* When, accompanied with his elder brother, Kṛṣṇa entered the arena, he appeared like a thunderbolt to the athletes, as a superman to men, the god of Love (Cupid) incarnate to women, a kinsman to cowherds, a chastiser to wicked monarchs, a child to his parents, the veritable Death to Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas, as a weakling or an inadequate competitor to the ignorant, the Highest Principle (*Brahman*) to the Yogins and the Supreme Deity to Vṛṣṇis.

18. Seeing that the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa was killed and both of them were still invincible, Kaṁsa with all his intrepidity and self-possession, felt extremely terrified at that time, Oh King.

19. The mighty-armed brothers with picturesque dress, strange ornaments, wreaths and wearing quaint garments, shone like two excellently attired brilliant actors on the stage and they captivated (and agitated the minds of the on-lookers with their brilliance.

* ŚR. explains that Lord Kṛṣṇa was a combination of different *rasas* (sentiments) according to the view point of the person concerned. He quotes a verse enumerating the order of *rasas*. He manifested :

raudro'dbhutaśca śṛṅgāro hāsyaṁ vīro dayā tathā|
bhayānakaś ca bībhatsaḥ śāntaḥ saprema-bhaktikaḥ||

VT. and VB. also in a lengthy commentary expound how Lord Kṛṣṇa represented all the *rasas*. For example : the ordinary citizens were so much surprised to see the Supra-human exploits of Kṛṣṇa (e.g. killing a big elephant singlehandedly without the use of weapons by his physical might) that it was a miracle to them (*adbhuta*)

20. The occupants of the galleries, both from the town and the country gazed at those two super-men. With their eyes and countenances beaming with an outburst of extreme joy, they as if drank the countenances of those brothers with their eyes but did not feel satisfied, Oh King.

21. They were as if drinking them with their eyes, licking them with their tongues, smelling them with their nose and clasping them in their arms.

22. They described to each other the details of what they actually saw (e.g. breaking of the sacrificial bow) and of what they heard (e.g. lifting of mount Govardhana) as if they were recollecting their personality (armed with the tusks of the elephant), excellences (such as bravery), sweetness (of smiling, manner of speaking etc.) and their extraordinary courage.

23. "These two brothers are the incarnations of the rays of the Almighty Lord Hari whose abode is cosmic waters, descended on the earth in the house of Vasudeva.

24. It is reported that this Kṛṣṇa was born of Devakī and taken to Gokula where, without being known by anyone, he grew up in the house of Nanda till that time.

25. By him Pūtanā, the demon in the form of a whirl-wind (Cakravāta), the two Arjuna trees, the Yakṣa (Śaṅkhacūḍa), Keśin, Dhenuka[1] and others of the same tribe were finished.

26. Cows along with cowherds were rescued by him from the forest-conflagration, the serpent Kāliya was subdued and Indra was humbled down with his pride ridden off.

27. The big mountain (Govardhana) was held up by him on his palm for seven days and Gokula was protected from (driving) showers, (tempestuous) winds and thunderbolts.

28. Looking with delight at his ever-cheerful appearance beaming with smiles, the Gopīs easily[2] got over their sufferings of various sorts.

29. People say that being protected by him in every respect, the race of Yadu became widely celebrated and will attain affluence, glory and influence.

1. It may be noted that Dhenuka was killed by Balarāma (vide 10.15.36) But people in Mathura heard a different report.

2. ŚR. alternately takes *śramam* as qualifying *mukham* and interprets: the slightly 'fatigued countenance of Kṛṣṇa.'

30. This is his elder brother the splendid-looking Balarāma of lotus-eyes, by whom were killed Pralamba, Vatsaka (the demon who assumed the form of a calf) and Asuras like Baka and others[1]"

31. While people were talking thus (among themselves) and there was a flourish of trumpets, Cāṇūra addressed Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, and spoke as follows :

32. "Oh Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda ! Oh Balarāma ! Hearing that both of you are respected as great heroes, expert in wrestling, you have been invited by the king who is eager to see you.

33. Subjects who abide by the wish of the king in thought, word and deeds, attain to prosperity. And if they behave to the contrary, they meet with the reverse of it.

34. It is quite well known that since the age as cowherd-boys who tend calves, even grown up cowherds also take delight in sporting and wrestling in the jungle while pasturing the cows.

35. Hence, let all of us do what is liked by the king. All beings will be propitious unto us thereby, as the king personifies all beings."

36. Hearing that speech, Kṛṣṇa welcomed it. Considering that wrestling was desirable in his case[2], he gave a reply appropriate to the place and occasion.

37. "(Though we are not city-dwellers like you under Kaṁsa's direct control) we too, wanderers in the forest as we are, are the subjects of the king of Bhojas we shall always do what is agreeable to him. It will be a great favour unto us.

38. We are after all boys. We shall play with those who are equal to us in strength. Let there be proper type of wrestling. There should not be the slightest transgression of justice, Oh judges of the wrestling tournaments."

1. As it usually happens in hearsay information, people of Mathura seem to have mixed up matters, for Vatsa and Baka were killed by Kṛṣṇa.

2. VB. explains that the investiture of the sacred thread of Kṛṣṇa had not taken place. As such, though he was a Kṣattriya, he was ineligible to use arms. Hence (for killing them) wrestling was appropriate from the point of time and place or traditional usage.

Cāṇūra replied :

39. "Neither You nor Balarāma is a child nor a teen-ager (from eleven to fifteen years of age). You, by whom an elephant possessing the strength of a thousand elephants was killed as if in a sport, are the foremost amongs the powerful people.

40. Hence, Oh Kṛṣṇa (A scion of the Vṛṣṇi clan) You will have to wrestle with powerful athletes. There is no injustice in this case. You measure Your strength with me and let Balarāma wrestle with Muṣṭika."

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Slaying of Kaṁsa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. (When the pairs (or wrestlers) were so determined) Lord Kṛṣṇa (the slayer of demon Madhu) of unflinching resolution caught hold of Cāṇūra and Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī advanced towards Muṣṭika.

1-A* (Spurious—vide the foot-note)

2. With the ambition of vanquishing the opponent, they interlocked their hands and feet with those of the opponent and vehemently tugged each other (with all their strength).

3. While wrestling they struck each other with fore-arms with clenched fists[1], knees with knees, heads with heads and chests with chests.

*. D.S. Yande's edition of the Bh.P. Bombay 1928 adds this spurious verse. As Vṛndāvana edt. does not give it, I did not include it above :

āsphoṭya hastau hastābhyām ūrū caiva punaḥ punaḥ /
visṛjya bhūyaḥ saṅgṛhya parikramya parasparam //

It describes how the wrestlers stroked loudly their arms and thighs, closed upon each other and tried to dodge.

I regard it as 'spurious' as some standard annotators such as ŚR., VR., VJ., VB., VT. do not take its cognisance.

1. *tasmān muṣṭyupa-lakṣitatvena kathañcit muṣṭir eva vācyā*—VT

4. They mutually tried to overpower each other by whirling, squeezing into arms, dashing each other to the ground and by pouncing on each other or dodging by receding.

5. Fired with the ambition to vanquish the other, they subjected each other's bodies to sufferings by lifting up, by carrying away, dashing down on the ground and fixing the opponent to the spot.

6. Noticing that unequally-arranged fight between the weak boys and the powerful athletes, all the lady-spectators, being full of compassion, spoke (criticising) in groups, to each other, Oh king !

7. "Alas ! It is out and out injustice on the part of the royal assembly who revel in such unequal fighting between the weak and the strong opponents, despite the presence of the king as spectator.

8. What a great contrast is there between the athletes of adamant-like powerful bodies, enormous like the hills, as opposed to the two saplings (teenagers) of very delicate limbs and who have not even attained youth.

9. This is certainly the transgression of righteousness on the part of this assembly. One should never stay at all at a place where violation of religion and justice takes place.

10. An intelligent person who is aware of the faults of the members of attending an assembly, ought not to enter that assembly at all. Irrespective of his participation in the discussion of the assembly by remaining silent despite knowing the truth or making a non-factual statement), the attending member incurs sins.

11. Lo ! Have a look at the lotus-face of Kṛṣṇa. How his countenance appears adorned with droplets of perspiration and resembles a lotus covered with drops of water, as he whirls round his opponent.

12. Don't you see the face of Balarāma, with reddish eyes, flushed with rage against Muṣṭika, yet beautified with a defiant laugh.

13. Oh ! How blessed must be the lands of Vraja where this Ancient Person whose feet are worshipped by god Śiva and goddess Lakṣmī roams about in the guise of a human being, decorated with wreaths of quaint wild flowers, playing upon

his flute, tending cows in the company of Balarāma and goes out for playing games (Shame upon this assembly where he is maltreated thus).

14. What supreme type of penance the Gopīs must have practised that they drink with their eyes his personal charm which is the essence of beauty, neither equalled nor surpassed by anything, which is by itself too beautiful to be adorned by anything external which assumed novelty every moment and is very difficult to obtain, as it is the permanent absolute abode of glory, beauty, affluence and almightiness.

15. Blessed are the women of Vraja who, in the course of their every day activities like milking the kine, pounding corns etc. churning curds for butter, applying cow-dung to the ground, rocking the cradles, lullabying their babies, cleaning and sweeping the houses, glorify him in songs with their hearts deeply attached to him, with their throat choked with tears and who get whatever they wish with their minds absorbed in Lord Kṛṣṇa[1] (*or* who carry on all their activities while contemplating on Lord Kṛṣṇa).

16. Inexhaustible must be the fund of merits of those women of Vraja who, coming out on the street quickly on hearing him playing upon the flute, while going out of the Vraja in the morning and returning to Vraja in the evening along with the (herd of) cows, are able to behold his countenance beaming with smiles and radiating grace and compassion.

17. While the women folk were loudly discussing among themselves, the glorious Lord Hari, the Master of Yoga made up his mind to finish with the enemy, Oh Leader of Bharatas !

18.* Hearing the panicky discussion of women (full of apprehension), the parents (Vasudeva and Devakī) who were not aware of the (extraordinary) strength of their children, were overwhelmed with filial love and were agitated at heart (full of repentance for not instructing Akrūra not to bring children to Mathura).

1. *ŚR. urukramacittaṁ tenaiva yānaṁ sarva-viṣaya-prāptir yāsāṁ tāḥ /*

*. untraced in the text of VJ.

19. Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa) and Cāṇūra fought with each other using diverse manouvers in wrestling. In the same manner did Balarāma wrestle with Muṣṭika.

20. It is reported that at every blow and stroke from the Lord's limbs (such as fisted fore-arms and knees) which were hard like strokes of Vajra (Indra's thunderbolt), the limbs of Cāṇūra got shattered and he fainted now and then.

21. With the swiftness of a hawk, the enraged Cāṇūra jumped up and clenching both hands into fists, struck the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa (the son of Vasudeva) on the chest.

22-23. The Lord however did not budge an inch under that blow like an elephant when struck with a wreath of flowers), (on the contrary) catching hold of Cāṇūra by both his arms, he whirled Cāṇūra several times so violently as extinguished his life thereby and dashed him on the ground, where he lay stretched with ornaments and garlands scattered and hair dishevelled, like the flagstaff of Indra struck down.

24. Similarly Muṣṭika was violently slapped with his palms by Balarāma who was dealt a blow with his fist by Muṣṭika.

25. Trembling violently (in a swoon) and pressed hard (from within), he vomitted blood profusely through his mouth and fell down dead on the ground, like a tree uprooted by a stormy wind.

26. After this, Balarāma, the past master in boxing (lit. in dealing blows) sportively yet scornfully dealt a blow with his left fist and killed another demon Kūṭa who advanced to fight.

27. At the same time, Śala (who approached Kṛṣṇa to pull his leg) got his head knocked off by Kṛṣṇa's kick and the head of Tosalaka (who attempted the same simultaneously) had his head split in two (by Kṛṣṇa's kick) and both of them fell down lifeless on the ground.

28. When Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kūṭa, Śala and Tośalaka were thus killed, the rest of the wrestlers, being anxious to save their own lives, ran away.[1]

1. Out of the various commentaries describing this wrestling, it appears that VB had a better idea of that art.

29. Then Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa dragged forth their cowherd-friends in the arena. And clasping them they sported. While the trumpets were flourishing, their anklets too jingled as (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) capered and danced.

30. With the exception of Kaṁsa, all spectators were overjoyed at the (athletic) feats of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. And all good people including prominent Brāhmaṇas cheered them up with the shouts "Bravo ! Well-done !".

31. It is traditionally reported that when the stalwart wrestlers, were killed and the rest took to their heals, Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas, stopped the blowing of all trumpets and commanded as follows :

32. "Drive out from the city (Mathura) the two ill-behaved sons of Vasudeva. Confiscate the wealth of all Gopas (cowherds). Arrest and bind down the wicked-minded Nanda.

33. As to the evil-minded Vasudeva, the vilest of the vile, let him be put to death immediately along with father Ugrasena and his attendants who have sided with the hostile party."

34. While Kaṁsa was thus boastfully ordering, the indefatigable Lord Kṛṣṇa flared up in rage and with vehemence he sprang forth with agility to the high dias (occupied by Kaṁsa).

35. Perceiving Kṛṣṇa so approaching him as his veritable Death, the heroic Kaṁsa instantly sprang from his seat and grasped his sword and shield.

36. Like Garuḍa forcibly seizing a serpent, the formidable Lord of irresistible and terrible energy, instantaneously caught hold of Kaṁsa firmly, as he was moving about right and left, like a hawk in the sky.

37. Toppling down his crown and catching Kaṁsa by his hair, the Lord hurled him down from the high dias to the groundfloor of the arena. And on him jumped the absolute willed, (the weighty) support of the (heaviest of the heavy) universe, the veritable Lord Viṣṇu (the lotus-navelled God) himself.

Vj.'s text adds

37A. When Kaṁsa was thus thrown down and crushed by Kṛṣṇa, (the mightily heavy) abode of the three worlds and

of absolute will power, Kaṁsa gave up his life in a second (the winking of the eyelid), Oh King.

38. And like unto a lion dragging an elephant, Lord Hari dragged him on the ground though lifeless, even while the world was witnessing it (aghast). Loud shrieks, screams and shouts expressing grief and horror burst forth from all the people, Oh King.

39. With a mind agitated with fright, he always visualized in front of him the Lord armed with a discus even while he was drinking, speaking, wandering, sleeping (nay even) breathing. Hence after death, he attained (identity with) that very form which is so very difficult (for others) to attain.

40. Kaṅka, Nyagrodhaka, and other eight younger brothers of Kaṁsa became enraged and attacked him with a view to repay the moral debt of their brother by avenging his death.

41. With the tusk of the elephant as a club (*parigha*) Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, struck down and finished all those who rushed fully prepared and with vehement impetuosity, as a lion kills beasts.

42. Kettle-drums were sounded in the heavens. Great divinities like Brahmā, Śiva and others were highly delighted and sang songs of glory, while showering flowers on him. And celestial women danced.

43. The widowed women, however, who were deeply grieved at the death of their husbands and friends came there beating their heads and eyes overflowing with tears, Oh great king.

44. Embracing their husbands lying dead on the ground the grieving ladies lamented loudly, shedding frequently profuse tears.

45. (They bewailed: "Ah! My Lord! My beloved, knower of *dharma*! Oh merciful Lord! Oh affectionate darling! By your death we, along with your home and progeny are as good as killed.

46. Oh foremost among men! Bereaved of you the protector, the city of Mathura does not appear beautiful as it is bereft of joyousness, festivals and auspiciousness.

47. Oh Lord !You perpetrated utmost cruelty and harshness towards the innocents. Hence, you have been brought to such a plight. What oppressors of living beings can get happiness ?

48. For, this Kṛṣṇa is verily the beginning (creator), end (destroyer) and the protector of all beings. He who is insubordinate to him shall never get any happiness."

Śrī Śuka said :

49. Having consoled the ladies of the royal family, the glorious Lord who is the protector of the world, caused what is known as the formal obsequies and funeral rites of those who were killed.

50. Thereupon, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma secured the release of their father and mother from their chains and touching their feet with their heads, paid respects to them.

51. Realizing that their sons who were bowing down are verily the Lords of the world, Devakī and Vasudeva being afraid (of a possible offence to them) did not embrace them.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Restoration of Preceptor Sāndīpani's son

Śrī Śuka continued:

1. Noticing that his parents, Vasudeva and Devakī, had realized the truth (of their Divine Nature) prematurely (before enjoying the filial bliss in loving them as their children), the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa, cast over them his divine Māyā (the spell of his deluding faculty) which infatuates the world, so that this realization (of his God-hood) should not continue (as it would not give scope to their parental love and affect their affectionate filial behaviour).

2. Kṛṣṇa, the bull (prominent person) among the Sātvatas, approached along with his elder brother to his parents.

He bowed down with great modesty, and respectfully addressed them: "Oh Mother" and "Oh father."

3. "Father ! Though both of you have been all along longing earnestly for it, we could not, at any time, give you the pleasure of witnessing the infancy, childhood and boyhood of your sons.

4. Unfortunate as we are, we had not the good luck of staying near you nor could we enjoy the bliss of being caressed by parents which children dwelling in their parent's home experience.

5. It is not possible for a mortal being, even within the full span of human life of hundred years, to repay the obligations of parents who brought forth and nourished his body whereby all the four objects in life (like *dharma*, *artha* etc.) are achieved.

6. If he (the son) be (physically and financially) competent but does not maintain them by rendering personal service or financial help, he is made to eat his own flesh (in hell) after his death, by servants of Yama.

7. He who, in spite of his competence (to support) his old mother, father, chaste wife and infant son, his preceptor, (learned) Brāhmaṇa and one seeking his resort, is as good as dead though breathing.

8. With our minds ever in terror of Kaṁsa and due to our inability to worship you both, all these days have been sheerly wasted away.

9. It behoves you, Oh father and mother, to forgive us, since we were dependants and unable to render service to you, even though you were mercilessly harassed by that wicked-hearted fellow Kaṁsa."

Śrī Śuka said:

10. Fascinated by the charming words of Lord Hari who, though the soul of the universe, had assumed a human form through his Māyā Potency, they placed him on their lap, embraced him and felt greatly delighted.

11. Oh King ! Bound with ties of (filial) affection, they bathed him profusely with their tears. Being bewildered and

with their throats choked with tears and emotions, they could utter nothing.

12. Having thus comforted his parents, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, (immediately) installed his maternal grandfather as the king of Yadus.

13. He addressed him (Ugrasena): "Oh great king! May Your Majesty be pleased to command us (Yadus) as well as the subjects (of the Śūrasena country). Owing to an imprecation from Yayāti, Yadus are not entitled to occupy a throne.[1]

14. When I attend upon you as your servant, even gods (and other supernatural beings) will submissively offer worship to you. What then to speak of other chiefs of human beings? They will definitely do so.

15-16. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Creator of the Universe, brought back his kith and kin—Yadus, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Dāśārhas, Kukuras and others, who being overcome with the fear from Kaṁsa, had fled to different directions and had undergone suffering in foreign lands. He consoled them, providing them with sufficient wealth and wherewithals and rehabilitated them in their homes.

17. Protected by the arms of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and with all their agonies removed by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they enjoyed themselves in their homes with all their desire accomplished.

18. (Having the opportunity of) seeing daily the lotus-like countenance of Kṛṣṇa graced with splendour and beauty and beaming with smiles and compassionate looks, all of them were delighted.

19. Even aged persons thereof, who could drink with their eyes the nectarine beauty of his lotus-face, became rejuvenated with abundant strength and energy.

1. Despite Yadu's refusal to transfer his youth to his father for enjoying his mother (a serious moral problem), Yadu was given the southern part of his kingdom by his father (*vide Supra* 9.19.22). ŚR. explains: 'Though you belong to the Yadu clan, you will not incur any sin as you occupy the throne by my command.'

20. Thereupon, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Son of Devakī, and Balarāma approached Nanda, and embracing him, spoke to him as follows, Oh King of kings.

21. "Father ! Both of us have been extremely fondled and nourished by you both (Nanda and Yaśodā) who have been highly affectionate to us. Parents cherish more love towards their children than to their own selves.

22. He is the real father and she is the (*de facto*) mother who nourish and caress like their own sons, other babes who are abandoned by their relatives, due to their incapacity to feed and protect them.

23. Father ! Now all of you return to your Vraja. After looking to the welfare and felicity of friends hereof, we shall come to visit you, our kith and kin who due to our separation from them are grieved through their love for us."

24. Having consoled Nanda along with the residents of Vraja in this way, the glorious Immutable Lord (Kṛṣṇa) respectfully worshipped them with garments, ornaments, utensils (of copper, brass etc. as milk-containers) and other gifts.

25. Nanda who was addressed thus (by Kṛṣṇa) was overwhelmed with filial love. With his eyes streaming with tears, he hugged them both and returned to Vraja along with Gopas.

26. Thereafter, Vasudeva, the son of Śūra caused as per *Śāstric* prescriptions, the ceremony of the investiture of the sacred thread[1] (essential for the status of the 'twice-borns') (of their sons) by his family priest Garga and other Brāhmaṇas.

27. After adorning the Brāhmaṇas with ornaments, he worshipped them and gave as *dakṣiṇā* (fee for performing this ceremony) cows with their calves, decorated with gold chains and other ornaments and covered with silk-cloth.

28. The noble-minded Vasudeva recollected the cows which he donated mentally, according to the constellation that was in ascendance at the time of the birth of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa but (which he could not give, as they) were seized ille-

1. As the presence of mother is essential in the sacred thread ceremony, it is obvious that Balarāma's mother, Rohiṇī was brought from Vraja—VT.

gally and unrighteously by Kaṁsa. And he gave those cows also (which he intended to give).

29. Thereupon, being consecrated (through the investiture of the sacred thread) and attaining the status of the 'twice-borns', those two staunch observers of vows adopted the vow of celibacy (lit. vow pertaining to the *Gāyatri mantra*) from the sage Garga, the family priest of Yadus.

30. Though both of them were the source of all lores, and the omniscient Lords of the worlds, they concealed their unclouded spiritual knowledge which is in-born and not borrowed from others, by behaving like common men.

31. Desirous of having a residence in a preceptor's house for their education, they approached (and served Sāndīpani who was originally a resident of Kāśī[1] but was now a citizen of Avantī.

32. The self-controlled brothers formally approached him with due humility and respect, and set a model of faultless behaviour with the teacher, (for others to emulate). Both of them who were respectfully treated, served their teacher with devotion, as if he were a god.

33. Being highly pleased with their pure-hearted devoted services, the eminent Brāhmaṇa teacher, Sāndīpani taught them all the Vedas along with their *Upaniṣads* (the philosophical works) and the accessory branches (viz. *Śikṣā*—phonetics, *chandas*—prosody, *Vyākaraṇa*—grammar, *Jyotiṣa*—Astronomy, *Kalpa*—science of Vedic ritualism and *Nirukta*—etymology).

34. He taught them Military science (lit. the Veda pertaining to archery) along with the mystic formulae (*mantras*) of discharging and retracting *astras* (missiles), *dharma-śāstra* (Law incorporated into the codes of Manu etc.), *Mimāṁsā*, Logic and political science along with its six branches[2] (viz. techniques regarding peace-treaties, warfare, expedition, encampment, spreading sedition and dis-array among enemies and consolidation of alliance).

1. *Kāśyam*—belonging to Kāśyapa *gotra*.
2. ŚR. and VJ. quote the following verse enumerating these branches-
Sandhiṁ ca vigrahaṁ caiva yānam āsanam eva ca/
dvaidhī-bhāvaṁ saṁśrayaṁ ca ṣaḍ-guṇāḥ kavayo viduḥ //

35. Those two greatest among the great, who were themselves the progenitors of all lores mastered everything that the teachers uttered but once to them (while teaching), Oh protector of men !

36. Within a period of sixtyfour days and nights, those brothers, with controlled minds, mastered as many (i.e. sixtyfour[1]) arts and crafts, and persuaded their preceptor to accept whatever he liked as his fee of teaching.

1. ŚR. quotes a work *Śaiva tantra* enumerating the traditional sixty four *kalās*. Ardhamāgadhī Jaina canon enumerates 72 *kalās*. The resemblance between the two lists is significant from the point of social life in ancient India. Here the list of sixtyfour *kalās* as quoted by ŚR. and explained by VT is given.

1. *Gīta* (singing) 2. *Vādya* (instrumental music) 3. *Nṛtya* (dancing) 4. *Nāṭya* (histrionics) 5. *Ālekhya* (painting, and drawing) 6. *Viśeṣakacchedya* (painting various designs on the body) 7. *Taṇḍula-kusuma-bali-vikāra* (preparations of various designs with rice, flowers etc. in worship) 8. *Puṣpāstaraṇa* (preparing a bed of flowers 9. *Daśana-vasanā-aṅgarāga* (painting the teeth, limbs of the body and articles of dress with various figures). 10. *Maṇi-bhūmikā-karma* (paving of the floor with precious stones.) 11. *Śayana-racanā* (preparation of bed) 12. *Udaka-vādya* (*Jala-taraṅga* : a musical instrument with water pots), *Udaka ghāta* (steadying water enabling one to walk over it) 13. *Citra-yoga* (demonstration of miracles). 14. *Mālya-grathana-vikalpa* (preparation of wreaths and chaplets of flowers). 15. *Śekharāpīḍa-yojana* (preparation of ornaments of flowers for the ears etc.) 16. *Nepathya-yoga* (method of beautifying the body with clothes etc.). 17 *Karṇa-patra-bhaṅga* (drawing ornamental figures on the ears). 18. *Sugandha-yukti* (making of cosmetics and perfumes) 19. *Bhūṣaṇa-yojana* (making ornaments of different kinds). 20. *Aindra-jāla* (Jugglery). 21. *Kaucumāra-yoga* (assuming various disguises) 22. *Hasta-lāghava* (sleight of hand) 23. *Citra-śākāpūpa-bhakṣya-vikāra-kriyā* (preparation of various sweet dishes). 24. *Pānakarasarāgāsava-yojana* (preparation of drinks of various tastes and colours). 25. *Sūcīvāya-karma* (needle work and embroidery). 26. *Sūtra-krīḍā* (Puppet-show by string-pulling), 27. *Vīṇā-ḍamaruka-vādya* (making musical instruments), 28. *Prahelikā* (solving conundrums—like cross-word puzzles); 29. *Pratimālā* (making replicas of things—) 30. *durvācaka-yoga* (uttering tongue-twisters), 31. *Pustaka vācanam* (fast reading of books (Mss) despite *lacunae*), 32. *Nāṭakākhyāyikā-darśanam* (Dramaturgy and writing plays or dramas), 33. *Kāvya-samasyā-pūraṇam* (completion of a verse from a part—generally containing an apparently illogical statement) to make a cogent statement out of it) 34. *Paṭṭikā-vetra-bāṇa-vikalpa* (Preparation of ligatures, canework, arrows), 35. *tarka-karma* (spindle work), 36. *takṣaṇam* (carpentry), 37. *Vāstuvidyā* (architecture), 38. *rūpya-ratna-parīkṣā* (evaluation and testing of valuable metals (silver, gold) precious stones), 39. *dhātuvāda* (Alchemy), 40. *maṇi-rāga-*

37. Noticing their miraculous capacity and greatness and their super human intelligence, the Brāhmaṇa, after consultation with his wife, sought (the restoration to life of) his son who died in the ocean at Prabhāsa (paṭṭaṇa in Saurāṣṭra), as his fee.

38. Complying with his request with the word, "So be it", those two great heroes (who could single-handedly fight with ten thousand warriors) and were of unlimited prowess, then mounted their chariot, arrived at Prabhāsa and going to the beach thereof, sat there for a moment. Having come to know of the arrival of those divine personages, the god presiding over the ocean, worshipped them with valuable presents.

39. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke to him: "Let the son of my preceptor who was swallowed up by you in a big wave, be restored immediately."

The Presiding Deity of the sea replied:

40-41. "Oh refulgent Lord Kṛṣṇa ! I have never carried away that son of your preceptor. But there is a formidable demon called Pañcajana who moves through the waters. He is an asura who has assumed the form of a conch As a matter

jñāna (developing colours in precious stones), 41. *ākara-jñāna* (mining and mineralogy), 42. *Vṛkṣāyurveda* (botany), 43. *meṣa-kukuṭa-lāvaka-yuddha-vidhi* (arranging ram-fights, cock-fights), 44. *Śuka-sārikā-pralapana* (teaching parrots, etc. to imitate human speech), 45. *utsādanam* (Driving out an enemy—by a *mantra*), 46. *Keśamārjana-Kauśala* (hair-dressing and cleaning), 47. *akṣara-muṣṭikā-kathana*(reading closed letters and divining what is hidden in fists), 48. *mlecchita-kutarka-vikalpa* (reading books in foreign or barbaric-scripts), 49. *deśa-bhāṣājñāna* (knowledge of languages of the country i.e. Indian languages), 50. *Puṣṭa-śakaṭikā-nirmiti-jñāna* (knowledge of making a cart blossom), 51. *yantra-mātṛkā-dhāraṇa-mātṛkā* (magical formulae—with figures inscribed with letters and amulets to wear), 52. *sampāṭyam* (breaking hard substances like diamonds in different shapes), 53. *mānasī-kāvya-krīyā* (mind-reading in verse form), 44. *abhidhāna-kośa* (Lexicography), 55. *chandojñana* (knowledge of prosody), 56. *Kriyāvikalpa* (multiplying the number of objects by various devices), 57. *chalitaka-yoga* (playing tricks), 58. *Vastra-gopana* (showing one's clothes as more superfine), 59. *dyūta viśeṣa* (expertise in gambling), 60. *ākarṣa-krīḍā* (attracting remote objects= telekinesis). 61. *Bālakrīḍanaka* (playing children's games), 62. *Vaindyikī* (jugglery and practice kriyā dharmas), 63. *Vaijayikī* (foreknowledge of victory in debate), 64. *Vaitālikriyā* (control of goblins and evil spirits).

of fact, the boy has been carried away by him." Hearing that, the glorious Lord instantly plunged into the water, killed the demon (Pañcajana) but could not trace the child in his bowels.

42-44. Taking the conch which formed his body, he returned to his chariot. He went with Balarāma to Saṁyamanī, the beloved city of Yama, the god of death and blew his conch. Hearing the loud blast of the conch, Yama, the chastiser of all beings, offered them worship on a grand scale and with deep devotion. Bowing down in humility, he submitted to Kṛṣṇa who abides in the hearts of all beings, "Oh Viṣṇu who have assumed a human form out of sport ! What can I do for you both ?"

The glorious Lord replied:

45. Oh great Ruler ! Even if the son of my preceptor is brought here due to the force of his *Karma*, bring him here in obedience to and under the sanction of my command.

46. The preceptor's son who, in compliance of his command, was brought back by the god of Death, was restored to their preceptor by those two eminent Yadus who requested him, "Be pleased to ask for any other boon."

The Preceptor (Sāndipani) said:

47. Child Kṛṣṇa ! The obligations of the preceptors have been richly and properly repaid by you both respectable pupils. What desire of your preceptor can remain unfulfilled ?

48. Oh heroes ! You return to your homes ! May your glory be purifying to the world ! May your memory and knowledge of the Vedas remain afresh here and hereafter.

49. Oh child parīkṣit ! Being thus permitted to return home, both of them returned to their capital in their chariot which had the speed of the wind and the thundering of the cloud.

50. All the subjects who missed Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa for many days, were highly rejoiced to see them both, like persons who have recovered their lost wealth.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Uddhava deputed for consoling Nanda

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Uddhava was the foremost counsellor of the Vṛṣṇis and the utmost beloved friend of Kṛṣṇa. He was a direct disciple of Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods and a founder of the political science) and was most intelligent.

2. On one occasion, holding Uddhava's hand in his own, Lord Hari, the destroyer of miseries of those who seek asylum in him, spoke to him—his most beloved votary of unflinching devotion.

3. "Oh gentle-natured Uddhava! Please do go to Vraja. Bring felicity to our[1] parents (Nanda and Yaśodā) by communicating my message to them. Please relieve the (mental) agony of separation from me of the Gopīs by conveying my special message to them.

4. They have entirely devoted their heart and soul to me and they regard me as their very life. For my sake they have given up their husbands and sons—nay their bodily requirements[2] as well.

4A. They are united with me in mind regarding me as their beloved-most, the climax of their love and their Lord.

I always support and give happiness to those who renounce all pleasures and interests and means to obtain them here and hereafter, and have over-ruled popular moral conventions for my sake.

5. Myelf, the foremost of their beloved objects, being away at a distant place, the women of Gokula always brood over me and being overwhelmed with deep anxiety and grief caused by separation from me, they have become oblivious to everything else, dear friend!

6. It is due to my message assuring them of my return to visit them that the cowherd women whose heart and soul is

1. *v.l. nau*—of us both—VB.

2. 4-A. Some editions (e.g. Yande's Bombay edition) add this line here :

māmeva dayitaṁ preṣṭham ātmānam manasā gatāḥ /

absorbed in me are somehow managing to stay alive with great difficulty".

Śri Śuka said :

7. Oh king ! When thus instructed, Uddhava received with respect and devotion the message of his Lord. Getting into his chariot, he drove fast to Nanda's Gokula.

8. While the sun was setting and his chariot was obscured with the thick cloud of dust raised by the hoofs of the cattle that were returning home, the blessed Uddhava reached Nanda's Vraja (and could contact Nanda without Gopīs being aware of his arrival).

9. It (the Gokula) was noisy to the roaring of maddened bulls (in rut) fighting with one another for cows in heat, and by rushing of cows with heavy udders to meet their calves.

10. It appeared beautiful with snow-white calves (briskly) frisking and capering here and there and with the musical notes of flutes and (whistle-like) sounds while milking the cows.

11. The Gokula appeared most resplendent with richly adorned Gopīs and Gopas, the former glorifying in songs the auspicious deeds of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

12. It was charming with the habitations of the cowherds where the sacred fire, the sun-God, guests, cows, Brāhmaṇas, ancestors and gods were being worshipped with flowers, lights and fragrant frank-incense burnt before them (*OR* and which were beautified by garlands, lamps and burning frankincense).

13. On all sides, it abounded in groves in full blossom and resounded with the sweet warblings and notes of birds and hummings of bees. It was beautified with ponds full of lotus-beds teeming with swans and Kāraṇḍavas (a species of ducks).

14. Seeing (and receiving) Uddhava, the beloved follower of kṛṣṇa, who had arrived there, Nanda was exceedingly delighted. He embraced him and worshipped him (with due formalities and respect) regarding him to be Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) himself.

15. When he was served with rich dishes and was comfortably resting on a bed, and had been relieved of his fatigue by shampooing and such other services, Nanda enquired of him.

16. "Oh Highly blessed dear Uddhava ! Is our friend Vasudeva, the delight (or son) of Śūra happy and doing well, as he is now free (from imprisonment) united with his sons, wives and others and is surrounded by his friends and well-wishers ?

17. The wicked Kaṁsa who always hated the righteous and religious-minded Yadus, has fortunately been killed by his own sins along with his followers.

18. Does Kṛṣṇa remember us, his mother Yaśodā, his friends, well-wishers and other Gopas, Vraja of which he was the protector, cows, Vṛndāvana and mount Govardhana !

19. Will Kṛṣṇa, the Protector of cows, come at least once, to see his friends, kith and kin (hereof) ? Then alone we shall be able to see his charming countenance with a shapely nose, happy smiles and (loving) glances.

20. We have been protected from the forest conflagration, stormy winds and driving showers, the demon in the bullock form (Ariṣṭa), the serpent (Kāliya) and from perils and fatal accidents which were difficult to be avoided, by the highly noble-souled Kṛṣṇa.

21. Dear Uddhava ! When we remember the heroic exploits of Kṛṣṇa, his sportive glances, his smiles and talks, all our actions become slackened.

22. Even as we see the play-grounds, the river Yamunā, hills, forests and groves adorned with the foot-prints of Kṛṣṇa, our mind becomes absorbed in him.

23. As observed by Garga, I too regard that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa are the most prominent divinities who have descended on this earth for accomplishing some important mission of gods.

24. Both of them easily killed, as in a sport, Kaṁsa who possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants, the two wrestlers (Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika) and the king of elephants. Kuvalayāpīḍa.

25. Like a king of elephants breaking down a sugarcane, Kṛṣṇa snapped the formidable bow three *tālas* (i.e. twentyseven spans) in length. And on one hand, he held up the mount Govardhana for a period of seven days.

26. By him were killed as in a sport demons like Pralamba, Dhenuka, Ariṣṭa, Tṛṇāvarta, Baka and others who have vanquished gods and *asuras*."

Śrī Śuka said :

27. Recollecting graphically again and again the sports and exploits of Kṛṣṇa, Nanda whose mind and intellect were deeply attached to Kṛṣṇa lapsed into silence, as he was overwhelmed with extreme longing and (felt choked up) with a flood of affection.

28. While Yaśodā was listening to the description of the exploits of her sons, she shed tears profusely and her breasts overflowed with milk through maternal affection.

29. Noticing such a supreme affection of Nanda and Yaśodā towards Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava spoke with great joy to Nanda.

Uddhava said :

30. "Oh courteous bestower of honours![1] Both of you are indeed the most praiseworthy among embodied beings in this world, inasmuch as you cherish such a deep love for Nārāyaṇa (Kṛṣṇa) who is the Creator of all beings.

31. For these two—Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa—are the primary (efficient and material) cause of the Universe ; they are the *Puruṣa* (spirit) and *Pradhāna* (Primordial matter). Permeating all beings, these two Ancient(beginningless) Lords control varieties of consciousness.

32. If at the time of death, a person concentrates his mind in him at least for a moment, he reduces to ashes all his (accumulated) *karmas* and (realizing the nature of his self) becomes identical with Brahman, (and attaining a form constituted of pure *sattva*) acquires the refulgence of the Sun, and instantly reaches the highest goal.

1. You gave us the honour of belonging to the fraternity of devotees of the Lord from Nārada down to a resident of Gokula—VT.

33. Both of you cherish utmost devotion unto him (Kṛṣṇa) who is the veritable Lord Nārāyaṇa himself, the cause (source) of all beings, and who has assumed a human form for some divine purpose. Oh noble-souled Nanda ! What meritorious acts are yet to be achieved by you both !

34. At no distant date, the immutable Lord Kṛṣṇa will visit Vraja again. The glorious of the Sātvatas will accomplish whatever delights his parents.

35. Whatever Kṛṣṇa has promised you after slaying Kaṁsa, the enemy of Sātvatas, in the arena[1] he will accomplish it for you.

36. Please do not get depressed, Oh highly fortunate ones ! You shall see Kṛṣṇa by your side. Just as the fire (latently) exists in fuel, he abides in the hearts of all beings.

37. (Please do not entertain doubt how he will leave his dear parents and come to you). None is extremely beloved of or disliked by him, for he is above attachments. None is superior or inferior or unequal to him as he is the same to all.[2]

38. He has no mother, no father, no wife, no children or other relatives. He has none who is his own or who is his non-self. He has no corporeal form at all.

39. He has no bound of *Karma*. But out of sport and for the protection of the righteous, he incarnates in good (e g. Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, bad (Fish, Boar) and mixed (e.g. Man-lion) types of species.)[3]

40. Though this unborn Lord is transcendental to and hence unaffected by *guṇas*, he assumes all the *guṇas* such as the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. It is out of sportiveness that he creates, maintains and destroys the universe by these means.

41. Just as the whole earth appears rotating to an eye that is rolling, the Soul is regarded as the Agent through the influence of *ahaṁkāra* (Ego) while it is actually the mind that is active.[4]

1. Vide.Supra 45.23
2. Not traced in VB
3. Incarnates among gods, humans and sub-human beings—VJ.
4. Not traced in VJ.'s Text.

42. This glorious Lord Hari is not merely a son of you both, but is the Sun, Soul, father, mother and the Almighty Ruler of all.

43. Without the presence of and apart from the Lord, there is nothing which is seen or heard of, has happened in the past or present or can happen in future: nothing immobile or mobile, great or small is different from or without the presence of the Lord. For only he is everything and real.

44. In this way, while Nanda and Kṛṣṇa's follower (Uddhava) were talking, the whole night passed away (without their being aware of it). (At dawn) the cowherd women got up, lighted the lamps, duly worshipped the presiding deities of their home e. g. the threshold, and began to churn their curds.

45. The Gopīs appeared splendid with their jewels shining refulgent in the light of lamps, as they pulled to and fro the cords of the churning-rod, with (jingling) rows of bangles on their hands, with their big hips, heavy breasts and pearl necklaces moving (in a rhythmic motion), with their cheeks refulgent with the radiance of the rocking ear-rings (while churning), and with their countenance decked with red saffron.

46. The sound of the singing damsels of Vraja glorifying loudly in songs the deeds of the lotus-eyed God (Kṛṣṇa) mixed with the (gurgling) sound of the churning of the curds, filled the heaven and thereby whatever was inauspicious in all directions was dispelled.

47. When the sun rose, and the Gopīs of Vraja saw a gold-plated chariot at the door of Nanda, they enquired whose chariot it was.

48. Has Akrūra, the accomplice of Kaṁsa who carried away lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa to Mathura and thus accomplished Kaṁsa's purpose, come again?

49. Is he going to bring about the gratification of his dead master by offering us i.e. our bodies or flesh as *piṇḍa* (offering to the deceased) to him. While the women were talking thus, Uddhava who had finished his bath and morning (religious) duties, arrived there.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Uddhava's Discourse on the Real Nature of the Lord, Return to Mathura

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. Observing that follower of Kṛṣṇa (viz. Uddhava) with (knee) long arms and eyes like (a pair of fresh-blown) lotuses clad in yellow (silk) raiment and wearing a garland of lotuses, with a lotus-like cheerful countenance, brightened with ear-rings set with resplendent jewels, all the damsels of Vraja, beaming with broad smiles, became extremely eager and curious to know who was that charming personality with fascinating looks, wearing dress and ornaments like those of Lord Kṛṣṇa, whence he came and his who's who. They surrounded him who had taken shelter under the lotus-feet of the Lord Kṛṣṇa of hallowing renown.

3. Ascertaining that he was the emissary of the spouse of goddess Lakṣmī (Kṛṣṇa) carrying a message for them, they bowed down to him with modesty. They received him courteously with bashful smiles, glances and sweet words. When he was comfortably seated, they enquired of him in great confidence (privately) :

4. "We learn that you are the attendant of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yadus, who have arrived here and that your honour has been deputed by the Lord for bringing about the happiness of his parents.

5. Otherwise, we do not see that there is anything worth remembering for him in the Gokula. The ties of affection of relatives and kinsmen are extremely difficult to dissociate even for sages.

6. In the case of others (who are not relatives) the friendship is contracted for achieving a purpose and it lasts till the purpose is accomplished, as in the case of love shown by men to (good-natured, guileless) women or by black bees to flowers.

7. Courtezans abandon a penniless (lover) ; subjects, an incompetent king; students who have completed the course of Vedic studies, their preceptors and the priests in sacrifice, the sacrificer who has paid their fees for performance of sacrifice.

8. Birds leave off the trees the fruits of which are exhausted; guests, the house after finishing their meals; beasts, a forest that is burnt down; a paramour after enjoying the women though attached to him."

9. When Uddhava, the emissary of Kṛṣṇa arrived at Vraja, the Gopīs whose body, mind and speech were completely devoted to Lord Govinda (Kṛṣṇa) disregarded the worldly usages and etiquettes (in behaving with strangers).

9*-A. VJ.'s Text differs (vide the footnote).

10. Remembering vividly every now and then the sportive activities of their Kṛṣṇa during his infancy and childhood, they glorified his deeds in songs and also wept, casting off their sense of bashfulness.

11. A certain Gopī who was musing over her union with Kṛṣṇa, saw a bee about her and imagining that it was the messenger deputed to her by her Beloved Kṛṣṇa, addressed it as follows[1] :

The Gopī said[2] :**

12. Oh bee![3] Oh friend of a rogue (Kṛṣṇa, a treacherous paramour)! Don't touch our feet (and try to win our favour by submissive bows) with your beard-like tentacles

* VJ's text reads differently :

When Uddhava, the emissary of Kṛṣṇa, arrived at Vraja, he perceived that the Gopī's thereof had dedicated their mind, body of speech to Govinda so completely that they had lost the sense of worldly manners and etiquettes.

1. SG. and the annotators of Gauḍīya school of Vaiṣṇavism assert that this Gopī was Rādhā. SG quotes the *Agni P.* to support this view but the quotation is untraceable in the Gurumandal Calcutta edt. of the *Agni P.*

** Irrespective of the name of Gopī who sang this ode to the black bee, it is one of the best poetic outbursts of a love-lorn heart in Sanskrit literature. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas regard this as the expression of "divine ecstasy" in the *mahābhāva* stage. This expression of intense love is called *Citrajalpa* and is discussed in their works on rhetorics. As VT. points out, this stage is superior to Mokṣa in blissfulness.

2. VJ. States that this address of a black bee is equally applicable to Uddhava. Thus *Kitava-bandhu* in v. 12 means 'A friend or relative of Kṛṣṇa who was a thief (stole butter etc.)

3. *madhupa*—One who has kissed the nectar-like sweet lips—VR.

tinged with the saffron of the wreath (of Kṛṣṇa) that was pressed down upon the (Saffron-painted) breasts of our rival women (of Mathura). Let Kṛṣṇa, the chief of Madhus whose messenger you are, as described above carry with him, the favours of the proud ladies (of Mathura). (Why his attempt to court rustic women like us !) which will become a butt of ridicule in the assembly of Yadus.

13. Being infidel like you who (after sucking the honey) immediately desert the (innocent, good-natured) flower, he made us drink but once the seductive, enchanting nectar of his lips. He instantly abandoned us. Alas ! What a pity ? How is it that the (notoriously fickle) goddess of wealth continues to serve his lotus feet (I presume that) her mind must have been transported by the fascinating talk of Kṛṣṇa of hallowed renown.

14. (Thinking that it is to gain her favour that the black-bee is humming a song of Kṛṣṇa's glory, she retorts).

Oh six-legged one ![1] Why are you singing here, in such details, in front of us, homeless foreste-dwellers, the glory of the Ancient-most[2] person Kṛṣṇa the Lord of Yadus. (It is already too well known to us). Go hence. Let all his episodes be glorified in song in the presence of the female friends of Kṛṣṇa (the friend of Arjuna). Those lady-loves of Kṛṣṇa the agonies of whose breasts (and heart) are soothed by his embrace and other erotic acts will bestow on you your desired object.

15. Are there any women on the earth, in the celestial region or in the nether-world who are difficult to be won over by him with his alluring crafty sweet smile and the tempting dancing of his eyebrows ? What are we after all to him, the

1. *Ṣaḍaṅghri*—Oh Uddhava you have mastered six *darśanas*, you attend to sixfold duties, you have trampled underfoot the six objects of enjoyment which obstruct the path of devotion.—VJ.

2. *Purāṇa*—

(i) *purā pūrvam eva ṇam nivṛtti-rūpam*
sukha-rūpam . . sāmpratam duḥkha-karam /
which formerly gave pleasure to us but now brings grief—SG.

(ii) *pure vartamānam* 'Kṛṣṇa who is staying in the town'—VJ.

dust on whose feet is adored by goddess Lakṣmī ?[1] However (go and convey my message to him) that the epithet *uttama-śloka* (one of the most glorious renown) befits him who is on the side of the helpless and forlorn people like us.

16. (The black bee approached her feet as if to beg pardon). Get away. Take away your head from my feet. I know you thoroughly. Being an emissary of Mukunda (an expert in fraudulent courting) you are trained in the fine art of conciliation and winsomeness by means of sweet words. It is here at Vraja that he (ungratefully) deserted us who have abandoned our husbands, children, prospects of happiness in the next world (by conforming to social morality) for his sake. Inconstant at heart as he is, what is there to be gained by such reconciliation ?

17. (In his previous incarnation as Dāśarathi Rāma) Cruelhearted by nature, like a hunter, (desirous of eating the flesh of his kill), he (surreptitiously) hit with an arrow Vāli, the king of monkeys. Being dominated by one woman (his consort Sītā), he deformed another woman (Śūrpaṇakhā) who approached him with amorous purpose. Like a crow eating up *bali* (boiled rice etc. offered in *bhūta-yajña*), he (as Vāmana) ate up (accepted the worship offered by) King Bali and (ungratefully) bound him down (and threw him in a cave in the subterranean world.) Now enough of any friendship with that person of black complexion (Kṛṣṇa). But the wealth of his episodes is too (precious and sweet) to forgo.

1. *caraṇa raja...ka* : We are however not among the gullible women who fall a victim to his temptations. The term *uttama-śloka* is applicable to the partisans of the helpless—VR.

(ii) We are after-all forest dwellers. We only hear that the term *uttama śloka* is used for one who espouses the cause of the indigent and the helpless but that is not our experience (for he has no interest in us). VJ.

SG. is interesting. The gist is as follows :

Only low women (*kāḥ striyaḥ*) or all women fall a victim to him by his craftiness in enticing women. Goddess Lakṣmī may be worshipping the dust on his feet but none of us will stoop so low. Only a person of glorious renown deserves singing which he is not. *Or* He has become so closefisted (and hard-hearted) that he does not see us. (This is of course ironical).

18* In this world, many persons who have but once enjoyed a particle of his delightful sportive deeds which are (sweet as) nectar to the ears, have shaken themselves free from conflicting pairs of qualities (like love and hate, pleasure and pain). Reducing themselves to non-entities[1], they have at once forsaken their homes and members of their families in a bereaved state, and have adopted the ascetic way of life like that of birds (i.e. the way of life of *haṁsa* ascetics) and practice control of sense-organs[2].

19. Oh messenger of Kṛṣṇa ! Let other topics be discussed. For, like female deer, the gullible female mates of black-antelopes, which (mistakenly) believe in the enticing musical notes of the hunter (and get into a trap or are hit with an arrow), we innocent maid-servants of Kṛṣṇa trusted in his crafty professions of love as genuine, and have many times[3] seen and suffered from the acute pangs of love created by his amorous touch of nails.

20. Oh friend of our Darling Lord ! Are you redeputed by our Beloved that you have come again ? You are an honourable guest. Dear black-bee ! Please seek whatever you would like to have from me. Oh gentle-natured bee ! As his consort Lakṣmī is always by his side and has a place on his bosom, how are you going to take up from here to the side of the Lord, separation from whom is very painful and difficult.

21. Oh gentle black-bee ! Is the son of our Gopa-chief (i.e. Nanda,) now at Mathurā back from his preceptor's house ? Does he remember his father's house (i.e. his parents Nanda and Yaśodā) ? Does he ever refer to us his maid-servants, in his talk ? Would that (he return to Gokula and) place his arm fragrant with the (pigment of) *aguru*—sandal on the crown of my head (to soothe me)"

*. The SK wording of the text appears apparently a censure but it is a praise of the Lord in the deeper sense.

1. Go away out of sight like birds—SG.

2. *bahavaścaranti* : Just as birds fly through the support of the sky, the ascetics do so through the support of Lord Hari. These ascetics maintain their body for the Spiritual Knowledge.
bhikṣu-caryām : *indriya-grāma-nigraham*/ —SG.

3. Female deer suffer but once when hit by an arrow, but our sufferings are life-long.

Śrī Śuka said :

22. Having heard this (expression of ardent love for Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava consoled those Gopīs who were eagerly desirous of seeing Kṛṣṇa, with the messages of their Darling and addressed them as follows :

Uddhava said :

23. Oh Gopīs ! You have completely achieved all the objects in human life (e.g. *dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa*) and are adored and praised by the world, inasmuch as your hearts are dedicated to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva.

24. Devotion unto Kṛṣṇa is engendered[1] by charitable gifts, observance of vows, austerities, performance of *homa* (sacrifice) muttering of a *mantra* or God's name, Vedic (scriptural) studies, self-control and such other meritorious acts.

25. It is fortunate of you that you, respectable ladies, have established such an unsurpassably supreme (standard of) devotion into the glorious Lord of hallowing renown as is extremely difficult even for sages.

26. You deserve congratulations as you have renounced (attachment to) your sons, husbands, your own persons, kith and kin as well as your homes, and have sought after the Supreme person Kṛṣṇa.

27. Oh highly blessed Gopīs ! Due to your separation from the Lord, you have accomplished an unflinching, absolute devotion unto Lord Adhokṣaja (Kṛṣṇa). You have certainly rendered a great favour unto me by giving me a glimpse of your ardent devotion to the Lord.

28. Let the message of your dear Lord which will bring delight to you be heard (alternatively). It is to convey this message that I, as a *confidant* of the Lord, have come here.

The Glorious Lord said :

29. As I pervade all as their Inner Soul, there cannot be any separation between you and me. Just as the five elements—the ether, air, fire, water and earth—are found in all

1. v.l., *bhaktir na sādhyate* 'Is not engendered'—VR.

beings, similarly, I abide (as the support) in the mind, vital breath, elements, conative and cognitive senses and qualities.

30. By the force of my Māyā Potency and in association with *bhūtas* (elements), the senses and the *guṇas*, I create myself (in various forms) within myself, protect them, and destroy them.

31. The Self (*ātman*) is absolutely pure, distinct, untainted and unconcerned with *guṇas*, an embodiment of consciousness and knowledge. He appears (as *Viśva, Taijasa* and *Prājña*) in the states of sleep, dream and wakefulness through mental states (and not directly) which are the creations of Māyā.

32.* Ever alert and vigilant, a person should try to control that mind with which he broods over the objects of senses which are unreal like the objects seen in a dream, and runs after the senses (sense-object) even during wakefulness.

33. According to the opinion of the spiritually wise, the study of the Vedas, the Yoga (with its eightfold path), the Sāṅkhya teaching (discriminating between the soul and the non-soul), renunciation (*saṁnyāsa*),—austerities, control (over the senses), truthfulness—all these have mind-control as their goal, even as all the rivers terminate in the ocean.

34. It is with a view to attract your mind constantly to me while you eagerly meditate upon me, (and thus to secure our mental nearness) that I, though your beloved, am staying far away beyond the ken of your eyes.

35. The mind of women is not so much ardently drawn to and absorbed in their beloved while he lives near, just before their eyes, as and when he is staying far away.

36. As you have completely dedicated your entire heart resigning all its activities to me, and are constantly contemplating on me, you will attain me within a short time.

37. Those ladies who being detained at Vraja (by their husbands etc.) could not participate in the *Rāsa*) in the forest, have attained to me by contemplating on my exploits, Oh blessed ladies".

* Not traced in VJ.

Śrī Śuka said :

38. Having heard the message of their most beloved Lord, the damsels of Vraja whose recollections of Lord Kṛṣṇa were revived by it, became highly delighted and spoke to Uddhava.

The Gopīs said :

39. Luckily the tyrant Kaṁsa, the deadly enemy and persecutor of Yadus is killed along with his followers. It is a matter of good fortune that the immortal Lord (Kṛṣṇa) is living happily with his relatives who have obtained all their objects (through his grace).

40. (Some asked) : Does Kṛṣṇa, the elder brother of Gada who was adored by us with affectionate, bashful smiles and loving glances, impart the same delight to the women of the city (Mathura), Oh gentle Uddhava?

41. (Others asked) : Highly expert in erotics and beloved of excellent women as he is, how can he fail to (be won over) and bound down by their love when he is greeted with words (expressing love) and amorous gestures by them.

42. (Someone asked) : Does the Lord of cows (or of Gokula ever remember us, the rustic women, causally, in some context in the assembly of the urban women of Mathura, during his free talk of his past life, Oh piousone![1]

43. (Others asked) : Does he ever remember those nights (at Vraja) when in Vṛndāvana grove lovely with blooming lilies and jasmines and resplendent with the full moon, he sported with us, his beloveds, and when in the ring of the Rāsa dance resonant with the jingling of anklets his charming stories were sung by us ?

44. (Some asked) : Will Kṛṣṇa, the descendent of Daśārha ever come here to enliven us who are tormented with grief on account of separation from him, by the life-giving touch of his limbs, like Indra refreshing woods (scorched with heat of summer) with rain-clouds.

45. (Others exclaimed) : Why should Kṛṣṇa (bother to) come here at all when he has obtained a kingdom, slain

1. The adj. implies that Uddhava being pious must tell the truth. —*SG*

all the enemies, will have married a number of princesses and is living happily in the company of his friends.

46. (Others gave out the fact of the matter)

What purpose of the Supreme Soul, the Consort of Lakṣmī (Kṛṣṇa) be served by us, the forest-dwellers or by others (princesses), when he himself has all his desires accomplished and is perfect (within himself).

47. Even the public woman Piṅgalā[1] has observed that desirelessness is the real happiness. Knowing that as we do, our longing and hope to meet Kṛṣṇa is difficult to overcome.

48. Who could detach one's mind from the secret talks one had with the Lord of hallowing renown from whose person Śrī seldom dissociates herself, even though he does not long for her ?

49-50. What a pity ! The river Yamunā, the mount Govardhana, the woodlands of Vṛndāvana, the cows, the musical notes of flutes—all associated with Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma as his companion—poignantly remind us again and again of Kṛṣṇa, the son of the Gopa Nanda, through his foot-prints which are the asylum of the goddess Lakṣmī. Alas ! It is simply impossible to forget him, Oh Uddhava.

51. Our hearts have been fascinated and spirited away with his seductive gait, enchanting laughter, sportive glances, and honeyed words. How can we forget him, Oh Uddhava ?

52. Oh Lord ! Oh Consort of goddess Lakṣmī ! Oh Lord of Vraja who destroyed our afflictions ! Oh Lord of cows ! Be pleased to lift up Gokula that is submerged in the sea of grief.

Śrī Śuka said :

53. Thereupon, the Gopīs whose agonies of separation from Kṛṣṇa, were removed by the message of Kṛṣṇa, realized that Kṛṣṇa the Supra-sensuous Lord was within

1. Piṅgalā—Name of a prostitute in Mithilā. Once she was disappointed as none came to her in spite of her waiting, she realized the bliss of transcending desires and hopes. Avadhūta regarded her as his preceptor *vide, infra* 11.7.34, 11.8. 22-44.

them—nay was identical with them—and they worshipped Uddhava with due respects.[1]

54. Uddhava stayed there for some months alleviating the grief of those cowherd women. He brought delight to the settlement of those cowherds (Gokula) by glorifying in songs the delightful stories of Lord Kṛṣṇa's sportive activities.

55. For as many days, Uddhava stayed at Nanda's Vraja, (they were so absorbed) in talking about Kṛṣṇa, those days of the residents of Vraja flitted away as if they were so many moments only.

56. Observing devoutly the river Yamunā, Vṛndāvana, mount Govardhana, the valleys and the blossoming trees, (where Kṛṣṇa roamed and sported and) which reminded the people of Vraja of Kṛṣṇa (causing thereby a longing to see him) that Servant of Hari spent that time in joyfulness.

57. Uddhava was highly pleased to notice the intense mental anguish of the Gopīs (as described above[2]) caused by their (longing for and) absorption of their minds in Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava paid his respects to them and (in justification of the bowing down to Gopa women by a Kṣattriya like himself and sang (of their glory) as follows :

58. "Only these Gopa women have really vindicated their worthiness of possessing a human body (life as a human being) since their heart is steeped in Supreme Love (and devotion) to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the protector of cows—a stage which those who are scared of *saṁsāra* (and aspire after liberation from it i. e. *mumukṣus*), the sages (who are *muktas* i. e. freed from the bondages of *saṁsāra*) and we (the devotees of the Lord) aspire. To a person interested in the stories of the Infinite Lord, what importance is there to the kinds of birth as a Brāhmaṇa (viz. physical heredity from Brāhmaṇa parents, ceremonial birth by means of investiture with the sacred thread and initiation in the sacred Gāyatrī *mantra* and ritua-

1. They worshipped Uddhava regarding him as if he was Lord Kṛṣṇa himself.—VJ.

2. vide Supra vv 4-21 and vv 39-52

listic birth with consecration for sacrificial performance)[1] *OR*, Of what use is the repeated birth as four-faced god Brahmā if one has no fascination or liking for the stories of the Infinite Lord[2].

59. What a contrast is this ! (On the one hand) these rustic forest-dwelling women condemned for adultery[3] (in the eyes of the public as they abandoned their husbands and offered themselves to Lord Kṛṣṇa) and their deeprooted intense absolute devotion to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, on the other. Certainly, the Almighty Lord himself bestows the highest beatitude upon his devotees who, even though ignorant, always remember him and resort to him, just as nectar, the king of medicines when used (unknowingly by an ailing patient, cures him).

60. Oh ! How covetable was the blissful Grace that was showered on the cowherd women of Vraja at the time of Rāsa dance when all their cravings and longings for getting themselves embraced by the mighty arm of the Lord were amply satisfied—A grace never enjoyed even by goddess Śrī who is always closely associated with his person, nor by the celestial damsels whose fragrance and splendour of complexion is like lotuses—What need be said of others ? (Much less can others expect it).

61. How strongly I desire to be one of these shrubs, creepers, plants or herbs of Vṛndāvana which have the good luck to come in contact with the dust on the feet of these cowherd women who forsook their relatives so difficult to abandon, and the traditional path followed by the noble and the good (which is equally difficult for chaste women to give up) and took to the path of devotion that leads to Lord Kṛṣṇa who is sought after by the Vedas.

1. This explanation is based on the 1st way dissolving the compound in the text :

ananta-kathā-rasasya : *Ananta+kathā+rasa.*

2. This will be the interpretation if the compound in text mentioned above is dissolved as *Ananta+kathā+a-rasa*—ŚR.

3. SG. regards this as a comparison between Gopis and Uddhava who call themselves: *vayaṁ vyabhicāra-duṣṭāḥ*—we who are averse to pious deeds.

62. The Gopīs dispelled all the agonies of their heart by embracing Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus-feet placed on their bosoms during Rāsa dance—the lotus-feet of the Lord which are adored by the goddess Śrī, god Brahmā and others who have accomplished all their desires, and by masters of yoga in their hearts.

63. I bow down again and again the dust under the feet of the damsels of Nanda's Vraja, whose loud singing of the stories of Lord Hari sanctifies the three worlds.

Śrī Śuka said :

64. Then, after taking leave of the Gapīs, Yaśodā and Nanda and bidding good-bye to Gopas, Uddhava, the scion of Daśārha, became ready to depart (on his return journey) and mounted his chariot.

65. When he just got out of his house, Nanda and others brought in their hands different presents (presumably for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) and with eyes dimmed with tears of love, spoke to him affectionately as follows :

66. "May all our mental activities be concentrated on the lotus-feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. May our speech (oral activities) be ever engaged in uttering the name of the Lord and may our body (physical activities) be engaged in bowing to him (and doing such worshipful services).

67. Wandering whithersoever (or in whatever species of birth) we be, as a result of our *karman* (actions) or by the will of the Almighty Lord, may our love be constant in the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa in consequence of our auspicious deeds and charitable gifts (performed by us in our past lives)"

68. Thus honoured by the cowherds through their devotion to Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava returned to Mathura protected by Kṛṣṇa, Oh King Parīkṣit.

69. Lying prostrate before Kṛṣṇa, he reported to Kṛṣṇa the effusion of intense devotion of the people of Vraja (unto him), and handed over the presents (sent by the cowherds) to Vasudeva, Balarāma and King Ugrasena.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Visit to the Houses of Trivakrā and Akrūra

Śri Śuka said :

1. Now knowing the earnest desire of the maid-servant Trivakrā who was pining with passionate love for him, the Almighty Lord, the In-dwelling soul of all, who is omniscient, went to her house with an intention to gratify her cherished desire.

2. The house was equipped with highly costly articles of furniture; was enriched with means of stimulating erotic passions, was decorated with garlands of pearls, flags, canopies, beds, seats, was perfumed with fragrant incenses, lights (emitting sweet scent), wreaths of flowers and perfumes.

Texts of VR and SD add :

2A. (It was beautified with beautiful paintings in various colours pertaining (or designed according) to *kāmaśāstra* (science of Erotics).

3. Beholding that he was coming, she (Tri-vakrā) in a flurry, quickly rose from her seat, went forward along with her female companions to pay him due respect, and warmly received him by offering a high, comfortable seat and other articles of worship.

4. Uddhava also was similarly received as a pious person, but he touched with his hand (to pay respects to) the seat offered to him, and sat on the floor. (To carry out his part as a man) Kṛṣṇa also, following the practice of the world, (got up from his seat and of his own accord quickly entered the bed-room furnished with costly bed.

5. Embellishing herself after bath, with cosmetics, fine clothes, ornaments, garlands of flowers, scents, betel-leaves chewing, nectarlike drinks and the like, she approached Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of goddess Lakṣmī—ogling him with amorous glances and bashful sportive smiles.

6. He called to his side that beautiful woman who was a bit nervous and hesitant through bashfulness, as it was their first meeting. He took her by the hand that was adorned with bracelets and made her sit on the bed. He gave that

charming lady her desired pleasure for the slight act of merit she had done, by offering him the pigment (at his request, while going to Kaṁsa for service).

7. Enjoying the fragrance of his feet, swept off the agonies in her breast and bosom specially tormented by love-fever, and those of her eyes as well, by (the soothing touch of) his feet. She clasped in her arms her beloved Kṛṣna, the embodiment of bliss who was now on her bosom and thus got rid of the suffering of separation she had gone through, for a long time.

8. Alas ! Having thus obtained in return for the offer of pigment the presence of the Lord of the Absolute state (who confers Final Beatitude), the Supreme Ruler of the Universe so difficult to attain, the unfortunate woman begged of him the following.

9. She said, "Oh beloved-most Lord ! Be pleased to stay with me for some days here in my house and give me the pleasure of your company. Oh lotus-eyed god ! I cannot forgo your company."

10. Having conferred upon her the boon as per her desire and having honoured her (with presents), the Lord of all the universe who respects others, returned with Uddhava to his (Vasudeva's) splendid palace.

11. Having propitiated the All-pervading Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Ruler of all rulers of the universe (like god Brahmā) who is so very difficult to be pleased, a person who seeks what is agreeable to the mind (viz. the pleasures of the sense) is certainly a man of perverted intelligence inasmuch as the so-called pleasures are trivial (and not worth craving).

12. With a desire to do a good turn to Akrūra in his interest and with the intention of sending him on some errand, Lord Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Balarāma and Uddhava went to the house of Akrūra.

13. Seeing from a distance that those greatest among foremost of men who were his own relations, were coming, he was overjoyed. He rose from his seat and went forward to receive them. He embraced them and honoured them.

14.* He bowed down to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (as he knew their divine nature, though they were his juniors in age) and was reciprocally respected by them. When they were comfortably seated, he worshipped them with due formalities

15-16. He washed their feet and sprinkled over his head that water (with which he washed them). He received them respectfully by presenting articles of worship such as rich clothes, excellent perfumes, wreathes of flowers and ornaments. He bowed them bending down his head and kneaded their feet after taking them in his lap. Modest and devoted as he was, Akrūra submitted Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as follows:

17. "How fortunate it is that the wicked Kaṁsa along with his followers has been killed by you both and this clan of yours has been not only rescued from the (seemingly) unending harassment and difficulties but is made prosperous as well.

18. Both of you constitute Pradhāna (Primordial matter) and Puruṣa (the self, in Sāṅkhya terminology). Both of you constitute (the material and efficient) causes of universe and are inherent in it. Without you neither cause nor effect can exist.

19. Oh Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the Supreme Brahman Itself ! Having evolved the universe through your potencies (such as *rajas* and others) you have entered into it (as its Indwelling Soul or Inner Controller) ! you appear as many in various innumerable forms which are within the ken of sight and hearing.

20. Just as the constituent elements like earth, water, fire etc exhibit themselves in various forms of beings mobile and immobile as through various species of creatures, so your honour who is the one, absolute, self-dependent Supreme self, manifest yourself in innumerable forms (in various species such as human beings, beasts etc. and in various stages of life such as child, youth etc. which are but your creations (and thus appear as many).

21. Through your potencies in the form of *guṇas* viz. *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*, you evolve, protect and dissolve the universe. But you are not bound or affected either by the *guṇas* or by the actions. Essentially constituted of pure knowledge and

* Not traced in VJ.'s text.

consciousness as you are, nothing could work as a limiting condition on you.

22. As physical body and other limiting conditions (which are supposed to subject the soul to limitations and bondage) are not observed predicable in your case, no birth or difference can be predicated of the soul in reality (much less so in the case of the Supreme Soul viz. your honour). There is no bondage or Liberation (*mokṣa*) therefrom for you. It is our lack of discrimination and ignorance which project these on you.

23. Whenever this ancient path (of religion prescribed in the Vedas promulgated by you for the good of the world is threatened with obstruction by the false heterodox creeds, your honour assumes a form (constituted) of pure, unalloyed *sattva guṇa* (for the re-establishment of the original Vedic path).

24. You are that Supreme Lord, now incarnated in the house of Vasudeva along with Balarāma, your partmanifestation, with the mission of removing the burden of the earth by slaying one hundred *akṣauhiṇis* of kings born with non-celestial i.e. demonic *asura aṁśa* and also to enhance the glory of your (Yadu) race.

25. Oh Supreme Ruler ! Today our homes have been rendered highly blessed and fortunate indeed inasmuch as they are visited by you who are the creator and the preceptor of the world, the very embodiment of all gods, ancestors, beings and the kings and the water washing whose feet(viz. the river Gaṅgā) hallows the three worlds. Oh Supra-sensuous Lord !

26. What learned person would seek resort to any person other than you who are so beloved of your devotees, true of word, friendly and grateful and who bestow on all his votaries and friends who resort to you, their desired objects—nay his own self which is above decay or growth.

27. Oh Janārdana ! Luckily you, access to whom is very difficult even to the great masters of Yoga as well to the lords of gods, have become manifest to us. Be pleased to cut off cords your Māyā quickly (and immediately) regarding sons, wives, money, relatives and of our very body.

Śrī Śuka said:

28. The glorious Lord Hari who was worshipped and glorified by his votary Akrūra, spoke to him smilingly, and addressed to Akrūra hypnotising him as it were with his sweet and pleasant words.

The Lord said:

29. "You are our elderly relative (or preceptor), uncle. You are our ever praiseworthy relative. We are after all your children who are to be protected, nourished and looked after with compassion.

30. Highly blessed and most adorable persons like your honour should always be waited upon by persons desirous of achieving their *summum bonum*. For gods are always intent on achieving their own purpose (and are selfish), but saintly persons are never so selfish at all. (They oblige you without any expectation in return while gods won't grant you anything unless they are pleased by the offer of oblations in the sacrifice etc. Hence saints are greater then gods).

31* Not that the holy places (*tirthas*) consisting of water and gods represented in earth and stone images do not purify but they do so after a pretty long time, while saintly persons sanctify one immediately at the first sight.

32. You are verily the worthiest of our friends. With the object of doing some good to pāṇḍavas and making enquiries (probing the real state of affairs) about them, please do go to Hastinapura.

33. We have heard that after the death of their father those grieving children along with their grief-striken mother were brought by the king Dhṛtarāṣṭra to his capital and they stay there.

34. It is certain that king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Ambikā who is both blind and of poor intellect, is under the control of his wicked son and does not treat them impartially.

* The term *Tirtha* does not connote a storage of water but it is the deity presiding over them that is implied. The same is the case with images of gods made of earth or stone. But these deities have to be served for a long time to please them. But not so the saints—VJ.

35. Do go now and ascertain his present behaviour (with them) whether it be good or otherwise. After knowing the facts correctly we shall so manage (the situation) as will be conducive to the welfare and happiness of our friends."

36. Having briefed Akrūra (regarding his mission to Hastinapura) the glorious Almighty Lord Hari straightway returned to his palace along with Balarāma and Uddhava.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Akrūra's Mission to Hastinapura

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. Having arrived at Hastinapura, the noted capital of the great and glorious kings of the Puru dynasty, he saw there Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Ambikā along with Bhīṣma, Vidura, Kuntī : Bāhlīka along with his son Somadatta, Droṇa, the descendant of Bhāradvāja along with Kṛpa of the Gautama family, Karṇa, Suyodhana (i.e. Duryodhana), Aśvatthāman, the son of Droṇa, Pāṇḍavas and other friends thereof.

3. Having met his relatives in the appropriate manner (to establish closer contacts), Akrūra, the son of Gāndinī, was respectfully enquired about by them about their friends (at Mathura) and he also reciprocally asked them about their well being.

4. With a view to probe and know in depth the behaviour of the king whose sons were wicked and who was himself feeble-minded, and who was guided by the will of the wicked (like Śakuni), Akrūra stayed there many months.

5-6. Pṛthā (Kuntī) and Vidura completely reported to him all the wicked acts such as administering poison (to Bhīma) and others by Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons who could not tolerate and felt jealous of Pāṇḍavas' majesty, prowess, physical strength, heroism, modesty and other excellent virtues as well as the love and loyalty the subjects had for them; they also told him what they intended to do (to harm Pāṇḍavas).

7. Approaching her brother (cousin) Akrūra who came to visit her, Kuntī (Pṛthā) remembered her birth-place and with her eyes full of tears enquired :

8. "Oh gentle Akrūra ! Do my parents (Śūrasena and Māriṣā), brothers (Vasudeva and others), sisters (Śruta-devā etc.), nephews (Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and others), respectable ladies in the house (like Devakī and others) and female friends remember me ?

9. Does my nephew, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the protector of his dependants and affectionate to his votaries, and the lotus-eyed Balarāma ever remember the sons of their paternal aunt?

10. Would Kṛṣṇa care to comfort with words of consolation me who am grieving here in the midst of enemies like a female deer in the midst of wolves. Would he do so to my children who are now fatherless.

11. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Kṛṣṇa ! Oh great *yogin* ! Oh Soul of the Universe ! Oh Creator of the world ! Be kind and protect me who have sought Your protection, Oh Govinda, I am suffering along with my children.

12. To persons who are afraid of death and of the cycle of births (*saṁsāra*), I do not see any other refuge except the lotus feet of yours—of the Supreme which confer Liberation from *saṁsāra*.

13. Bow to Kṛṣṇa, the pure Brahman (unalloyed with Māyā), the Supreme Soul, the Lord of Yogas, the very embodiment of *yoga* ! I have sought asylum in you."

Śrī Śuka said :

14. In this way, remembering her relatives, and Kṛṣṇa, the Ruler of the world, your paternal great-grand mother lamented loudly, in grief.

15. Akrūra who looked upon pleasure and pain with equanimity and Vidura of great glory, consoled Kuntī by telling her the divine parentage of her sons (and their mission to help Kṛṣṇa in the reduction of the burden of the earth).

16. When he was about to return to Mathura, Akrūra approached King Dhṛtarāṣṭra who practised discrimination between his sons and Pāṇḍavas and was specially partial and

attached to his sons. He communicated to the king in the midst of his relatives, the message of his well-intentioned relations such as Kṛṣṇa and others.

Akrūra said :

17. Oh son of Vicitravīrya ! You are the enhancer of the glory of the Kuru race ! But after the demise of your brother Pāṇḍu, you have now occupied the throne (in stead of installing Pāṇḍu's son--the legal heir—on the throne).

18. By governing the earth with piety (and as per code of righteous government), pleasing your subjects by your (spotless) character and behaving with strict impartiality with your relatives, you can still attain prosperity and good reputation.

19. If you act otherwise, you will be censured in this world and shall go to dark hell hereafter. You, therefore, treat impartially your sons and the Pāṇḍavas.

20. There is no possibility of having eternal companionship with anybody at any time in this world—not even with one's body. What need be said of contacts with one's wife and sons, Oh King.

21. A creature comes into being alone and it dies alone, all by itself. It is all alone when it experiences the fruits of good deeds or suffers the consequences of his evil actions.

22. Others who go under the name of sons (*lit.* one deserving nourishment) carry away the wealth accumulated by unfair means of this dull-witted fellow, as the brood of acquatic animals share waters.

23. A foolish person who unrighteously nourishes life, wealth, sons and others under the wrong notion that they are his own, finds himself deserted by them, for good, even when he has not yet accomplished his objective of enjoying them.

24. A person not knowing his real interest, being deserted by them (viz. wealth, sons etc. which he regarded as his own) carries the load of his sins himself as he is averse to religion and with his hopes of enjoyment, unfulfilled, he enters the hall of blinding darkness.

25. Oh King ! Realizing that this world is like a dream,

illusion or an idle fancy, you control your own mind by yourself and be impartial and serene, Oh Lord.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied :

26. Oh *Dānapati* (the most distinguished donor of charities) ! As your honour utters this sweet, salutary speech, I do not feel sated with it, just as a mortal would feel after obtaining the nectar.

27. Oh gentle-natured Akrūra ! Your sweet and righteous advice, however, does not get fixed in my fickle mind which is partial through affection towards my sons, any more than a flash of lightening into the mount Sudāman.

28. What human being can violate the decree of the Supreme Ruler who has now descended in Yadu's race for removing the burden of the earth.

29. Bow unto that Supreme Lord who, having created this universe by his Māyā of incomprehensible ways and having entered it afterwards (as the Inner Controller) he apportions the *karmas* and their fruits, and whose sportive acts which are very difficult to comprehend and who is the main cause and the ultimate goal of this wheel of transmigration (*saṁsāra*).

Śrī Śuka said :

30. Having thus gauged the mind of the king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and taking leave of his well-wishers and relatives, Akrūra of the Yādava clan, returned to Mathurā.

31. Oh Parīkṣit (the scion of the Kuru race) ! (After his arrival at Mathurā), he reported to Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the behaviour of Dhṛtarāṣṭra towards Pāṇḍavas—the maiu purpose of his deputation to Hastināpura.

CHAPTER FIFTY*

Settlement at the Fort of Dvārakā

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Asti and Prāpti were the two queens of Kaṁsa Oh prominent Bhārata. When their husband was slain, they were afflicted with sorrow. They went to their father's house.

2. Stricken with grief, they reported fully to their father Jarāsandha, king of Magadha, the cause of their widowhood.

3. Hearing that unpleasant account, he was filled with grief and indignation, Oh King Parīkṣit. He made a great endeavour to wipe out the Yādavas from the face of the earth.

4. Accompanied with an army of twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs* Jarāsandha besieged Mathurā, the capital of Yadus, on all sides.

5-6. Observing the army of Jarāsandha was surging forth like a sea overflowing its coastal limits, and that His capital was besieged by it and His own people were struck with panic, the glorious Lord Hari who assumed a human form with a special mission (of removing the burden of the earth) considered the measures suitable for the exigencies of that time and place and also the purpose of His incarnation (on the earth).

7-8. "I shall now destroy this army amounting to many akṣauhiṇīs consisting of infantry, cavalry, chariot-corps and elephants, in the service of Jarāsandha's tributary princes and brought together (and deployed) by Jarāsandha, King of Magadha, as this force is nothing but an accumulated burden to the earth. But Jarāsandha should not be killed, as he will again make efforts and mobilise more forces (and help disburdenment of the earth).

9. This incarnation of Mine is for this mission, viz. removal of the burden of the earth, protection of the righteous and the elimination of the wicked.

*Henceforth there is much divergence in the Texts of ŚR and VJ. For the convenience of readers, additional verses in VJ are translated in the footnotes and the additional special chapters in VJ are given separately as an *Appendix* to the X Skandha.

10. Another personality (e.g. the boor incarnation) has been assumed by me for the protection of the path of righteousness and termination of the unrighteousness when it becomes predominant, at times.*

11. While Kṛṣṇa was thinking in this way, there descended near him, from the sky, two chariots refulgent like the sun, (each) equipped with military appurtenances (armour, banner etc.) and manned by charioteers.**

* (*Here the Text of VJ. gives the following additional verses*).

10.1 While Kṛṣṇa was pondering thus, the mighty king of Magadha with his big army, laid siege to Mathurā including its groves and parks.

10.2-4. According to the commands of Jarāsandha, the Magadhan king, Kaliṅga, Cekitāna, Dantavaktra, Vidūratha, Ulmuka, Veṇudāri, Śālva and the wicked-minded Śiśupāla, king of Caidyas, reached the, eastern gate (of Mathurā) and blocked it. Vinda, Anuvinda of Avanti, Virāṭa, Darada, Ekalavya, Bālhika and the king of Panjab (land of five rivers) besieged the southern gate.

10. 5-6. Directed by Jarāsandha, the powerful king Pauṇḍraka, Yudhāmanyu, Bṛhat-Kṣatra, Śālva, Bhūriśravas, Uttamaujas, Rukmi, Druma, Sudaksiṇa assailed the western gate and beleaguered the city of Mathurā.

10. 7-8. Drupada Śiśupāla, Trigarta, Jayadratha, Śakuni, Somadatta and the mighty Kuṇinda—all proud of their power—proceeded to the northern gate under the leadership of Jarāsandha and laid siege there, Oh prominent Bhārata.

10.9 Like a sea overflowing its coastal limits, they blockaded all the four gates. Uttering war-cries, blowing conches a number of times, they became ready for action and beat thousands of kettle-drums.

10.10. Hearing that tumultuous uproar of the combined forces of those kings at the gates, which resembled the roaring of the inundating oceans at the end of the universe, Kṛṣṇa was not at all disturbed in mind like a proud mighty lion on hearing the howling of a pack of jackals.

** The Vrindavana edition quotes in VJ.'s com. the following verses as *additions in VJ.'s text* :

11.1 (There appeared) the terrific yet beautiful discus Sudarśana of thousand spokes, and the auspicious heavy mace named *Kaumodakī* as it belonged to Nārāyaṇa who imparts delight and happiness to the world.

11.2 (There appeared) the most formidable bow called Śārṅga, bent at three points and equipped with a string; sword called Nandaka of sharp edge and pointed at the end; two light and attractive quivers with inexhaustible store of arrows.

12. Seeing their ancient celestial weapons appearing there of their own accord, Kṛṣṇa, the Supra-Sensuous Lord, spoke to Balarāma.

13. "Look, Oh respectable brother, the great peril that is threatening to befall Yadus, of whom you are the protector, Oh Powerful Lord. Behold, this chariot of yours has arrived along with your favourite weapons.

14. Getting into this vehicle, wipe out this (hostile) army and rescue your people from the impending disaster. Our incarnation is certainly for this purpose, Oh powerful Lord, that we should afford protection and felicity to the righteous.

15. Remove the burden of the earth now known as "the army of twentythree *akṣauhiṇīs*" Having planned together thus, both the descendants of Daśārha (viz. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) put on their armours (armed with their respective weapons and accompanied with a small band of selected warriors mounted their chariots and sallied forth from the city of Mathurā.*

11.3 (The chariot was yoked with) horses called Saibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka. And a heavy and sturdy plough and a club (pestle) for Balarāma.

11.4-A. These weapons alighted from the sky for using them in the battle.

15.1 Oh King Parīkṣit ! Accompanied with a small army consisting of many prominent Yadus well-armed and clad in coats of mail, both of them rushed out of the great city.

15.2 When Kṛṣṇa came out of his residence, he summoned all Vṛṣṇis and commanded them to defend forthwith the four gates of the city.

15.3 Kṛṣṇa deployed Vasudeva, Niśaṭha, Kṛtavarmā and Uddhava at the eastern gate, Oh descendant of Bharata !

15.4 Hari sent to defend the northern gate Ugrasena, Sudāman, Pṛthu and Vipṛthu.

15.5 Hari sent to the Western gate extremely powerful warriors Sātyaki, Gada, Prasena and Akrūra, the son of Gāndinī.

15.6-7 Kṛṣṇa of supremely heroic lustre, equipped with weapons of his choice, himself with Dāruka as his charioteer and with Balarāma to help him, sallied forth through the northern gate. The Lord of the universe blew out his conch of very loud sound, inspiring terror in Daityas and Dānavas.

16. Surrounded by a small force, both of them kṛṣṇa and Balarāma equipped themselves with their beautiful weapons and went out of the city. Hari with Dāruka as his charioteer came out of the city and blew conch.

17. It (the challenging conch-blowing) sent a cold shivering of shudder in the hearts of the armies of the enemy. Seeing them both, Jarāsandha said : 'Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Meanest of all men' (also 'to whom other men are inferior', 'the best among men').

15.8 Kṛṣna, the consort of goddess Lakṣmī, smilingly spoke to Dāruka who had occupied the front seat (of the chariot-driver), in the chariot.

The Glorious Lord directed :

Take the chariot to the place where Śiśupāla the king of Caidyas, and Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas, have taken their positions, Oh knower of military duties (*dharma*). I shall thoroughly satisfy with my arrows, the (itch of fighting of all the) kings very proud of fighting.

Śrī Śuka continued :

15.9 Thus directed by the Lord, Dāruka quickly drove the horses to that spot and Govinda, the conqueror of inimical forces, roared like a lion.

15.10 Blaring out his conch, Balarāma also sent forth a roar like a lion that shuddered the hostile forces, causing nervous anxiety and fear in their hearts.

15.11 At the eastern gate there was a terrible fight between the Yadus and the (attacking) princes, eight princes (like Kaliṅga etc.) fighting with the four (such as Vasudeva and others). It was a miraculous sight indeed.

15.12 At the southern gate, there was tough fighting between Yadus who were inspired with confidence by Kṛṣna and the inimical princely forces.

15.13 At the western gate also the battle between formidable Yādava archers and the army of opposing princes was so thrilling that it made one's hair stand on their ends.

15.14 Fired with the ambition of conquering both the worlds (here and hereafter), Yadus, though beaten by princes valorous as the king of gods, did not recede from the battlefield, Oh King.

15.15 In that battle, god Viṣṇu (i.e. Lord Kṛṣṇa) beloved of the three worlds, an eminently brave member of the Yādava clan, reached the spot where the most terrible kings of Caidya (Siśupāla) and of Magadha (viz. Jarāsandha) were positioned.

18. I do not wish to fight with a young boy like you as you are alone. It is shameful (to fight with you). I won't fight with you who lay concealed so long (out of Kaṁsa's fear) you stupid fellow ! The murderer of relatives ! You go away (Fighting is not your profession) as you are a *gupta* (a man of Vaiś'ya community, as you are the son of the cowherd Nanda.

19. Oh Balarāma ! If you have faith and confidence in you, muster some courage and fight with me. Go to heaven leaving your body shattered with my arrows or kill me (if you dare).

The glorious Lord replied :

20. "Those who are really brave do not boast but display their valour. We do not take seriously the words of those who are delirious (or of unbalanced mind through grief due to the death of your son-in-law) or who are on the point of death (as you are now)."

21. Jarāsandha, the foster-son of the demoness Jarā, assailed both Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the descendants of Madhu, and surrounded them both, their detachment of soldiers, vehicles (chariots), flags, horses, charioteers with a big formidable army, just as a tempestuous wind would cover the sun with clouds or the fire with particles of dust.

22. Finding that the chariots of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma which were distinguished by the ensigns with the figures of Garuḍa and Palmyra tree had become invisible in that battle, the women of Mathurā who occupied seats on the top of the raṃparts, mansions and towers were struck with grief and fell in swoon.

23. Perceiving that his own army was sorely afflicted by incessant showers of extremely sharp arrows from the cloud-like inimical forces, Hari twanged His excellent bow called

Verse 18.1. ŚR. gives a complimentary interpretation of the line :

guptena hi tvayā'manda na yotsye yāhi bandhuhan /

With you who, being the Inner controller of all beings, are beyond the ken of sight. Oh highly intelligent person ! You are the destroyer of *Avidyā* ! Be pleased to come (let me attain to you).

Śārṅga which was held in high esteem (lit. adored) by both gods and demons alike.

24. And taking out arrows from the quiver, and setting them on the bow, pulling the bow-string and discharging vollies of sharp arrows, he incessantly shattered down chariots, elephants, horses and infantry-men, whirling the bow like a fire-brand.*

* *Here VJ's Text adds the following verses* :

24.1 Then Kṛṣṇa applied to his mouth and loudly blew the conch Pāñcajanya, which, white like the moon in appearance, gave out a loud blast that spelt death to Daityas, and gave courage and comfort to Yādavas who were struck down with hosts of Kṣatriya forces.

24.2 Hearing the most defeaning terrible blast of the conch, the kings, at every point, lost courage at the terrific sound. The warriors on the Yādava side assisted by their army, raised their weapons and put down the army of opposing kings.

24.3 The Yādava warriors felt encouraged by Hari's twanging of the Śārṅga bow. They immediately rushed onwards against the enemies, discharged volleys of arrows and put to flight all the kings at the four gates.

24.4 Śiśupāla, the king of Caidya's, who bent his bow almost in a circle, challenged and threatened Kṛṣṇa saying, "Oh Kṛṣṇa! Stop, halt, Oh Kṛṣṇa."

24.5 Kṛṣṇa rushed at him showering on him innumerable sharp arrows washed with oil, from his bow which was bent practically into a circle.

24.6 Thereupon Śiśupāla, the son of Damaghoṣa, took out five terrible arrows. With four of them he hit the horses and with one the charioteer, quickly.

24.7 He quickly set ten arrows on the bow and discharged them at Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of the demon Madhu. He gave out a roar like a lion and all this happened as if like a miracle.

24.8 At that (Śiśupāla's exploit) Kṛṣṇa applauded him, crying out, "Well done ! Bravo ! Oh Śiśupāla, you are a great archer. You are a hero and a powerful one at that.

24.9-15 Now you wicked-minded fellow, see my expertness in archery by experiencing it personally." While Kṛṣṇa was speaking thus, all the kings simultaneously discharged and hit Kṛṣṇa with sharp arrows. Kṛṣṇa hit each of them with five shafts, dispatching the charioteer and four horses of each chariot to the abode of the god of Death. Kṛṣṇa, the delighter of the Yadus, pierced each of the kings with three arrows, on the chest, in the mouth and on the forehead, in the battle. The valiant leader of the Yadus quickly cut down the thirty bows of the thirty kings

25. The elephants fell down with their temples split up; a number of horses with their necks cut off with arrows fell down. The chariots stood with the horses, charioteer and the warrior killed and flag staff broken. The foot-soldiers had their arms, thighs and necks cut down.

26. There flowed forth hundreds of streams of blood issued from the shattered bodies of soldiers, elephants and horses which were teeming with (floating acquatic) serpent-like (hacked down) arms, rolling tortoise-like human heads, they were studded with islets of elephant-bodies and were infested with crocodiles in the from of (dead) horses.

27. Therein were hands and thighs of men like fishes, the locks of human hair like moss, bows like ripbles and weapons like bushes. The shields (or wheels) were like terrible whirl-pools and ornaments of big and costly precious stones formed the stones and sand in them.

28. By Balarāma of infinite prowess (who was) knocking down with his pestle the proud and powerful enemies in that battle, there started streams of blood which struck terror in the hearts of the cowards and inspired matrial delight and courage in the valiants.

29. Oh dear Parīkṣit ? That army impassable and terrible like an ocean of vast limitless (unfordable) expanse and directed (lit. protected) by Jarāsandha was completely annihilated. This was a supreme sportive feat of the sons of Vasudeva who were the Lords of the world.

with thirty shafts in that battle. He laughingly cut off the bow even of Śiśupāla, the son of Damaghoṣa, and with three shafts cut down the flag, his crown and the umbrella. Thereupon Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Madhu, fitted ten Bhalla type of arrows on his Śārṅga bow. He drew the bow-strings up to the ear and hit Śiśupāla with them in the battle. The army of the *kṣatriyas* which was pierced with arrows became confounded.

24.16. The hostile army, the horses, charioteers and chariots of which were killed and destroyed, became helpless as there was nobody to save it, as if it was struck with tempestuous winds at the end of world which blows away hills, trees and creepers.

24.17. Keeping all the while the Magadhan army in view, Kṛṣṇa of ferocious valour, continued discharging arrows, blowing his conch and twanging his bow incessantly and moving it in a circle like a fire-brand, in the battle.

30. There is nothing surprising in the defeat of the hostile forces in the case of Kṛṣṇa of infinite excellence who, out of sportiveness, brings about by His will, the creation, protection and destruction of the three worlds. This is however an attempt to describe the story of the Lord who imitates the ways of the mortals.*

31. Like a lion powerfully seizing another lion, Balarāma took Jarāsandha a captive who, though extremely powerful himself, had lost his chariot and the whole of the army and was left alone alive.

32. With a view to achieve His purpose of (destroying demonic forces which would be mobilised by Jarāsandha) he forbade Jarāsandha's being bound with the nooses of Varuṇa and cords of human beings (by Balarāma) although Jarāsandha had put to death many enemies (in the past).

33-34. Released and allowed to go by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Protectors of the world, Jarāsandha who was highly respected by warriors, felt ashamed. He made up his mind (to retire from politics and) to perform penance. But on his way (to the forest) he was dissuaded by (his friendly) kings with expressions conveying the import of sacred texts (and quotations from *Śāstras*) as well as popular maxims and words of worldly wisdom. They convinced him by the argument:) "Your defeat by the Yadus is the consequence of the bondage of your *karma* (actions in past life)".

* *Here VJ.'s text adds* :

30.1. When all his army was annihilated and the remaining soldiers fled away, the extremely mighty Jarāsandha, alone in his chariot confronted Balarāma, the wielder of the plough (as a weapon).

30.2. Both of them were enormously big like mountains, proud like intoxicated elephants, fired with indignation and possessed of great strength. They fought with each other.

30.3. Jarāsandha who was overwhelmed with wrath, took up his heavy mace (*Gadā*) and turning it round a hundred times, hurled it at the chest of Balarāma.

30.4. Dodging the onward dashing *gadā*, big and heavy like a mountain peak, Balarāma, the wielder of a plough (as his weapon) smilingly made his attempt fruitless.

30.5. Having rendered the mace ineffective by striking it with his pestle, the wrathful Balarāma struck it against the chariot and killed his charioteer.

35. With all his army annihilated and himself slighted by the Lord by showing indifference to him, king Jarāsandha, the son of Bṛhad-ratha returned to Magadha with his heart weighed with despair and melancholy.

36. Kṛṣṇa also whose army was unscathed (as the wounds of his soldiers immediately healed with his nectarine glance and who had crossed over the ocean of the inimical forces (by crushing them), was applauded (with words "Well done ! Bravo") and was showered over with flowers by gods.

37. He returned to his capital while his victory was being celebrated in songs by the congregations of the citizens of Mathurā and bards like Sūta, Māgadha and *Bandins* whose hearts were delighted with the total disappearance of the feverish panic (caused by the siege of Mathurā).

38. As the Lord entered the capital, conches, drums, kettledrums, trumpets were loudly and incessantly sounded and lutes, flutes and *mṛdaṅgas* were every now and then played upon.

39-40. The roads of the city were sprinkled with water. The population was jubilant. The city was decorated with flags and was resonant with the recitation of the Vedas. Ornamental arches with festoons suspended were erected all over the way. (By way of worship and reception) Kṛṣṇa was showered over with flowers and tender shoots by women; curds mixed with unbroken grains of rice were applied to his forehead and he was gazed with affection by the people with their loving eyes full of joy.

41. The Lord (Kṛṣṇa) presented to Ugrasena, the king of Yadus, all the spoils of the battle, the untold treasure (left behind by the flying army) and the ornaments and jewelry of the warriors (killed and hence) lying on the battle field.*

* The *Textus ornatior* of VJ. gives a number of additional verses and chapters. This additional material has made the Kṛṣṇa legend more comprehensive and attractive. Readers are recommended to read the additional verses in the footnotes and additional chapters which are given as Appendix to this Skandha.

From verse 41 here VJ. adds three more interesting chapters describing the repeated attacks of Jarāsandha in Mathurā and the journey of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to the South (probable to find a suitable place for the Yādavas at a safe distance from Magadha) and how Kṛṣṇa killed

42. In this manner Jarāsandha, king of Magadhas mobilised every time an army of the same (twentythree) number of *Akṣauhiṇis* and fought for seventeen times (in succession) with the Yadus who were protected by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

43. (In every expedition) the Vṛṣṇis completely destroyed the whole of his army through the dint of Kṛṣṇa's spiritual power. With his forces completely slaughtered and himself allowed to escape by the enemies, king Jarāsandha returned to his capital.

44. While the eighteenth invasion was imminent, there appeared in the interval, a Yavana hero (Kālayavana) who was despatched by Nārada.[1]

45. Kālayavana (who regarded himself as) the matchless hero in this world, heard (the report from Nārada) that Vṛṣṇis were his equals in war. He invaded and laid siege to Mathurā with three crores of Mlecchas(barbarians).

46-47. Seeing him (with that vast army), Kṛṣṇa who had Balarāma as His companion, conferred (with him), "Alas ! A great calamity is bafalling Yadus on both sides (from Kālayavana and Jarāsandha. Today this *Yavana* with his vast army has completely beleaguered us. Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha also will be coming today, tomorrow or day after tomorrow.

48. If Jarāsandha, the son of Jarā, comes while both of us are engaged in fighting with this (Kālayavana), the mighty Magadhan king will massacre our clansmen or take them captive to his capital.

49. Therefore, let us construct today a fortress inaccessible to human beings (lit. bipeds) and keeping our kinsmen

Śṛgāla Vāsudeva, an ally of Jarāsandha at Karavīra (Kolhapur?). Followers of VJ.'s text are requested to read these chapters which are printed as an Appendix before reading the next (42nd) verse. That verse follows ch. 50. verse 24 in the Appendix.

1. According to VP. 5.23.6 it was in reply to the query of Kālayavana as to who is a match to him that Nārada mentioned the name of Yādavas. Nārada did not instigate him against Kṛṣṇa.

safe in that fort, we shall arrange for the killing of this Kālayavana."[1]

50. Having thus consulted with Balarāma, the Lord caused a fortress constructed in the (western) sea. In the fortress, he got built a city twelve *yojanas* (96 miles) in area and wonderful in every respect.

51. The building of the city exhibited the expertise in architecture and the skill in masonry of Tvaṣṭṛ, the architect of gods. The roads, quadrangles, streets (and residential areas) were constructed strictly in conformity to the prescribed tenets of the science of architecture (pertaining to city building).

52. In that city, gardens planted with celestial trees and creepers and wonderful parks were laid out. It was built with sky-scraping, gold-towered buildings and balconies of crystals.

53. It had barns built of silver and brass which were adorned with gold pitchers. The houses therein were of gold with jewelled domes and floors paved with gold and big emeralds.

54. It was provided with shrines with upper storeys dedicated to gods. It was thickly populated with persons belonging to the four classes of the society. It appeared beautiful with the palaces of the rulers of the Yadu clan.

55. For the sake of Hari, the great Indra transported his own assembly-hall Sudharmā and the celestial tree Pārijāta[2] resorting to which a human being is not subjected to the conditions (such as hunger, thirst, old age, death) affecting a mortal.

55-A *VJ's text adds* :

This city became a beloved resort of Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the God of gods who resides on the milky ocean.

1. As per VP 5.23.1-4 Gārgya who was insulted by Yadus got a boon from Lord Śiva that his son (Kālayavana) would terrorise Yadus and would be invincible. To respect Śiva's boon, Kṛṣṇa did not kill him.

2. ŚR. explains this anachronism by stating that although Pārijāta was not brought at the time of building Dvārakā, the event that Kṛṣṇa brought it from Indra took place before this narration of the *Bhāgavata* by Śuka.

56. Varuṇa gifted (snow-) white horses with one black ear, swift like mind in speed.

56-A. *VJ.'s Text*

The Lord of waters presented to the God of gods one thousand such horses. Kubera, the presiding deity over treasures gave him eight treasures[1], while Guardian deities of the worlds submitted their special type of wealth to him.

56-B. *VJ.'s Text*

Similarly, guardian deities of other spheres presented him the wealth special to them.

57. When Lord Hari incarnated on the earth, Siddhas to whom all powers were given for the execution of their duties by the Lord, resubmitted all the powers etc, to him.

58. Having transferred all the people (his clansmen) there (to Dvārakā) by using his supernatural *yogic* powers and in consultation with Balarāma, the protector of the remaining population (of Mathurā), Kṛṣṇa issued out of the gates of Mathurā, wearing garland of lotuses completely unarmed.[2]

CHAPTER FIFTYONE[3]

Mucukunda's Eulogy of the Lord

1-3. The Yavana (Kālayavana) perceived Śrī Kṛṣṇa coming out (of the gates of Mathurā) like the rising Moon, most beautiful to look at, dark in complexion, clad in yellow silken garment, with the *Śrī-vatsa* mark on his bosom, with his neck beautified with the pendant brilliant Kaustubha gem,

1. S.R. quotes the following list of eight treasures
   padmas' caiva mahāpadmo matsya-kūrmau tathaudakaḥ /
   nīlo mukundaḥ śaṅkhaś ca nidhayo'ṣṭau prakīrtitāḥ //
2. Here ends chapter 53 in VJ.'s text.
3. Ch. 54 in VJ.'s text.

having four mighty (knee-) long arms and eyes reddish like a fresh-blown lotus, ever beaming with joyousness, with splendid, beautiful cheeks, bright with a smile and lotus-like countenance with dazzling alligator-shaped ear-rings.

4-5. "This exquisitely beautiful man characterised by *Śrī-vasta*, four arms, lotus-like eyes and wearing a Vanamālā must be Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa). From the characteristic marks described in details by Nārada (I presume) he cannot be anyone else. But since he is armless and walking on foot, I too shall fight with him unarmed (and without using any vehicle)".

6. Resolving thus, the Yavana, with the intention of seizing him whom even the *yogin* cannot attain with difficulty, chased him who was running fast with his back towards the Yavana.

7. Showing himself to be within his grasp at every step, the king of Yavanas was taken far away to a distant mountain cave.

8. "Born as you are in the Yadu race, it is not proper for you to run away from the enemy". Reproaching him thus while pursuing, he could not overtake him (and catch hold of him) as his inauspicious *karmas* were not exhausted.

9. Even though he was thus vilified, the Lord entered a deep cave in the mountain[1]. Kālayavana also made his way into it and saw that another person was lying there asleep.

10. "Surely after luring me to such a long distance, he is (pretending to be) asleep like an innocent person." Thinking thus and regarding the sleeping man to be Kṛṣṇa, the stupid fellow kicked him

11. The man who was asleep for a long time became awakened. He slowly opened his eyes and looked in all directions and espied Kālayavana standing by his side.

1. VB. States that the cave is near Dhavalapura (Dholapur) at a distance of 10 yojanas from Mathurā. N.L. De identified it with a lake three miles to the west of Dholapur and states that on the site of the lake there was formerly a mountain—GDAM I.p. 132.

12. By the angry look of the enraged man (rudely awakened from sleep), there arose a fire out of Kālayavana's body and he was reduced to ashes in a moment.

King Parīkṣit asked :

13. What was the name of the man who (thus) killed the Yavana, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ? From whom was he born ? What (extra-ordinary) prowess did he possess ? Why did he enter the cave for sleep ? What majestic lustre did he possess ?

Śrī Śuka narrated :

14. He was born in the race of Ikṣvākus and was a prominent son of Māndhātṛ. He was well-known by the name Mucukunda. He was friendly to Brāhmaṇas and always true to his words.

15. He was implored to ensure their protection (from demons) by the host of gods headed by Indra, as they were very much afraid of (and harassed) by Asuras. He accordingly afforded them protection for a long time.

16. Having secured (the services of) god Kārttikeya (son of Śiva) as their protector, they spoke to Mucukunda, "Oh King ! You may now retire from the onerous task[1] of protecting us.

17. Having given up your world kingdom from which all the thorns (miscreants and enemies) were wiped out by you, you have been protecting us in doing which you have given up all pleasures, Oh warrior.

18. Now none of your sons, queens, clansmen, ministers or your contemporary subjects survives as they are subjected to the influence of Time (and have died).

19. The glorious supreme immortal Lord, the Time-spirit is mightier than the mighty. He drives off all creatures easily as in a sport, as a herdsman would do his cattle.

20. May God bless you. Please ask of us any boon except the final emancipation. For the imperishable Almighty Lord Viṣṇu alone has the capability to grant it.

1. Though he was in heaven, Mucukunda was always engaged in fighting and had no respite to enjoy heavenly bliss—VJ.

21*-22. When the highly glorious king Mucukunda was thus addressed (by gods), (it is reported that) he respectfully bowed to gods[1]. He entered a cave (shown to him by gods) and reposed himself to enjoy the sleep granted to him by gods.

23. (The gods assured him) "He who would wake you up thoughtlessly while you are asleep (and thus disturb your rest), the stupid fellow be reduced to ashes the very moment he is woked at by you".

24. When the Yavana was reduced to ashes, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the most prominent Sātvata manifested himself to the intelligent king Mucukunda.

25-27. He perceived the Lord, of dark-blue complexion like a cloud, wearing a yellow silken garment, with the *Śrīvatsa* mark on the chest, lustrous with the refulgent *Kaustubha* gem, having four arms, appearing resplendent with the *Vanamālā* (a garland of forest flowers special to Śrī Kṛṣṇa), with a charming, kindly disposed countenance, beautified with radiant alligator-shaped ear-rings, captivating to the eyes of all human beings[1] with smiling looks expressing gracious love, endowed with youthfulness, noble in gait like a proud lion.

28. Being over-awed with his dazzling effulgence, the highly intelligent and wise king gently enquired of him as he was unapproachable due to his splendour.

Mucukunda said

29. "Who are you arrived here in this inaccessible mountain cave in a dense forest ? How is it that you go about in this forest full of thorns, on foot tender like lotus-petals ?

* According to Yande's (Bombay) edition.

1. *VJ.'s text adds* :

21.1 ... and he begged of them to grant him (the boon of) sleep lasting for a pretty long period inside a cave. When he was granted that boon, the noble-minded king Mucukunda being overcome with fatigue sought from them (undisturbed) sleep.

Vṛndāvana edition adds :

21.2. (Mucukunda requested as a boon :) 'Whoever disturbs my sleep should be instantaneously reduced to ashes, Oh most prominent gods'. The gods granted the boons saying 'Amen'.

1. v.l. enhanting to the eyes of the three worlds (VJ.)

30. You are the embodiment of majestic lustre of all those endowed with effulgence and luminosity. Are you the glorious Fire-god or the Sun-god or the Moon-god or the great Indra or the guardian deity of the world or any other divinity of that high status ?

31. I regard you as the Supreme Person, Lord Viṣṇu out of the three Gods of gods (viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) as you dispel the darkness of the cave (or remove ignorance in my heart) by your splendour as does the light of a lamp.

32. Oh most excellent person ! If it pleases You, may your birth, exploits, family name be frankly disclosed to us who are sincerely desirous of hearing it (or who sincerely desire to render you service).

33. As for us we are Kṣattriyas of the Ikṣvāku race, Oh Tiger among men. I am, Oh Lord, known as Mucukunda, the son of Māndhātṛ (who was the son of Yuvanāśva).

34. Completely exhausted by vigil extending over a long period and with all the limbs of my body benumbed and over-powered with sleep, I lay enjoying un-interrupted sleep to my heart's content, from which I was rudely awakened by some unknown person, just now.

35. Even he has been reduced to ashes, verily by his own sins, indeed. It is after that your glorious personality, the destroyer of enemies, has been perceived by me.

36. Being bedazzled by your unbearable lustre, we cannot look at you for long. Our powers are ineffective in your presence, Oh blessed God. But you deserve to be honoured by all embodied beings (This much we can say about you)".

37. Thus respectfully addressed by the king, the glorious Lord, the Creator of all beings, laughed aloud and replied to him in a voice deep like the thundering of a cloud.

The Almighty Lord replied:

38. Dear King ! my incarnations, exploits and epithets are innumerable. They, being infinite in number, it is not possible even for me to count them.

39. Possibly someone might reckon, through (a continuous period of) many lives, all the particles of dust over the

earth, but nobody can ever enumerate my excellences, exploits, designations and incarnations.[1]

40. Even great sages (like Parāśara, Vaiśampāyana etc.) who tried to describe my descent and exploits pertaining to the past, present and future in order, have not been able to reach the end.

41. However, listen to me as I narrate those pertaining to the present time, Oh dear king. Formerly, I was entreated by god Brahmā to protect the order of righteousness and for annihilation of Asuras who caused a burden to the earth.

42. I have descended in the race of Yadus in the house of Vasudeva. As I am born of Vasudeva, they call me Vāsudeva.

43. Kālanemi, born as Kaṁsa and the haters of the righteous like Pralamba and others have been killed by me. This Yavana is caused to be burnt by me through your fiery looks.

44. Having been earnestly and repeatedly implored by you in days gone by, I, that Vāsudeva, being fond of my votaries, have come over to this cave for showering my divine Grace on you.

45. Seek boons from me, Oh royal sage. I shall bestow on you all desired objects as no person that resorts to me (submitting himself completely to my Will) shall suffer misery any more.

Śri Śuka said:

46. When addressed thus, Mucukunda bowed down to him. Remembering the words of Vṛddha Garga (predicting God Viṣṇu's revelation to him), he realized that he (Vāsudeva) was Lord Nārāyaṇa himself. Overwhelmed with joy, he submitted as follows:

1. Cf. *Viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi pravocaṁ yaḥ pārthivāni vimame rajāṁsi* /—RV. 1.154.1, AV 7.26.1; VS. 5-18, TS. 1.2.13.3

Mucukunda said:

47. Oh Lord ! This person (i.e. I or human being) whether male or female is absolutely deluded by your Māyā (Deluding Potency). With his eye (or mind) concentrated on *saṁsāra* (*Or* being unable to realize that you alone are the Reality), he does not seek resort in you (as a devotee). For the sake of happiness, he is attached to the house including wife, children, wealth etc.) which is the source of all miseries and is thus deceived (in his search for happiness).

48. After securing the blessing of birth as a human being in this world—which, in itself, is very difficult to obtain—and that too with proportionate limbs (and soundness of mind) without any efforts (on one's part but through Divine Grace), a person who does not resort to the lotus-feet of the Lord, is, Oh handsome Lord, a wicked-minded (dull-witted) fellow who, like a beast desirous of eating grass falls into a grass-covered well (with no way out), sinks down in the dark deep well of domestic life.

49. All this life of mine has been fruitlessly wasted, Oh Invincible Almighty, for I behaved as a king elated with the pride of affluence and splendour of my royalty, identifying this mortal body as the Self and in endless anxiety due to my attachment to sons, wives, treasures, and lands.

50. Forgetting you altogether, I became incorrigibly haughty and lordly with the deep-rooted (ignorant) attachment to this inert body which is similar to an earthen pot or a wall (and thus totally different from the Soul), the inherent pride of being a god among men (king) surrounded by many military officers commanding division of chariots, elephants, cavalry-men and foot-soldiers and leading expeditions over the earth.

51. Like unto a hungry serpent, licking the corners of its mouth with its tongue, seizing upon and swallowing up a rat, you, the alert God of Death, surprisingly overtake a person who forgets you altogether, and is engrossed in pondering over the ways and means of achieving worldly plans which (even if frustrated) intensify the desire for worldly objects which (even after attainment) extremely increases the greed and thirst for them.

52. The mortal body which formerly moved in chariots plated with gold or rode on elephants and was designated (honorifically) as 'the god among men', is reduced to what may be called as excrement (if devoured after death by dogs, crows etc. in an undisposed condition), as worms (if interred in the grave) and as ashes (if cremated by fire) during the inevitable course of Time.

53. Having conquered (all kingdoms spread over the earth in) all directions, with the (possibility of future) wars forestalled, occupying the exalted imperial throne, being paid respects by his (former) equals, the man is reduced to the state of a pet (a beast for play) for women in his home which is characterized by sexual pleasures, Oh Almighty Lord.

54. Being devoted to the performance of austerities denying himself all pleasures of senses, he continues to perform righteous acts and donate gifts (in the present life) with the expectant desire, "I should become the king of heaven (Indra) or the sole sovereign ruler of the world. But this simply intensifies his thirst and is not conducive to real happiness.

55. When the time of release from the *saṁsāra* of a person wandering in the cycle of births and deaths, approaches then only companionship with saintly persons takes place, Oh Imperishable Lord. It is only after association with saints that the mind (being averse to attachment to all worldly objects turns to your devotion—you who are the Master of the high and the low.

56. That the bondage of attachment to kingship should be severed automatically (without any efforts on my part) is, Me-thinks your special divine Grace shown to me—the Grace devoutly solicited by saints of unflinching devotion to you and by kings who though they ruled over the entire earth, still wished to retire to the forest for penance.

57. Oh Omnipresent Lord ! I do not seek any other boon from you except rendering service to your feet, which is regarded as the most covetable blessing according to those who have renounced everything (and possess nothing of their own). Having propitiated you, the bestower of *Mokṣa* (Liberation), Oh Hari, what wise man would solicit a boon from you which will create a bondage to one's soul.

58. Hence, rejecting all blessings which are bound with the *guṇas* viz. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, Oh Lord, I seek resort in you, the Supreme Person, the very embodiment of knowledge and consciousness unsullied by any taint, transcendent to all *guṇas*, the One without second.

59. For a very long time, I have been troubled in this world with fruits of action and have been afflicted with the *vāsanās* (effects left on the mind after enjoying fruits of actions) and am harrassed by six unsatiable (internal) enemies. Being unable to secure mental peace, I have with great difficulty approached your lotus-feet Oh Lord who are the Supreme Soul, free from fear and grief of death, Oh Lord ! Be pleased to protect me who am full of distress.

The glorious Lord said:

60. Oh Emperor of the entire world ! Oh great king, Your mind is free from impurities (like attachment, greed etc.) and judgment clear. For though you were tempted with boons (at your sweet will), you were not lured thereby.

61. It was with a view to test your unerring, vigilance that you were tempted with boons. Please know that the mind and intelligence of unflinching devotees is never changed by temptation of blessings.

62. The mind of those who are other than devotees and who control it by *Prāṇāyāma* (breath control) and other means, is not devoid of *vāsanās* (the subtle desires) and it is noticed that they are again attached to sense-objects.

63. You may roam over the earth at will after setting your mind on me. May your devotion unto me be everlasting and unflinching for ever.

64. In compliance of your duties as a Kṣattriya, you have killed living beings in hunting (fighting etc.). Expiate the sin committed by you by seeking my asylum and by meditation and performance of penance.

65. In the next birth you will be a prominent Brāhmaṇa, the best friend of all beings. Then you will certainly attain to me, the Absolute, Oh king.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma escape to Dvārakā: Balarāma's marriage

Rukmiṇi's Letter to Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. In this way, blessed by Kṛṣṇa, Mucukunda, the descendant of Ikṣvāku, circumambulated by the right Lord Kṛṣṇa, bowed to him and came out of the cave.

2. He noticed the dimunition of stature and form in men, beasts, creepers and trees and concluding that the Kali Age[1] had set in, he went to the northerly direction.

3. Endowed with faith and penance, free from attachment and cleared of doubts, the wise king concentrated his mind on Kṛṣṇa and entered the mount Gandhamādana[2].

4. He arrived at Badarikāśrama[3], the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Undergoing conflicting pairs of conditions (such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain) with tranquillity of mind, he propitiated Lord Hari with his austerities.

5. The Lord again returned to the city of Mathurā which was still besieged by the Yavana army. He annihilated the Yavana army and carried of their wealth as spoils to Dvārakā.

6.* While the wealth was being transported on the backs of men and oxen under the direction of the Imperishable

1. VT : Though the Kali age set in after Kṛṣṇa's departure from this world, he guessed that the advent of the Kali Age was imminent.

2. A part of Rudra Himālayas in the Kailāsa range. According to *Mbh.* and *Varāha P.* Badarikāśrama is situated on this mountain.—GDAMI p. 60.

3. Badrinath in Garhawal in U.P.

* *After this verse VJ.'s text reads* :

6.1 Thereupon king Jarāsandha, fierce like the universal fire at the end of the world, deployed his forces consisting of divisions of chariots, elephants, horsemen and foot-soldiers in crocodile-like formation within the wink of the eye and he surrounded Lord Kṛṣṇa in the midst of that formation.

6.2 Grasping the situation the ferocious Kṛṣṇa hastily uprooted a tree and struck down with it the elephants, chariots and horses in that battle.

Lord, Jarāsandha, commanding an army of twentythree *akṣauhiṇīs* arrived on the scene.

7. Observing the violent onrush of inimical forces, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the descendants of Madhu[1] adopted the human way of life and quickly began to run, Oh king.

8. Though really dauntless, they left the vast treasure (the spoils from the Yavana army) and simulating terrified cowards, they ran for many *yojanas* on foot, tender like lotus-petals.

9. Seeing both of them on the run, the powerful king of Magadhas laughed heartily and being ignorant of the deep designs and capacity of those two Lords pursued them with his army of chariots.*

6.3 Thus knocked down by Kṛṣṇa with the tree, elephants in the hostile army fell down dead on the ground like mountains struck down by Indra with his *Vajra* (Thunder-bolt).

6.4 There was left no trace of the chariots along with the occupants of the chariots, of the horses along with their riders, as if they were reduced to powder (in a grinding mill), Oh best among the Kurus.

6.5 Being infuriated, Balarāma knocked down with blows of his fist, intoxicated elephants, on the battle field, just as Indra, the King of gods, does to mountains with his thunderbolt.

6.6 The chariots (of the enemies) which were shattered down with the blows of Balarāma's fist, could not even be seen on the earth, Oh King, as they were reduced to powder like dry, withered leaves.

6.7 In the meanwhile, Jarāsandha noticed that all the wealth of the Yavana was being carried to Dvārakā and (pursuing it) and massacring the Yādavas (escorting it), seized it all. He then returned to the scene of the battle to encounter Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, Oh scion of the Kuru race.

1. *VJ.'s Text adds here* :

7.1 Noticing Jarāsandha dashing towards them with his allied princes and their armies and themselves being showered with volleys of arrows like two cubs of elephants (*kari-potakau*) driven by heavy rainshower, and themselves were without any chariots, weapons, armours and soldiers.

* *Here VJ's text adds* :

9.1 Striking back, the two warriors took rest at Karavīrapura at night. When the sun rose, the two heroes ascended the mount Gomanta.

9.2-3. Climbing up mount Gomanta which was inhabited by Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas and Vidyādharas, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa hastily ascended its peak known as Pravarṣaṇa as clouds always shower

10. Being completely exhausted by (the strain of) running fast to such a long distance, they, however, ascended the lofty mountain peak known as Pravarṣaṇa where Indra the god of rain, always sends forth showers.

11. Surmising that they must have concealed themselves somewhere on the mountain and not being able to locate their place of hiding, they (Jarāsandha's men) set the whole mountain on fire on all sides with the fuel (the trees cut down by them during their search) strewn around.

rains there. They happily lived there subsisting on fruits and roots, Oh king.

9.4. Feeling elated and happy, Jarāsandha also pursued the two Mādhava brothers (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) and laid siege to the Gomanta mountain, surrounding it with his vast army.

9.5-7. He summoned his followers, the allied princes proud and irresistible in fight, such as (kings of) Kaliṅga, Kuñjarapati, the ruler of Śurāṣṭra (Kathiawar), Jayadratha the king of Sindhu (lower Sindh), Somadatta of the Kuru family, Śakuni the king of Gandhāra and Rukmi, the (crown) prince of Vidarbha, Sudakṣiṇa of Kāmboja and Virāṭa, the king of Matsyas. He commanded them to go up and fight from the east of Gomanta.

9.8-10. For scaling (and attacking) the mountain Gomanta from its southern side, Jarāsandha ordered the following kings—Drupada, the king of Pāñcālas, Damaghoṣa, the ruler of Cedis, Brahmadatta, king of Śālvas and Ekalavya, the chief of Niṣādas, Bāhlika, the foremost of Kurus and the unconquerable Yudhāmanyu, Vinda and Anuvinda of Avanti and Pauṇḍraka, the king of Kāśi.

9.11-13. To Druma, the ruler of Kimpuruṣas, Dantavaktra and his younger brother, the heroic king of Videhas and Bhūriśravas, Bṛhaccāpa, the ruler of Karuṣas and Śatadhvaja of Daśārṇa, Śaibya, the king of Suvīra (or Sauvīra, upper Sindh and Southern Punjab) and the great chariot warrior Darada,—To these King Jarāsandha of immeasurable dignity and splendour, commanded to ascend expeditiously the mount Gomanta from the west.

9.14-15. Despatching as vanguards Suśarmā of Trigarta, the mighty Veṇudārin, the immensely powerful Kulinda, the chiefs of Kekayas, Śiśupāla and the invincible monarch Bhīṣmaka, he himself quickly scaled up the mount from the northern side.

9.16. Having thus climbed mount Gomanta abounding in fruit-bearing trees of all seasons, they searched for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma everywhere below the peak Pravarṣaṇa. Not finding Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, they deforested the mount cutting down all the trees.

12. Thereupon, both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma quickly (and with great velocity) leapt from the mountain peak which is eleven *yojanas* in height and had its sides burning, and descended on the plains below (beyond the army of Jarāsandha).

13. Without being noticed by enemy and his followers, those best sons of Yadu race returned to their capital Dvārakā which is surrounded by the sea as its moat, Oh king.

14*. Falsely believing that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa must have been burnt (in that fire), the king of Magadhas withdrew his vast army and returned to his kingdom of Magadha.

15. It has been already narrated to you by me (*vide Supra* 9.3.27-36), that Kakudmin, the son of Revata, the celebrated king of Ānarta gave his daughter Revatī in marriage to Balarāma, as per direction of god Brahmā.

16. Lord Kṛṣṇa also married Rukmiṇī, the princess of Vidarbha and the daughter of Bhīṣmaka and who was an *aṃśa* (part-manifestation) of goddess Śrī in a *svayaṁvara* ('self-choice' type of marriage where the girl elects of her own free will, her husband).

17. Like Garuḍa, the son of Kaśyapa taking away the pitcher of nectar (defeating all the gods), Kṛṣṇa carried her away defeating instantly Śālva and other kings who were partisans and allies of Śiśupāla, the king of Cedis.

King Parikṣit enquired :

18. It has been heard by us that the Lord married the beautiful looking Rukmiṇī, the princess of Bhīṣmaka as per *rākṣasa* form of marriage (wherein the girl is abducted per force in the teeth of opposition of relatives.)

* *After this adds VJ.'s Text* :

14.1. Having vanquished Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the foremost among the Yādavas in the eighteenth expedition, Jarāsandha had brought under his dominion all the directions (all kingdoms on the earth) and feeling proud of it, he lived in his own kingdom, Oh king.

14.2 The noble-souled Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (the Mādhava brothers) entered the city of Dvārakā and lived happily in the company of their highly joyous relatives and were being praised day and night by bards and songsters like *Sūta, Māgadha* and *Bandins*.

End of ch. 55*th in VJ.'s Text*

For ch. 56 in VJ.'s Text vide the Appendix.

19. I desire to hear the story of Lord Kṛṣṇa of boundless power and energy, who defeated Jarāsandha, Śālva and others and carried away the girl, Oh worshipful sage.

20. Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ! The stories of Lord Kṛṣṇa are meritorious, sweet, ever-interesting, delightful and they wipe out the sins of the world. What person who knows the importance of listening to them, will be sated at hearing them.*

Śrī Śuka narrated:

21. There was a great king called Bhīṣmaka, a powerful monarch of the Vidarbhas. He had five sons and only one charming looking daughter.

22. The eldest son was Rukmi. After him was born Rukmabāhu and then Rukmakeśa, Rukma-mālin and the pious Rukmiṇī was their sister.

23. Listening attentively to the glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa's beauty, prowess, excellent virtues and affluence as sung by the visitors to her palace, she regarded him as her worthy spouse.

24. Kṛṣṇa also made up his mind to marry her as he knew her to be a suitable wife due to her intelligence, auspicious characteristics, nobility of heart, beauty, high character and other excellences.

25. In spite of all brothers being desirous of giving their sister in marriage to Kṛṣṇa, Rukmi who hated Kṛṣṇa, came in the way of it and proposed Śiśupāla, the king of Cedis.

26. Grasping the situation, the beautiful princess of Vidarbha was deeply agitated at heart. She pondered over the problem and immediately despatched a trusted Brāhmaṇa to Kṛṣṇa with the mission of bringing him.

27. Arriving at Dvārakā, he was ushered into (Kṛṣṇa's presence) by the door-attendants where he saw the First (the most ancient) Person (in the world) seated on a throne of gold.

28. Seeing him come, Lord Kṛṣṇa who was always friendly to Brāhmaṇas, got down from his throne. Offering a

* Here *Vrindāvana* edition gives the additional chapters 56 and a part of 57. These are translated in the Appendix.

(respectable) seat to the Brāhmaṇa, he worshipped him (as an honourable guest) as gods used to treat him.

29. When he had taken his meals and rested comfortably, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the final asylum of the saintly people, approached him and massaging gently his feet with his hand, he quietly enquired of the Brāhmaṇa.

30. "Oh most prominent one among great Brāhmaṇas! Is your righteous course of conduct traditionally approved by the elders, going on without any difficulty? (I hope) you are (happy with it and) contented in your heart.

31. If a Brāhmaṇa adjusts himself in contentment, with whatever he gets by chance, but does not swerve from his course of righteousness, he is like a wish-yielding cow capable of granting blessings to all the world (*or* that righteous course of conduct serves as a wish-yielding cow to him)

32. Even Indra, the king of gods, if discontented, has to wander from one world to another restlessly.[1] But a destitute person, if contented, sleeps soundly without a touch of feverish anxiety to his body and mind.

33. I bow down again and again with my head to those Brāhmaṇas who are happy with the realization of their self[2], pious and the best friends and well-wishers of all beings, free from ego, serene and self complacent.

34. Are you all happy (with a feeling of security) under your ruler, Oh Brāhmaṇa? That king is liked by me in whose country the subjects protected by him lead a happy life.

35. Please tell me the place from which you have come here crossing this (unfordable) sea and the object of seeing me. If it be no undivulgable secret, please tell us everything—what we should do for you?"

36. When such relevant queries were made courteously to the Brāhmaṇa by the Supreme Lord who had sportively assumed a human form, described to him in details (the situation which led princess Rukmiṇī to depute him to Lord Kṛṣṇa)*

1. v.l. *nāpnoti* : Even though he is the lord of gods he does not attain to higher worlds but suffers—ŚR.

2. *Or* : With what they get as a result of their destiny or *karmas*.

* Here VR.'s Text adds : (also VJ.)

36.1. I have been deputed to your presence, on best of men, by

Rukmiṇī said in her message :

37. Oh the most-beautiful Person in all the worlds ! Having listened to your excellent qualities which enter into the heart through (the passage of) ears and remove all the feverishness of the body and the mind, and of your excellent charms ensuring all the cherished blessings to those who possess eyes, my heart sheds all bashfulness and enters in you, Oh Immortal Lord !

38. Oh Kṛṣṇa ! Lion among men ! What wise, judicious girl of very noble descent will not seek you as a husband at the proper time—you who are the most beautiful one among all men, and one's own compeer in family, character, personal charm, knowledge, youthfulness, affluence and splendour.*

39. I have, therefore, chosen you as my lord indeed. Oh Lotus-eyed dear lord ! I have submitted my self unto you. Please do take me as your wife. Like a jackal polluting by his touch the lion's share of the prey, may not Śiśupāla, the king of Cedis come hastily and touch the hero's share (i.e. myself).

40. If the Supreme Lord, the Almighty, has been properly propitiated by me by religious deeds such as digging wells, performing sacrifices, giving donations, observance of religious rules and vows and the worship of gods, Brāhmaṇas and preceptors and such other deeds, may Lord Kṛṣṇa, the elder brother of Gada, come and marry me so that others like the son of Damaghoṣa (Śiśupāla) may not take my hands.

princess Rukmiṇī. Please listen to her message and let her prayer (and proposal) be implemented immediately there-after.

36.2. Placing the letter (written by Rukmiṇī) at his feet, he bowed down to him. The Lord of the world, with beautiful smiling eyes, took it up. The Lord, *Dharma* incarnate, read it attentively as if he was eagerly desirous to read it.

**VJ's Text adds* :

38.1. You are the glorious consort of goddess Lakṣmī, loved by Your devotees, the Supreme Controller of the Universe who are resorted to for protection by helpless people and as such also by me. Taking this into account, be pleased to grant the prayer of mine who am a servant of your lotus-like feet. Oh dearest Lord I have submitted myself to your feet.

41. Oh Invincible Lord ! May you come secretly with an army and generals to Vidarbha at the time of marriage which is to be celebrated very shortly. Defeat the armies of Caidya and Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha, and take me away as the spoil of your prowess according to the *Rākṣasa* form of marriage.[1]

42. 'How should I marry you who live in the precincts of the harem without putting your relatives to death ?' If this be the ground for hesitation, I shall suggest you an expedient. On the day preceding the marriage there is (in your family a traditional) procession to our family deity. In that, the bride to be wed goes openly to her deity.*

43. Oh Lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa ! In order to remove their personal ignorance, great-souled persons like god Śiva desire to have the dust on your lotus-like feet for covering their person as a bath. If I do not have this favour from you, I shall give up my life by starvation and other severe observance of vows so that at least after a hundred births I shall be favoured with your Grace.**

The Brāhmaṇa said :

44. Oh Lord of Yadus ! These are the secret words of the message that I have bought for you. Please consider what is worth doing in this (exigency of the situation), and prompt action should be taken immediately after this.

1. This form of marriage is recommended for *Kṣatriyas*.

**VJ. adds here* :

42.1 Coming over there at that time with the four divisions of army such as chariots, elephants, cavalry and infantry, and having given a sound drubbing to kings of Śālva, Magadha, Cedi and others, may the Lord of Lakṣmi take me along with my maids of honour from the temple to his own capital and have there a formal marriage celebration (lit. taking of hands).

***VJ's Text*

Śrī Śuka said :

43.1 Pondering over all the contents of the letter as well as the oral message of the princess, Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of demon Madhu, looked at the Brāhmaṇa (to convey his message).

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rukmiṇi's Marriage : Rukmiṇi carried away by Kṛṣṇa.

Śri Śuka said :

1. Hearing the message of Rukmiṇī, the princess of Vidarbha, Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yadus, clasped the hand of the Brāhmaṇa and laughing heartily, he spoke to him.

The Lord said :

1 A. *VR.'s Text adds* :

Just as the most beautiful Rukmiṇī has ever fixed her heart on Me.

2. So also I too have set My heart on her. Hence I do not get any sleep at night. I know that it is due to Rukmin's hatred against me that my marriage with her is obstructed by him.

3. As one would capture a flame after churning the fuel, I will vanquish those wretched kings in a battle and take away (as prize) that faultlessly beautiful princess who is so devoted to me.

Śri Śuka narrated :

4. Having ascertained (from the Brāhmaṇa) the constellation under which Rukmiṇī's marriage was to take place (viz. day after tomorrow at night, Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of the demon Madhu ordered his charioteer Dāruka to get his chariot ready forthwith.

5. Dāruka instantly brought up the chariot drawn by (the famous horses) Śaibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka and stood before him with folded palms.

6. Taking up the Brāhmaṇa with him, Kṛṣṇa, mounted the chariot and with those swift horses (yoked to the chariot) he travelled from Ānarta[1] to Vidarbha within one night.

7. Due to his weakness of being over-affectionate to his

1. Gujarat and a part of Malwa with Kuśasthalī or Dvārakā as the capital—GDAMI p. 7.

son, the king of Kuṇḍina caused all the auspicious rites connected with marriage-ceremony, with a view to give his daughter to Śiśupāla.

8-9. The city had all its streets, roads and quadrangles profusely sprinkled with water. It was decorated with banners of various kinds and buntings and arches. It was crowded by men and women who were wearing garlands of flowers, fragrant ointments and dressed themselves with immaculate clothes. They perfumed their mansions with the fumes of aloe wood (*Aguru*) smoke.

10. Having worshipped the manes, gods and Brāhmaṇas with due formalities and giving them a heavy feast he caused the auspicious verses recited according to formalities (to bless the bride).

11. The bride of beautiful teeth who had taken a bath and had gone through the formal auspicious preliminaries (such as wearing an auspicious thread woven with a piece of gold) was clothed in a pair of brand-new silken pieces and was beautified with excellent ornaments.

12. For the protection of the bride (from evil influences), the most prominent Brāhmaṇas pronounced *mantras* from the Sāmaveda, the Ṛg-Veda and the Yajur-Veda. The family-priest of the king who was expert in the Atharva-Veda offered oblations to fire for the appeasement of evil stars (and the prosperity of the house).

13. The king who was prominent among those who were well versed in Śāstric prescriptions gave as gift to Brāhmaṇas gold. silver, clothes and sesamum seeds mixed with raw sugar and cows as well.

14. In the same way king Damaghoṣa, the ruler of Cedis, caused all the religious formalities conducive to the good of his son, by Brāhmaṇas who were expert in *mantras*.

15. Accompanied with regiments of elephants exuding ichor, chariots decorated with garlands of gold and with armies of cavalry and infantry, he came to the city of Kuṇḍina.

16. The king of Vidarbhas went out to receive him and worshipped him with all the formalities with a gladsome heart. He lodged him in a separated mansion which was reserved for that purpose.

17. There came thousands of kings who were the allies of Śiśupāla such as Śālva, Jarāsandha, Dantavaktra, Vidūratha, Pauṇḍraka and others.

18-19 All those enemies of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma determined to see to it that the bride was secured for Śiśupāla. They decided among themselves, "In case Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Balarāma and other Yadus comes and tries to carry away the bride, we shall jointly put up a fight with him." Having made up their minds thus, all the kings came with all their forces and vehicles there.

20-21. Hearing the report of military preparations of the hostile kings, the glorious Balarāma who came to know of Kṛṣṇa's having gone alone to carry away the bride, apprehended a fight, and taking with him a very big army consisting of elephants, horsemen, chariots and foot-soldiers quickly rushed to Kuṇḍina, as he was overcome with brotherly affection.

22. The beautiful daughter of king Bhīṣmaka who was yearning for the arrival of Lord Hari and not seeing (any chances) of the return of the deputed Brāhmaṇa, began to think as follows :

23. "Alas ! Only one night has remained for the celebration of the marriage. I am afraid I am unfortunate with little merit (to my credit). The Lotus-eyed Lord has not come as yet, nor do I know its reason. The Brāhmaṇa who was my emissary with that message, has also not returned as yet.

24. Is it that the noble-souled Lord who made preparations for coming here has seen something censurable in me and hence does not come for the acceptauce of my hand ?

25. To me who am unfortunate, neither god Brahmā nor god Śiva is favourable and the fair goddess Pārvatī the spouse of god Śiva, that chaste daughter of Himālayas too seems to be averse to me."

26. While the girl whose mind was thus fixed on Lord Kṛṣṇa (as if carried away by him) was pondering thus, her eyes were bedimmed with tears. But as she knew what was proper for that particular time (viz. not shedding tears), she closed her eyes.

27. In this way, of the bride who was eagerly waiting for the coming of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the left thigh, arm, and eye began to throb indicating thereby auspicious and happy news.

28. That very excellent Brāhmaṇa who was directed by Kṛṣṇa (after his arrival in the park near Kuṇḍina) saw the glorious princess in the harem.

29. Seeing his cheerful countenance and gait with confident steps (indicating a success of his mission) the virtuous girl who was expert in guessing the indications, asked him with a broad smile.

30. He informed her that Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yadus had arrived and assured her of his definite promise of taking her away (*supra* verse 3) and that he was brought in his chariot by Kṛṣṇa Himself.

31. Knowing definitely that he (Kṛṣṇa) had arrived (at Kuṇḍinapura), the princess of Vidarbha was over-joyed at heart. (In her exultation) she could not decide what gift or boon be conferred on the Brāhmaṇa for his highly valuable service. And she simply bowed down to him[1] (and later paid him sumptuously).

32. Learning that both Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa had arrived out of curiosity to witness the celebration of his daughter's marriage, king Bhīṣmaka went forth to receive them with a flourish of trumpets, taking with him proper articles of worship and presents.

33. (Being highly intelligent, he guessed that Kṛṣṇa had arrived for marrying his daughter for which he was quite willing). So he worshipped Kṛṣṇa with due formalities suitable after the arrival of the bridegroom and he brought *Madhuparka* (a preparation of honey and curds—a customary offer to a bridegroom after arrival on the eve of the marriage ceremony), excellent (lit. well-washed) garments and other desirable presents (of various kinds) and worshipped them as enjoined in scriptures.

1. ŚR. : *Or* : Rukmiṇī was an incarnation of Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth. All people who pay respects to her are bestowed with all kinds of wealth. She decided, "When I, Lakṣmī, pay respects to this Brāhmaṇa, he will automatically become more affluent than all others."

34. The high-minded monarch arranged for a spacious, luxurious accommodation for them.

3-4A. *VJ's Text* :

It was quite spacious and suitable for them but in a garden on the outskirts of Kuṇḍinapura, as the city was overcrowded with kings like Jarāsandha and others.[1]

34. ... He also arranged for the hospitable reception of Kṛṣṇa's followers and army, in a proper manner.

35. In this way, he received all other kings who arrived there, each according to his prowess, age, military power and affluence, catering to them all that they desired.

36. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa had arrived, the citizens of Kuṇḍinapura came to see him and (as it were) drank (to their heart's c ntent the honey of beauty) of his lotus-face with both their eyes as if they were the joined palms for drinking).

37. (They spoke amongst themselves) : 'Only Rukmiṇī and no other girl deserves to be his consort, and he alone of faultlessly beautiful personality is the suitable consort for Rukmiṇī, the daughter of Bhīṣma.

38. May the Lord, the creator of the three worlds, be pleased with whatever little merit we possess and as his grace (showered on us) may the imperishable Lord Kṛṣṇa accept the hand of the princess of Vidarbha."

39. While the citizens who were attached to Rukmiṇī by bonds of affection, were speaking thus with one another, the bride, guarded by soldiers, started from the harem to the shrine of Ambikā (goddess Pārvatī).

40. Deeply contemplating on the lotus-feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, she went on foot to see and worship the foliage-like tender feet of goddess Bhavānī.

40-A *VJ's. Text adds* :

Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yādavas went there in the company of some selected followers.

41. The bride observed silence; she was accompanied by her mothers and was surrounded by her friends (maids of

1. Probably to avoid an outbreak of conflict if the two inimical camps are accommodated in the town.

honour). She was protected by the valiant royal guards clad in coats of mail and alert with their weapons uplifted.

41-A. *VJ's Text* :

And she was surrounded by aged chamberlains (eunuchs) with canes indicating their office, *Mṛdaṅgas*, conchs, drums, trumpets and kettle-drums were sounded (during the procession.)

42. She was accompanied by thousands of prominent courtesans carrying with them a variety of offerings and articles of worship and by Brāhmaṇa women (whose husbands were alive) tastefully adorned with garlands of flowers, perfumes (or sandal paste) excellent garments and ornaments.

43. Songsters singing songs and musicians playing on their instruments as well as bards and panegyrists like *Sūta*, *Māgadha* and *Bandins* surrounded the bride glorifying her in songs.

44. Arriving at the shrine of the goddess[1], she washed her lotus-like hands and feet. Purifying herself with sipping the water thrice as *ācamana*, she entered with a serene mind in the inner apartment—into the presence of the goddess Pārvatī.

45. Aged Brāhmaṇa ladies who were well-versed in the (pre-marital) rituals, guided the bride in the worship and paying respects to the goddess Pārvatī, the Consort of Śiva, along with god Śiva as well.

46. (Rukmiṇī prayed :) I constantly pay my respects to you Oh auspicious[2] Mother goddess, along with your children (Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya). May Lord Kṛṣṇa become my consort. May this prayer of mine be granted.

47. She worshipped the goddess Pārvatī in several ways by sprinkling her with water, applying sandal-paste and unbroken rice-grains, varieties of incense, with (a rich variety of) clothes, garlands of flowers, ornaments, various kinds of articles of worship and offerings (variety of edibles) and with rows of lights (waving them round her).

1. VR.'s *v.l.*—she entered the shrine of the goddess.

2. *Śivā*—implies respects to Lord Śiva with whom she (the goddess) shares the name and person.

48. With similar articles she worshipped Brāhmaṇa women *Suvāsinis*—(whose husbands are alive) in the same way, offering them salt, *apūpa* (fried cakes), betel leaves, *maṅgalasūtra* (the sacred thread to be worn round the neck by *Suvāsinis*), fruits (of various kinds) and (pieces of) sugarcane.

49. The Brāhmaṇa ladies gave her some part (of what she offered as worship to the goddess Ambikā) and gave their blessings (in addition) along with them. Rukmiṇī bowed down to them and and to the queen-mother and accepted the things offered to her (as *prasāda*).

50. Completing (the observance of) the vow of silence she came out of the temple of Ambikā[1], clasping the hand of her servant (nurse) with her own hand resplendent with rings of precious stones.

51-53. The glorious warriors who assembled there found themselves tormented with the passion of love and became perplexed at seeing her, who like the deluding potency (Māyā) of the Lord, was enchanting to the warriors, with her beautiful slender waist, and countenance beautified with the earrings; she was sixteen years of age[2], wore a girdle of precious stones around her waist: had protruding breasts (showing attainment of womanhood); her eyes were unsteady, appearing as if afraid of her over-hanging locks of hair. Beaming with bright smile, her white jasmine-bud like teeth appeared reddish as they were tinged with the splendour of her red lips-red like the *Bimba* fruit. Her gait was like that of a royal swan and her feet were radiant with the splendour of jingling anklets.

54. Hypnotized on seeing Rukmiṇī who under the pretex of the religious pilgrimage (to the shrine of the goddess), had come to offer her beauty to Lord Hari, the kings whose

1. *VJ.'s Text adds*

50.1 Nearby was the shrine of Indra and (his consort) Śacī who were the family deities of the royal house of Vidarbha.

50.2 Rukmiṇī entered (the inner part of the shrine) in the presence of Śacī, the beloved of the lord of gods. She bowed to the feet of Śacī whose lotus-feet were not worshipped by her for a pretty long time. Then she issued out of that temple with many umbrellas being held over her and fanned by waving of a number of *chowries*.

2. *Śyāmā*—who had not attained puberty—ŚR., VR.

hearts were captivated by her sublime smile and bashful looks, dropped down their weapons (without being aware of it), and fell senseless on the ground even though they were mounted on elephants, chariots and horses.

55. At that time, she was eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Lord and hence was slowly moving (her feet resembling) a pair of lotus-buds. Removing aside her hair flowing over her eyes with her fingers, she cast bashful side-glances to have an over-view of the kings that assembled there. And Lo ! she noticed him there.

56. Even while the enemies were looking on, Kṛṣṇa snatched away the princess who was desirous of ascending his chariot; he seated her in his chariot with the ensign of Garuḍa (emblem of Garuda on the flag) setting at nought the whole lot of Kṣattriyas assembled there. Kṛṣṇa, the Consort of Lakṣmī, then slowly (and fearlessly) departed from the place (to Dvārakā) with his forces headed by Balarāma, like a lion seizing his own share of prey from the midst of a pack of jackals.

57*. Other proud kings under the leadership of Jarāsandha did not tolerate this discomfiture and loss of reputation (by Kṛṣṇa's carrying away Rukmiṇī in the teeth of their opposition). They exclaimed : "Fie upon us who, although armed with bows, have been deprived of our reputation and glory by cowherds just as the lions are deprived of their kingly position by the deer."

CHAPTER FIFTY-FOUR

Celebration of Rukmiṇi's Marriage

Śri Śuka said:

1. With these self-condemning words, all the highly indignant kings put on their coats of mail and mounting their own vehicles and surrounded by their respective armies hotly pursued Kṛṣṇa, equipped with bows in their hands.

* This is the Ist verse of the next chapter in VJ.

2. Beholding the on-rushing kings in pursuit, the generals of the Yādava army stood their ground to confront them, twanging their bows, Oh king.

3. Veterans of war (like Jarāsandha) who were riding on horse-back, the shoulders of elephants and seats in the chariots discharged volleys of arrows like innumerable clouds pouring showers of water on mountains.

4. Finding her consort's force covered with showers of arrows, the slender-waisted bride with her eyes agitated with fear looked at her Lord's face bashfully.

5. Laughing out that fear, the Lord assured her: "Don't be afraid, Oh fair-eyed maiden ! The inimical forces will be liquidated in no time by your soldiers".

6. Not tolerating that prowess of the enemies, (the leaders of the Yādava army like) Gada, Balarāma and others shot down the horses, elephants and chariots (of the enemy) with their steel-arrows (*nārāca*).

7. And rolled down on the ground crores of heads of the occupants of chariots, horsemen and elephant-riders—all ornamented with ear-rings, crowns and head-gears.

8. And fell down on the grounds, their hands wielding swords, maces (*gadās*) and bows, and also fore-arms, thighs, feet, as well as the heads of horses, mules, elephants, camels, donkeys and (infantry-) men.

9. As their armies were thus being drubbed and slain by Vṛṣṇis ambitious of victory, the kings led by Jarāsandha turned back and fled away (from the battle field).

10. They all approached Śiśupāla who was gloomy, dispirited and with parched-up mouth, grieving as if his legally married wife was abducted.

The kings consoled him:

11. "Oh tiger among men ! Give up this despondency. In the case of embodied beings, pleasure or pain is never observed to be his permanent lot.

12. Just as a wooden doll dances according to the will of the showman (controlling it), the same way, due to his being controlled by God, the embodied being endeavours to pass through pleasure or pain.

13. Though backed by an army of twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs*, (every time) I suffered defeat at the hands of Kṛṣṇa in seventeen expeditions. But ultimately I was victorious in one (the last) battle.

14. I, however, do not feel aggrieved or elated by anything (defeat or victory) as I know that the world is controlled by time in combination with Providence.

15. Leaders of the army-commanders as we are, on this occasion also we were defeated by the small contingent of Yādavas under the protection of Kṛṣṇa.

16. The enemies became victorious this time as Time was favourable to them. We too shall vanquish them when the Time will be propitious to us."

Śri Śuka said:

17. Thus consoled with enlightenment by his friends, Śiśupāla returned to his capital along with his followers, while the other allied kings who survived that battle went back to their respective cities.

18. The mighty prince Rukmī who hated Kṛṣṇa, could not tolerate the idea of his sister being married to Kṛṣṇa according to the *rākṣasa* from of marriage and with an army of one *akṣauhiṇi*, he hotly pursued Kṛṣṇa.

19. The mighty-armed, impetuous, determined Rukmī, clad in armour and armed with a bow, in his high indignation, took the vow in the hearing of all princes (before they departed).

20. "Upon my word I hereby solemnly declare that I shall not enter Kuṇḍinapura unless (and until) I bring back Rukmiṇī after killing Kṛṣṇa in the battle."

21. Announcing this, he mounted his chariot and commanded his charioteer: "Quickly drive the horses to the spot where Kṛṣṇa is, so that I shall have an encounter with him.

22. Today with my sharp arrows I shall vanquish the pride of valour of that cowherd (or: the protector of the Vedas), the most wicked-minded fellow (or: one who is gracious unto the wicked as well who has abducted per force my sister".

23. Not knowing the extent of (the infinite) power of the Lord, Rukmī, the wicked braggart pursued alone in a chariot and shouted out the words, 'Stop', 'stop' to Kṛṣṇa who (also) was driving alone in his chariot.

23A. He overtook Kṛṣṇa while he was crossing the divine river Narmadā. Being fully prepared for a fight, he repeatedly shouted out at him to stop.

24. With all the force at his command, he bent the bow (by drawing the bowstring) and hit Kṛṣṇa with three arrows and roared: "Wait minute here (Oh thief! My enemy), the disgrace to Yadu's family[1].

25. Where are you going clandestinely kidnapping my sister like a crow[2] stealthily picking up sacrificial oblation? I shall today subdue your pride, you dullard[3] who are a cheat and adopt crooked stratagems in fighting.

26. Surrender my younger sister (lit. a young girl) before you are not lying (in the dust) struck down by my arrows."[4] Smilingly Kṛṣṇa cut down Rukmī's bow and wounded him with six arrows.

27. He struck his four horses with eight shafts, the charioteer with two and his flag with three. Taking up another bow, Rukmī pierced Kṛṣṇa with five arrows.

28. Struck by the stream of arrows, the imperishable Lord Kṛṣṇa sundered Rukmī's bow. He again equipped himself with (still) another bow which too the Lord snapped.

29. Kṛṣṇa cut into splinters whatever weapon—whether a club studded with iron, spear, pike, sword and shield, lance and iron club—Rukmī took up (one after another).

30. Jumping down from his chariot with a sword in hand, the indignant Rukmī, determined to finish with Kṛṣṇa, rushed at him like unto a moth dashing at a fire.

1. As usual ŚR treats this as a compliment explaining the pun in *yadūnāṁ kulapāṁsana* as *yadūnāṁ kulapa, aṁsana*—"you Protector of Yadu's race, expert in destroying enemies".

2. ŚR takes *muṣitvā dhvāṁkṣa* as *adhvāṁkṣa* and interpretes "Like god Indra taking away his legitimate sacrificial oblations"

3. *manda*—stable, immovable—ŚR.

4. 26.A—*VJ.'s Text adds* :

Bending the bow by drawing the bow-string powerfully, he hit Kṛṣṇa with three arrows.

31. As he was advancing, Kṛṣṇa cut down his sword and shield into sesamum-like particles with his arrows and taking up his sharp sword, he rushed forth bent on killing Rukmī.

32. Beholding his attempt to kill her brother, the virtuous Rukmiṇī was overwhelmed with fear. Falling at the feet of her consort, she piteously[1] entreated:

(*VJ.'s Text*: *Rukmiṇī prayed*)

33. "Oh lord of Yoga of incomprehensible nature ! Oh God of gods ! The Protector of the world ! Oh embodiment of auspiciousness ! It does not behove you to kill my brother, Oh mighty-armed Lord.

Śrī Śuka said:

VJ's Text:

33-A. Praying him thus in frightened tones, the poor Rukmiṇī earnestly desiring to save her brother, clasped the feet of Kṛṣṇa, the Protector of the world.

34. The merciful Lord gave up his attempt (on Rukmī's life) as his feet were clasped by Rukmiṇī whose whole person was trembling with fear, whose mouth was parched up with grief, whose throat was choked (with emotions) and whose gold necklace was fallen, out of nervous anxiety.

35. Binding that evil-doer with a piece of cloth, he disfigured him by shaving his head (with the blade of his sword) keeping (intermittently) some part of the mustaches and hairlocks on the head. In the meanwhile, prominent heroes in the Yādava forces crushed and routed the extraordinary hostile forces, like elephants trampling down stalks of lotuses.

36. When they approached to the presence of Kṛṣṇa, they beheld Rukmī reduced to that (humiliating) plight, as good as dead (through shame). The mighty Lord Balarāma was moved with pity and releasing him, he protested to Kṛṣṇa.

(*VJ's Text*: *Balarāma reproved*:)

37. "This blame-worthy act, abhorrent to us (our race), has been perpetrated by you, Oh Kṛṣṇa, in shaving the mous-

1. v.l. *paṇḍitā*—omniscient—(VT)

taches and the locks of hair of a relative. Disfiguring a relative this way amounts to killing him.

38. (Addressing Rukmiṇī): In your grief and brooding over this deformity of your brother, please do not scorn us (as evil-minded people) Oh good lady. No other person is the giver of (i.e. responsible for) the pleaure or pain that comes to one's lot; for a person reaps the fruits of his own actions.

39. Even if a relative has committed an offence deserving death in retribution, he should not be killed by a relative. He should be discharged forthwith. What is the propriety of slaying a person again, when he stands killed by his own sinful acts.

40. God Brahmā has ordained this as the *dharma* (the code of conduct) for Kṣattriyas that even a brother should kill a brother (in the battle). What could be more terrible than this ? (Hence it is the *kṣattriya dharma* that is at fault and not we who abide by it, Oh lady).

41. (Turning to Kṛṣṇa) It is only the proud, blinded with the intoxicating influence of prosperity that offend relatives for the sake of kingdom, land, wealth woman, honour, authority or for any such consideration.

42. (Addressing Rukmiṇī) : It is an improper lookout on your part that you, like an ignorant person, think auspiciously and well of your brother who always bears ill-will towards all beings and ill of those who are your well-wishers[1].

43. "That some persons are friends, some enemies and some indifferent is the self-delusion created by Lord's *Māyā* (deluding potency) among persons who regard the body and the soul as identical.

44. For the Supreme Soul is one only in all corporeal beings. But he is mistaken as many by the ignorant, just as the luminary (the sun, though one, is regarded as many when it is reflected in different vessels containing water) or the sky (though one, is regarded as different when circumscribed in a

1. *ŚR* adds : It is certainly your improper outlook that you regard the auspicious or proper punishment meted out to your brother (by shaving him) as evil, even though your relative is ill-disposed to all beings.

pitcher (*ghaṭākāśa*) or within a room (*maṭhākāśa*) is looked upon as many (when in reality it is one).

45. This body constituted as it is of five material elements (like the earth, water, fire and others), vital elements (like sense-organs and their presiding deities) and the *guṇas*[1] and has a beginning and an end, is projected on the Soul (*ātman*) through ignorance (*avidyā*) which makes the embodied soul wander in the cycle of *saṁsāra*[2].

46. The soul has no union with or disunion from anything else (viz. the body), as nothing other than the soul exists at all, Oh good lady. The soul is the cause of such appearance, just as the sun is the cause of the perception of the sun by means of the eye and colour (but the sun bears no union or disunion with them)[3].

47. Changes such as birth (youth, death) and others pertain to the body and never to the soul, just as the waxing and the waning of the moon are attributable to the digits of the moon (which remains constant all the while). The death of the body is like the *amāvasyā* (*kuhū*) when the light of the moon disappears but the moon remains unaffected (in the same way the soul continues to exist despite the disappearance of the body).

48. Just as a sleeping man, in a dream, perceives himself, the sense objects of enjoyment and experiences the fruit (enjoyment) thereof, even though nothing of these exists in reality, similarly an ignorant person undergoes (the experience of this unreal) *saṁsāra.*

1. ŚR: and is thus conditioned by the triad—*ādhibhautika*, *ādhyātmika* and *ādhidaivika*.

2. ŚR. : The body is not pure due to conditioning circumstances.

3. (i) It is the power ofillumination of the sun which shines all the while and has no contact with the eye and as such has neither union or disunion with the eye. Similarly, the Soul being of the nature of consciousness and existing in the past, present and future has no possibility of union or disunion with the body—VT.

(ii) The Supreme Soul is not bound or separated from the body coming into existence of which is dependent on Him, just as the Sun is unconnected with the eye or the colour, both of which depend on the sun for their function—VR.

49. Therefore, by means of the knowledge of reality eliminate completely your sorrow which is born of ignorance and which causes you pining and delusion. And be comforted and serene at heart, Oh lady, with bright smiles."

Śrī Śuka said :

50. When the beautifully slim lady was thus enlightened by the glorious Lord Balarāma, she overcame her mental depression and attained equipoise of her mind through reason.

51. Allowed to get away with life only, shorn of his power (or army) as well as of glory, brooding over his disfigurement and with his plans and ambitions frustrated, Rukmī built a big town called Bhojakaṭa[1] for his residence.

52. He resided there through indignation, as he formerly announced. "I shall not re-enter Kuṇḍina unless and until I have killed the wicked-minded Kṛṣṇa and brought back my younger sister".

53. Having vanquished all the monarchs in his way, the Lord brought Rukmiṇī, the daughter of Bhīṣmaka to his city, Dvārakā and married her as per *Śāstric* injunction, Oh Scion of the Kuru race.

54. There was a great festivity in every house in Dvārakā, the capital of Yadus, of the residents thereof, who were exclusively devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the protector of Yadus, Oh king.

55. Men and women thereof were highly delighted. Adorned with ear-rings of highly polished jewels, they presented valuable gifts to the newly-wedded couple wearing excellent bridal dress.

56. The city of Vṛṣṇis (Dvārakā) shone splendidly with flags raised in honour of Indra, with a wonderful variety of garlands, cloths and ornamental arches decorated with jewels, provided with auspicious arrangement at every door of pitchers

1. *Bhojakaṭa* or *Bhojapur* is identified with Bhojapura, six miles to the south-east of Vidiśā. GDAMI 33. It was built to the north of the Narmadā as per *purāṇas* which thus support this identification. GDAMI 33 and 224.

full of water, insense of the *aguru* (agall ochum)burning and lamps.

57. Its streets were besprinkled with the exuded ichor (temporal fluid) of elephants of the great kings invited for the marriage, and entrances beautified with tall plantain trees and areca-nut trees.

58. Moving hastily here and there in confusion in that marriage, clansmen of Kurus, Sṛñjayas, Kaikeyas, Vidarbhas, Yadus and Kuntīs were happy to meet each other.

59. Hearing the episode of Kṛṣṇa's carrying away Rukmiṇī sung by the people everywhere, kings and princesses who attended the marriage became extremely wonder-struck.

60. Great was the exultation among the citizens of Dvārakā, Oh king, to see Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of goddess Śrī now married to Rukmiṇī who was no other than goddess Lakṣmī herself.

CHAPTER FIFTY FIVE

The Story of Pradyumna's Birth[1]

Śri Śuka narrated:

1. As to Kāma[2], the god of Love, who was a portion of (the future) Lord Vāsudeva, was formerly burnt down through the wrath of god Śiva. Hence he (Kāma) resorted to him again for the restoration of his corporeal form.

* Ekanātha has written an excellent work in ovī metre on Rukmiṇī's marriage. Out of respect for Ekanātha, KD has incorporated it in his com. on this skandha (Harivaradā)

1. As SR and VR point out this chapter contains a chronological anamoly as it describes slaying of the demon Śambara by Pradyumna and his return to Dvārakā alongwith his wife Māyāvatī—incidents which took place long after Kṛṣṇa's marriages with Jāmbavatī, Satyabhāmā and others which are described in the subsequent chapters.

2. This refers to the incident when at the behest of god Indra, Kāma, disturbed god Śiva's spiritual concentration, with a view to tempt him to marry Umā and get rid of the menace of the demon Tāraka by procreating a son (the future Skanda). But contrary to expectations, Śiva flared

2. That very god of Love was born of Rukmiṇī, the princess of Vidarbha, and (lit. from the semen of) Kṛṣṇa. He became celebrated as Pradyumna and was in no way inferior to his father (Kṛṣṇa) in any respects.

3. Knowing that the babe was his future enemy (slayer), the demon Śambara, the inveterate enemy of Kāma, who could assume any form at will, clandestinely kidnapped it even when it had not completed ten days (on the sixth-day)[1] and throwing it into the sea, he went home.

4. A huge powerful fish swallowed that babe. But along with others, that fish was caught into a big net by fishermen.

5. The fishermen brought it as a present to Śambara. The cooks carried it to the kitchen and cut that wonderful fish with a knife.

6. Finding a babe in its abdomen, they offered it into the charge of Māyāvatī[2]. As her mind was full of misgivings (about the child), the divine sage Nārada narrated to her all the details how it was born and how it was found in the bowels of that fish.

7. It is reported that she was Rati, the glorious wife of the god Kāma, waiting for the reincarnation of her consort whose body had been reduced to ashes.

up with anger at this disturbance and opened his Third eye—the fire out of which reduced Kāma to ashes (*Vāl. Rām.Bāla* 23.10-13). VT. and VR. argue that Pradyumna, the Third emanation (*Vyūha*) of the *Pāñcarātra* school is indestructible. VT. finds a *via media* by assuming two sets of deities—the ordinary—*Prākṛta* set to which category Kāma, the servant of Indra who tried to disturb Siva and got consumed by fire, belonged. The other set, viz. the four manifestations (*Vyūhas*) of Nārāyaṇa of which Pradyumna forms the third, is not implied here. The word—*tu* in the text *Kāmas tu* signified this distinction between the two categories, and emphasizes that it was the *Prākṛta kāma*, the *jīva* of whom sought birth from Kṛṣṇa.

1. *ṣaṣṭhe 'hni jātamātraṁ tu Pradyumnaṁ sūtikāgṛhāt/*
mamaiṣa hanteti mune hṛtavān kāla-Śambaraḥ //

VP. 5.27.3.

2. As explained below (VT) and in VP. 5.27.27ff., she was Rati, the wife of Kāma who was reduced to ashes by Śiva. Under the pseudonym Māyāvatī, she worked as the kitchen-in-charge of Śambara waiting for her re-union with her husband in his next birth.

8. She was entrusted with the charge of supervision (of the cooking of pulses and rice) in Śambara's kitchen. Having come to know that the child was her spouse Kāmadeva himself, she developed affection to that child[1].

9. Not long afterwards[2] Pradyumna, the son of Kṛṣṇa, attained youth and caused confusion in the heart of women who had a look of him.

10. Considering him as her husband, Rati was ogling at him with bashful smiles and raised evebrows aud approached with amorous purpose Pradyumna who with eyes longish like lotus-petals and knee-long arms was the most beautiful man in the world.

11. The respectable son of Kṛṣṇa (strongly) protested: "Oh mother ! You seem to have a perverted mind. Abandoning the motherly relation, you behave like a lustful woman."

Rati replied :

12. "Your honour is the son of Lord Kṛṣṇa taken away by the demon Śambara from (the lying-in-chamber in) your house. I am Rati, your (lawfully) married wife and you are (none else but) Kāma, the god of Love, my Lord.

13. This demon Śambara cast you into the sea when you were not even ten days old. A fish swallowed you up. It is from the bowels of the fish that your honour came out here, my lord.

14. This enemy of yours is irresistible and invincible as he is expert in hundred types of black magic (*māyā*). You, however, slay him by means of *māyā* powers like *mohana* (stupefaction) and others.

15. Being deprived of her child, your mother is wailing like a female osprey at the loss of her young one. Being overwhelmed with motherly affection for a child, she is anxious and miserable like a cow bereaved of her calf."

1. v.l.—noted in VT : 'Due to her Māyā power, even Śambara could not know the child'.

2. According to HV, Pradyumna's growth was wonderfully accelerated with specific medicines, etc.

16. Exhorting him thus, Rati, the past-master in deluding magical processes (*māyāvatī*), imparted to the noble-souled Pradyumna the knowledge of 'Supreme Illusion' (*Mahāmāyā*), capable of destroying all sorts of spells and magical processes and illusions.

17. Approaching Śambara, he challenged him for a fight, provoking a quarrel by insulting him with unbearable taunts.

18. Reproached with sharp words of abuse, Śambara, like a serpent trodden under foot, rushed out with a mace in hand and eyes reddened with indignation.

19. Vehemently whirling his mace, he hurled it at the noble-souled Pradyumna and gave out a roar, terrible like the stroke of a thunderbolt.

20. The glorious lord Pradyumna struck back the oncoming mace with his own and flying in rage, he dashed his own mace at the enemy, Oh king.

21. Resorting to the illusory method of warfare of Daityas as taught by Maya, the Asura, taking up a position in the sky, discharged on Pradyumna, the son of Kṛṣṇa, a shower of missiles.

22. Being troubled with the down-pour of missiles Pradyumna, the powerful hero, the son of Rukmiṇī, employed his Great Lore consisting of pure *sattva* which was capable of counteracting and annihilating all *Māyās* (illusive processes, spells, etc.)

23. Thereupon, the *daitya* (Śambara) used hundreds of magical spells (*māyās*) used by Guhyakas, Gandharvas, Piśācas (goblins), Nāgas and Rākṣasas but the son of Kṛṣṇa simply blew them out (i.e. easily destroyed them).

24. Raising his sharp-edged sword, he forcibly severed from Śambara's trunk his head with its copper-coloured beard (and moustaches) and adorned with a crown and earrings.

25. Showered over with heaps of flowers by the celestials who were eulogising him, Pradyumna was taken to his (home-) city (Dvārakā) through the sky by his spouse who was capable of coursing through the sky.

26. Like unto a cloud accompanied with lightening, he, with his consort, alighted from the sky into (Kṛṣṇa's) excellent harem crowded with hundreds of beautiful women, Oh king.

27-28. Beholding him, of a complexion dark-blue like a cloud, wearing a yellow silken garment, of extra-ordinarily long arms, reddish eyes, with an enchanting smile and charming countenance, with his lotus-face extremely graced with dark-blue curly locks of hair, the ladies thought him to be Kṛṣṇa himself and out of bashfulness concealed themselves immediately wherever they could.

29. Coming to a conclusion from the distinguishing characteristics between the two (such as absence of *Śrivatsa* that he was not Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ladies approached him with great delight and wonderment as he was accompanied by a jewel-like beautiful damsel.

30. Then among them Rukmiṇī, the sweet-tongued princess of Vidarbha, of bluish (corners of) eyes, recollected her lost son and milk of maternal affection oozed out of her breasts.

31. "Who can this be a jewel among men ? Whose son is this lotus-eyed one ? What mother has borne him in her womb ? Who is this damsel obtained by him ?

32. If my son who being stolen away from the maternity chamber and thus lost, be alive somewhere, he would be his compeer in age, similarity of features, etc.

33. How could this boy inherit so much resemblance to the Lord wielding the Śārṅga bow in form (features), limbs, gait, tone of voice, smiles and way of looking.

34. Or, he must really be the same child whom I bore in my womb. I have begun to feel more affection for him and my left arm is throbbing."[1]

35. While Rukmiṇī, the princess of Vidarbha, was thus reflecting (to ascertain whether Pradyumna could be her son), Kṛṣṇa, of glorious renown, came there along with Devakī and Vasudeva.

1. This is regarded as an auspicious omen in regard to women, foreboding good tidings.

36. Though Kṛṣṇa knew the actual state of affairs, the Lord kept mum. It was Nārada who told all the story from his (Pradyumna's) kidnapping by Śambara.

37. Listening to that extremely miraculous account (of Pradyumna's life till then), the ladies of Kṛṣṇa's harem joyfully congratulated him upon his return after many years, like one returning to life from the realm of death.

38. Devakī and Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Rukmiṇī and other women of the harem embraced the young couple and were transported with joy.

39. Hearing that Pradyumna who was missing so long has arrived, the citizens of Dvārakā exclaimed; How wonderful ! How happy it is that the boy who (being missing) was as good as dead, has returned to life."

40. It is not wonderful that owing to his close resemblance to his father Kṛṣṇa, many times Pradyumna's (step-) mothers mistook him for Kṛṣṇa and resorted to seclusion (the passion of love was awakened in them). The very thought of the god of Love provokes passion. What of other women when Pradyumna, the god of love, who was the reflection of exact semblance of the Lord, the abode of goddess Lakṣmī, presented himself within the range of their sight?

CHAPTER FIFTY SIX

The story of Syamantaka jewel

(Kṛṣṇa's marriage with Jāmbavatī and Satyabhāmā)

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Satrājita[1] who had committed an offence against Kṛṣṇa, gave, of his own accord and making some special effort for it, his own daughter in marriage to Kṛṣṇa offering therewith the *Syamantaka* jewel (as an atonement for the offence).

1. The word is spelt both ways : *Satrājita* and *Satrājit*. The translation retains the spelling adopted in the original Sk. text.

King Parikṣit enquired :

2. What offence did Satrājita commit against Kṛṣṇa, Oh Brāhmaṇa sage ? Whence did he get the Syamantaka gem? Why did he offer his daughter in marriage to Hari?

Śri Śuka narrated :

3. The Sun-god was an intimate friend of his own devotee Satrājita. The Sun-god was so much affectionate to and pleased with Satrājita that he presented to him the Syamantaka gem.

4. Wearing that gem about his neck and effulgent like the Sun-god, he could hardly be visible and recognized due to its dazzling lustre, Oh king.

5. Beholding him even from a distance, people felt blinded with his brilliant splendour and believing him to be the Sun-god, reported it to the Lord who was playing at dice.

6. "Salutations to You, Oh Nārāyaṇa, the Wielder of the conch, discus and mace ! Oh Lotus-eyed Dāmodara ! Oh Govinda, the Delight of Yadus.

7. Blinding the eyes of men with his lustre, here comes the Sun-god of scorching rays, with a desire to pay visit to you, Oh Protector of the world.

8. Prominent gods really try to seek the way (to find you) in all the three worlds. Having come to know today that you live undisclosed among the Yadus, the birthless Sun-god has come to see you, Oh Lord."

Śri Śuka said :

9. Hearing the report of the ignorant people, the Lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa laughed loudly and remarked : He is not the Sun-god but Satrājit dazzling with the jewel (*Syamantaka*).

10. Satrājit entered his affluent, splendid mansion beautified with auspicious objects (for the celebration of his successful return with the gem) and got the jewel properly installed by Brāhmaṇas in the shrine of his family deities.

11. Oh King ! Every day, the gem yielded eight *bhāras*[1] of gold. Where the gem is installed and worshipped, there is no danger from famines, epidemics, calamities, serpents, diseases, inauspicious things or from rogues.

12. He was solicited by Kṛṣṇa on one occasion for the gem, for presenting to Ugrasena, the king of Yādavas. But being greedy of wealth, he did not comply regardless of the consequences of such refusal (to the Lord's request).

13. One day, Prasena (the brother of Satrājit) wore that jewel of extra-ordinary lustre about his neck and mounting his horse, he went to the forest for hunting.

14. Having killed Prasena along with his horse, a lion snatched the gem from him (out of curiosity for the dazzling thing) and was entering his mountain cave when he was killed by Jāmbavat who desired to possess the gem.

15. In his den, he used it as a toy for his young son. Not finding his brother, Satrājit was greatly tormented.

16. (He expressed his suspicion :) "My brother is most probably murdered by Kṛṣṇa as he went out to the forest with the Syamantaka jewel round his neck". Hearing that, people passed on the rumour in whispers from ear to ear.

17. Hearing that rumour, the Lord accompanied by some citizens followed the track of Prasena (Prasena's horse) in order to wipe out the calumny imputed to him.

18. People saw that Prasena and his horse were killed by a lion in the forest and that the lion was killed by a bear on the side of the mountain.

19. Keeping outside the citizens (with instructions to wait), the Lord alone entered the den of the king of bears, though it was terrible and full of blinding darkness.

20. Seeing there that the excellent gem was used as a toy of a male child he determined to take it away and stayed there near the child.[2]

21. Seeing that extra-ordinary person (not seen before) the nurse of the child screamed out as in fear. Hearing that,

1. ŚR. quotes verses which show that one *bhāra* is equivalent to 8000 *Tolās* (1 *Tolā* = 11.66 grams).

2. VB quotes a verse from *Purāṇas* as the nurses lullaby to the child, "The lion killed Prasena, the lion was killed by Jāmbavat. Oh tender child, don't cry. This Syamantaka is for you."

the enraged Jāmbavān who was the foremost among the mighty rushed at him, in rage.

22. Verily, in his indignation, he failed to understand Kṛṣṇa's greatness, and regarding him as an ordinary person he fought with him, his own Master (Rāma in previous incarnation), the Supreme Lord.

23. Like two hawks fighting for a piece of meat, the combat between them was tumultuous as they tried to overthrow each other by weapons, rocks, trees and arms.

24. There was a continuous combat for twenty-eight days (and nights as well) hitting each other with fists, harsh like the strokes of thunderbolt.

25. Jāmbavān was extremely wonderstruck as his joints and limbs were crushed and dislocated by the blows of Kṛṣṇa's fists and as his strength decreased and the body was full of perspiration., He addressed to him :

26. "(Now) I know You to be Lord Viṣṇu, the Ancientmost Person, the Creator of the Universe and the Controller thereof Who constitute the energy, the power of endurance (mental strength) and physical power of all beings.

27. You are really the Creator of the progenitors of the Universe ; You are the Reality that underlies it (as the material cause of the created substances). You are the Time Spirit which controls and destroys the world. You are the Supreme Soul of all.

28. You are verily my Lord Rāma, at whose side-glances which were slightly enkindled with wrath, the whole ocean full of alligators, whales and other aquatic animals got agitated and was made to give way to you; Who built a bridge across the sea as if it was a memorial of your glory; who burnt down the city of Laṅkā and by whose arrows, the heads of demons rolled on the ground."

29-30. To his devotee, the king of bears who had thus realized the knowledge of his being the Supreme Spirit, Kṛṣṇa, that Imperishable glorious Lord, the lotus-eyed son of Devakī, touched (all over his body, out of compassion) with his bliss-bestowing hand (relieving all his fatigue, wounds and pain in the combat) and out of Supreme Mercy and Grace, spoke to him in a voice deep with affection.

31. "We (I and citizens of Dvārakā) arrived here at the entrance of your cave for the sake of the Syamantaka gem. (Though some of the false imputation of calumny is hereby removed), I have entered the den to wipe out completely the false accusation (of Prasena's murder) against me, by means of (i.e. by producing) this gem."

32. It is traditionally reported that thus addressed, Jāmbavān gladly offered his daughter Jāmbavatī in marriage to Kṛṣṇa, along with the Syamantaka gem, by way of worshipping him.

32A. *VR's Text adds* :

Lord Kṛṣṇa who is affectionate to his devotees, was worshipped (by Jāmbavān) with many other excellent precious stones. And the Lord instantly bestowed on him (or decided to confer upon him) the Supreme Emancipation from which there is no return to *saṁsāra*.

33. After Waiting (at the entrance of the cave) for twelve days and finding that Kṛṣṇa entered the cave but had not returned out of it, the people who accompanied him there, returned to their own city (Dvārakā) in grief.

34. When they heard the report that Kṛṣṇa had not issued out of the cave (for the last twelve days), Devakī (Kṛṣṇa's mother), queen Rukmiṇī, Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa's father), his friends and kinsmen deeply grieved (his non-return).

35. Citizens of Dvārakā cursed Satrājit (for the disappearance of Kṛṣṇa). Deeply grieving, they devotedly worshipped the goddess Durgā (well-known by the name, Candrabhāgā),[1] the Supreme Illusive potency of the Lord, for the safe return of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

36. (Possibly) due to the blessing of the goddess they received through their worship and prayers of the deity, Lord Hari manifested Himself along with his spouse (Jāmbavatī) and with his purpose (recovery of the Syamantaka gem) completely achieved, thus thrilling them with joy.

1. ŚR. remarks : *Candrabhāgāṁ nāma Durgām* suggests that his Text most probably read *Candrabhāgā* for *Mahāmāyā* and was *Upatasthus Candrabhāgāṁ Durgām*" etc. instead of the current one.

37. All of them were transported with ecstatic joy to find Kṛṣṇa as if returned to life after death and that too with a spouse and the Syamantaka gem about his neck.

38. Summoning Satrājit to the royal assembly, in the presence of the king (Ugrasena), the Lord narrated the story of the recovery of the gem and entrusted the gem to his (Satrājit's) care.

39. Deeply feeling ashamed, he took that Symantaka jewel. Casting down his head and full of repentance for his guilt (of traducing the Lord), he returned home.

40. Constantly brooding over the sinful act (of caluminating an innocent person like Kṛṣṇa) and being agitated and perplexed at his conflict with a powerful party, he pondered : "How can I wipe off this misdeed and misbehaviour? Or how will Lord Kṛṣṇa be propitiated and gracious unto me?

41. What course would lead to my well-being whereby people won't censure me who am really short-sighted, mean, foolish and greedy of wealth.

42. I shall offer him my daughter who is a jewel among women, as well as that Syamantaka gem to him. This is the proper expedient, otherwise no peace can be brought about (between us) by any other way."

43. As the tradition reports, by this reasoning process, he reached this decision. Taking personal initiative in the matter, Satrājit offered his daughter who was excellent in all respects as well as the Syamantaka jewel to him.

44. According to ritualistic formalities prescribed in the Śāstras the Lord married Satyabhāmā who was blessed with good disposition, charming beauty, generosity and other excellent virtues and had many suitors soliciting her hand.

45. (Declining the offer of the Syamantaka gem) the glorious Lord said, "We do not accept the Syamantaka gem. Let it be with you as you are the devotee of the Sun-god (the donor of the gift). We shall enjoy the yield of the gem (viz. gold. As you have no son. I am the legal heir for the gold yielded everyday by the gem).

CHAPTER FIFTY SEVEN

The Story of Syamantaka

(*Murder of Satājit for Syamantaka—Akrūra allowed to retain it*)

Śri Śuka said:

1. Hearing the report of Pāṇḍavas and Kuntī having been burnt (in the house of lac at Vāraṇāvata[1]), Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Ruler of Senses, though knowing the reality (about their escape to safety), went with Balarāma to the Kuru country (to its capital Hastināpura) as a formal condolence visit to relatives.

2. It is traditionally reported that as co-sharers in their grief, he met Bhīṣma, Kṛpa along with Vidura, Gāndhārī as well as Droṇa and exclaimed: 'Alas ! What a pity !'

3. Taking advantage of this opportunity (of Kṛṣṇa's absence), Akrūra[2] and Kṛtavarmā instigated Śatadhanvā[3], "Why should not the gem Syamantaka be seized (now, as Kṛṣṇa is away) ?

4. Satrājit who, having positively promised us his beautiful, jewel-like daughter, set us at nought and gave her in marriage to Kṛṣṇa. Why should not such a fellow follow his brother (to the land of death) ?"

5. His mind being thus thoroughly perverted and prejudiced, the wicked-most, sinful fellow with his span of life

1. *Vide MBH. Ādi.* ch. 147.

2. VT. takes pains to absolve Akrūra of his participation in the criminal conspiracy of murdering Satrājit. His explanation that being enraged at Satrājit's accusation of Kṛṣṇa, Akrūra wanted to kill him, is not convincing—as Satrājit offered both Satyabhāmā and Syamantaka to Kṛṣṇa and it was Kṛṣṇa who of his own accord requested Satrājit to retain the jewel with him. When matters were amicably settled, to instigate Śatadhanvā to murder Satrājit is certainly not creditable. And his subsequent absconding with Syamantaka and the production of the gem when cornered by Kṛṣṇa, reflects against the character of this 'one of the greatest devotees' of Kṛṣṇa.

3. One of the five sons of Hṛdika of the Yadu clan, and a brother of Kṛtavarmā (*vide supra* 9.29.27)

diminished (and was about to be terminated soon), murdered Satrājit out of greed, while he was asleep.

6. While the women (in the family) were screaming and wailing loudly and helplessly, he, like a butcher knifing a beast, finished with Satrājit and absconded, taking with him the gem Syamantaka.

7. Beholding her father thus slain, Satyabhāmā was stricken with grief and bewailed, 'Oh father! father I am undone' And she fainted.

8. Depositing that dead body in a trough full of oil (to prevent its decomposition), she rushed to Hastināpura. Tormented as she was, she reported the matter of her father's assassination to Kṛṣṇa who (being omniscient) already knew the facts (of the case).

9. Hearing that (tragic incident) Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, both the Lords of the world, following the (customary) way of human beings bewailed, 'Alas, what a calamity has befallen us!', with eyes flowing with tears.

10. From Hastiṅāpura, the Lord with his consort and elder brother returned forthwith to his capital and started to adapt measures to slay Śatadhanvā and recover the gem from him.*

* *Vj's Text adds*:

10.1. At this juncture, there arrived from the capital[1] of the Pāñcāla country, an emissary deputed by king Yajñasena (Drupada) announcing the self-choice (*Svayaṁvara*) type of marriage of his princess Yajñasenī (Draupadī).

10.2. Being invited there along with his brother, Srī Kṛṣṇa went to (Kāmpilya), the capital of Pāñcālas and saw there the teen-aged sons of Pāṇḍu.

10.3-4. Those princes were perfectly disguised as Brāhmaṇas and were not seen before. Accompanying them, after they had achieved their ambition through the exhibition of their prowess by hitting the mark (the test for winning Draupadī's hand), he arrived at a potter's residence. He paid respects to his paternal aunt (Kuntī) and took leave of prince Yudhiṣṭhira.

10.4A. And hastened back to Dvārakā to slay Śatadhanvā.

1. viz. Kāmpilya, the capital of South Pāñcāla, the kingdom of Drupada. It is now known as Kampil, 28 miles N.E. of Fathegaḍh in Farrukkhabad District, U.P.—GDAMI p. 88.

11. Knowing the punitive measures adopted by Kṛṣṇa, Śatadhanvā got afraid and being anxious to save his life, he begged of Kṛtavarmā's help. But he (Kṛtavarmā) replied:

12. "I will not offend Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the Lords of the universe. Who can hope to live in peace after committing an offence against them ?

13. The great warrior Kaṁsa was forsaken by the goddess of wealth and prosperity due to his hatred of them, and had to leave this world along with his followers, while Jarāsandha had to take to flight in (each of the) seventeen expeditions losing even his own chariot."

14. Being thus refused help (by Kṛtavarmā), he entreated Akrūra for help. But he too replied: "What person knowing the might of these two Lords of the world, can dare to oppose them ?

VJ.'s Text adds:

14. A. God Śiva whose abode is mount Kailāsa, used to bow down to Hari with his head. He (Hari) has vanquished Hamsa and Ḍimbhaka who have become arrogant and overbearing due to boons (got by them), in the battle. The great poisonous serpent (Kāliya) was expelled by him from the pool (in the Yamunā).

15. It is out of sport that he creates, maintains and destroys this Universe. People deluded by his *Māyā* (the Unborn) do not comprehend the activities of the Creator of the Universe.

16. As a boy of seven years, he uprooted a mountain and held it up on one hand easily, as in play, like a child holding an umbrella-like mushroom.

17. Salutations to the Glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa of miraculous deeds. I bow down to the Infinite Lord, the Prime Cause of the universe, the Indwelling Soul of all."

18. Thus refused help by Akrūra, Śatadhanvā deposited the great jewel with him and mounting a horse (or a mare) capable of going hundred *yojanas* a day, he took to flight.

19. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa rode in their chariots carrying

the flag with the emblem of Garuḍa, pursued with very swift horses, the murderer of his father-in-law, Oh king.

20. Śatadhanvā left his horse that dropped down (dead through fatigue), in a park of Mithilā. Being afraid, he began to run on foot, Kṛṣṇa also, out of rage, followed him on foot.

21. The glorious Lord who pursued on foot beheaded him with his Sudarśana disk of very sharp edge, and he searched his upper and lower clothes for the Symantaka jewel.

22. Not finding the jewel on his person, Kṛṣṇa returned and spoke to his elder brother, "Śatadhanvā has been killed in vain, for the jewel is not on his person."

23. Then advised Balarama, "The jewel has been certainly deposited by Śatadhanvā with some person (at Dvārakā). You return to the capital and trace him (the person possessing the jewel).

24. I wish to see king Videha, my dearest friend." Speaking thus, Balarāma, the delight of Yadus, entered the city of Mithilā, Oh king !

25. Seeing him come unexpectedly, the king of Mithilā, being highly pleased in mind, immediately rose up to receive him, and worshipped duly his honourable guest with suitable presents and other articles of worship.

26. The powerful lord Balarāma spent some years in the city of Mithilā. He was duly honoured by the noble-souled Janaka with great affection. It was during that period that Suyodhana, the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, learnt the art of fighting with mace, at his feet.

27. Returning to Dvārakā, Lord Kṛṣṇa who wanted to please his beloved wife, reported the death of Śatadhanvā and also of his not finding the gem with him.

28. Thereupon, along with friends and well-wishers, the Lord caused to be performed all the obsequies of Satrājit his father-in-law who had been murdered.

29. Having heard the report of the slaying of Śatadhanvā, Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā, the instigators of the crime, were overwhelmed with fear and absconded (from Dvārakā).

30. When Akrūra left Dvārakā, there appeared evil portents to the citizens of Dvārakā and they frequently suffered

from physical and mental troubles as well as troubles caused by gods and elements (*Mahābhūtas*), so goes the tradition.

VJ.'s Text Adds:

30-A. Thereupon Śrī Kṛṣṇa inquired of old people of whom Ugrasena was prominent: "What is the reason that after such a long time. these ill omens and calamities are befalling us?"

31. Forgetting what I have spoken before, some chroniclers declare as above. But how is it possible that ominous portents will occur in the home-town of Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the abode of ascetics (capable of counteracting such evils by their very presence)?

32. Formerly, so the tradition goes, when the lord of rains did not send seasonal showers, the king of Kāśi gave his daughter Gāndinī in marriage to Śvaphalka (the father of Akrūra) who came there as a guest and there fell showers of rain in the kingdom of Kāśi.

33. His son Akrūra possesses the same (hereditory) miraculous powers. Wherever he stays, the rain-god sends showers at the proper season. No calamities or epidemics (like cholera) affect at that area.

34. Hearing the advice of the elders and considering that this (i.e. the departure of Akrūra) could be the cause (of these calamities, but the absence of the Syamantaka gem is the real cause), Śrī Kṛṣṇa managed to bring back Akrūra (to Dvārakā) and spoke to him.

35. Śrī Kṛṣṇa who knew the minds of all (understood that this great devotee does not covet to possess the Syamantaka gem, and must have certainly brought it with him) received him with deep respect, engaged him in delightful conversation, narrated to him some pleasantries and spoke with a smile:

36. "We already know that the brilliant gem Symantaka is in your possession since it was deposited with you by Śatadhanvā, Oh master of charities.

37. As Satrājita had no male issue, (legally) the sons of his daughter Satyabhāmā should offer water oblations and lumps of rice (to the departed soul), pay off his debts and inherit the remaining property.

38. As you observe vows properly, let the Syamantaka gem, however, remain in your possession, as it is difficult for others to retain it. But my elder brother (Balarāma) does not believe that I do not possess the gem (he suspects that I have it with me).

39. Please show to our relatives (the Symantaka gem) and bring peace of mind to them, Oh highly fortunate Akrūra. (You cannot deny the possession of the gem as) now-a-days your sacrificial performances on altars of gold are going on continuously (without any interruption or break)."

40. Pursuaded with such sweet words, Akrūra, the son of Śvaphalka, brought the gem wrapped up in a piece of cloth and handed over to him that gem which was resplendent like the Sun.

41. Having made Akrūra to show the gem to his relatives and clansmen*, he wiped out the blame and suspicion imputed to him by (producing) the gem (from Akrūra) and the Lord returned that gem to Akrūra.

42. He who reads, hears, contemplates this highly auspicious episode rich with the exploits of the glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Ruler of the Universe—an episode which wipes out all sins—becomes free from evil reputation and sins, and attains ever-lasting peace.

* *Here Vj's Text adds :*

41.1. The ruler of the world cleared off the accusation levelled against Him and explained the details of the case to Balarāma who had been away so long and had returned for seeing the gem (and to convince himself personally).

41.2. But on seeing it, he regarded himself to be the proper person to possess it and coveted to have it, Oh prominent Kaurava. Satyabhāmā considered herself to be (legally) the proper heir eligible (to possess) that hereditary property.

41.3. Without knowing the mind of Hari, she confidently wished to possess it. Even Jāmbavatī desired to get that gem as it was given as dowry by her father (as such her claim was legal).

41.4. Knowing all these (covetous) claims, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the consort of goddess Lakṣmī handed over again the gem to Akrūra.

CHAPTER FIFTY EIGHT

Espousals of Lord Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Śuka said:

1. On one occasion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the most prominent one among men, went to Indraprastha (modern Delhi) to see Pāṇḍavas who were celebrated for their bravery and other virtues. The Lord of the goddess Śrī was accompanied by Sātyaki and others.

2. Seeing Lord Mukunda, the Supreme Ruler of all, coming, all the sons of Pṛthā (Pāṇḍavas) immediarely stood up and those warriors went to receive him just as the divinities presiding over senses do to the returning main vital respiration (as senses become active when respiration returns).

3. Those warriors embraced the Imperishable Lord and got all their sins removed by the contact with his person. Beholding his countenance, beaming with affectionate smile, all of them were transported with joy.

4. Having bowed down to the feet of Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīma, he embraced Arjuna and was in their turn paid respects by the twin Nakula and Sahadeva.

5. When he was comfortably seated on an excellent throne, the dark-complexioned, recently-married Draupadī who was above censure (in spite of her marriage with five brothers), came there slowly and bashfully bowed down to him.

6. In the same way, Sātyaki was worshipped and paid respect to by Pāṇḍavas. Others also were equally received and they sat on their respective seats around Kṛṣṇa.

7. Approaching Kuntī, Kṛṣṇa paid respects to her. He was looked at with eyes full of affection and tears, and was as if embraced by her looks. He was inquired about the relatives. He made queries about her health and well-being as also of her daughter-in-law, and other relatives.

8. Remembering all the many sufferings they had undergone (at Vāraṇāvata and till their coming to the Svayaṁvara of Draupadī), her throat was choked with perplexing affection and eyes full of tears, she spoke to Kṛṣṇa who manifested himself in order to remove all the sufferings (of his devotees).

9. "Oh Kṛṣṇa, when remembering us, your relatives, my brother Akrūra was deputed to us by you, we had been happy since then. For we were blessed with a protector like you.*

10. You being the well-wisher and the very soul of the universe, do not entertain the deluding notion of partiality (calling someone as your own and disavowing relationship with others). You, however, abide in the hearts of those devotees who constantly remember you and destroy all their sufferings by your very presence therein.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

11. "Oh Supreme Lord ! I do not know what righteous act has been performed by us inasmuch as you, who are not easily visible even to experts in Yoga, have manifested yourself to our view, in spite of our poor understanding".

12. Earnestly requested by the king (Yudhiṣṭhira), the All-pervading Lord happily spent the four months of the rainy season there, giving delight to the eyes of the citizens of Indraprastha.

* *Vj.'s Text adds* :

9.1 "I have been quite at ease and happy since the time you, without forgetting, specially came to visit us while we were (at Kāmpilya) in the Pañcāla country".

9. 2-3. When Kuntī spoke thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Master in Yoga, of his own accord told her : "Having seen your sons along with their bride while they were (then) living in-cognito in the Pāñcālas (in its capital city Kāmpilya) at the potter's house, I departed hastily on that very day.

9.4-6. For, I wanted to kill Śatadhanvā, the enemy (and murderer of Satyabhāmā's father. When that evil genius Śatadhanvā was killed (and the Syamantaka gem was not on his person), my elder brother, Balarāma, the wielder of a plough (as his principal weapon) got angry with me. Disregarding me, he went to the Videha country in despondent mood. I stayed in the city (of Dvārakā) all this pretty long period, anxiously waiting for his return. Due to the pressure of work, I did not go anywhere".

To him who was explaining thus (the reasons of not seeing her so long), Kuntī, with her heart filled with feelings of affection, spoke to Him.

13-14. One day[1], equipping himself with the Gāṇḍīva bow, two quivers with inexhaustible stock of arrows and putting on his armour, Arjuna, the victorious, mounted his chariot distinguished by the flag bearing a monkey-emblem, prepared himself for hunting. Arjuna, the destroyer of hostile warriors, accompanied by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, entered a dense forest infested with a number of tigers and wild beasts.

15. He hunted down with his shafts a number of tigers, boars, buffaloes, antelopes (called *ruru*), *śarabhas* (a fabulous eight-legged animal, capable of killing lions), bisons, rhinoceroses, hares and porcupines.

16. As the day for performing sacrifice (or the *Śrāddha*-performance) had arrived, the attendants carried away those beasts which were considered proper and pure as oblation to the sacrificial fire.

17. Having sipped the water thrice (as *ācamana*), those two dark-complexioned great (chariot) warriors drank the crystal-clear water and noticed a charming girl strolling about.

18. Arjuna who was deputed by his friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa, approached that beautiful damsel of well-set teeth and charming appearance and enquired of her:

19. 'Oh beautiful maiden! Who are you? Whose daughter are you? Whence have you come? What is the intention (of strolling here)? I believe you wish to have a spouse? Tell me everything, Oh beautiful lady.'

Kālindī replied:

20. I am the daughter of the Sun-god. I am performing austere penance with the desire of getting the boon-bestowing god Viṣṇu who is worth courting, as my consort.

21. I do not wish to seek as my spouse any other person than the god Viṣṇu, the abode of goddess Śrī, Oh hero. May

1. This episode must have taken place after the burning down of the Khāṇḍava forest by Arjuna. God Agni who was satisfied by consuming that forest, gave Arjuna the Gāṇḍīva bow and two inexhaustible quivers of arrows and the chariot with the monkey-flag. —*MBH Ādi* 224.3-20.

the glorious Lord Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa), the refuge of the helpless, be propitious unto me.

22. I am known as Kālindī. I dwell in the mansion constructed by my father under the waters of the Yamunā and I mean to stay there, till I am able to see the immortal Lord Acyuta."

23. Arjuna (the controller of sleep) reported it *verbatim* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He knew it already. He placed the girl in the chariot and approached Kṛṣṇa in the presence of Yudhiṣṭhira along with her.*

24. When Kṛṣṇa was requested to help in the matter, he immediately got an extremely wonderful and beautiful city built by Viśvakarmā for the sons of Pāṇḍu.

25.** While the glorious Lord stayed there with the desire of doing some good to his relatives (or devotees), he became the charioteer of Arjuna for consigning the Khāṇḍava forest to the Fire-god.

26. Being pleased with him, the Fire-god bestowed upon Arjuna the (Gāṇḍīva) bow, four white horses and the chariot (drawn by them), two quivers with inexhaustible stock of arrows and an armour impregnable by (the arms etc. discharged by) armed soldiers.

27. Maya (the Asura architect) who was rescued from the (forest-) conflagration, (built for his friend) and presented to his friend Arjuna an assembly-hall wherein Duryodhana had optic illusions and he mistook a sheet of water for a paved floor and *vice-versa*.

28. Taking leave of Yudhiṣṭhira and obtaining consent of his friends, he returned to Dvārakā accompanied by Sātyaki and others.

Here Vj's text adds :

23.1. While Kṛṣṇa, the Controller of sense-organs, was happily staying at Indraprastha, he sent for Viśvakarman, the master architect of that period.

23.2-3. He made Viśvakarmā to build a wonderful city with high ramparts, portals, towers, mansions, gates. It became celebrated as the city of Indra (*Indra-prastha*). He did so with the desire to oblige his ralatives. Accompanied with his relatives, be was permitted (to depart from Indraprastha).

25** A bit of anachronism : *vide* verse 13 above.

29. Thereupon, in the auspicious season when the day was propitious and an auspicious constellation of stars was in ascendance, he married Kālindī.

29-A. *VJ.'s Text adds*:

Who being endowed with charming beauty and youthfulness gave delight to the mind and the eye).
And he thereby enhanced the joy and auspicious prosperity of his own people.

30. Vinda and Anuvinda, (the princes) of Avanti who were subservient followers of Duryodhana, forbade their sister (Mitravindā from choosing Kṛṣṇa as her consort) in her *svayaṁvara*, even though she was devotedly attached to *him*.

31. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then forcibly carried away Mitravindā, the daughter of his paternal aunt, Rājādhidevī (*vide Supra*. 9.24-31) while all the kings (attending the *Svayaṁvara*) stood agazing.

32. There was a very pious king called Nagnajit ruling over Kosala (at Ayodhyā). He had an excellent daughter named Satyā (Nīlā) who was also known as Nāgnajitī (after her father's name).

33. Kings were not able to win her for marriage without subduing seven extremely dreadful, wicked bulls with pointed horns and which never brooked the very smell of (approaching) warriors. [The taming of these bulls was the condition precedent of being eligible for Satyā's hand].

34. Hearing that the princess could be won only by the subduer of those bulls, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Protector of Sātvatas, proceeded to Ayodhyā, the capital of Kosalas, with a vast army.

35. With great pleasure, the king of Kosalas received him respectfully with due formalities, such as going forth to welcome, offering a seat etc. and worshipped him with very valuable presents and articles of worship, and in his turn he was reciprocally congratulated by Kṛṣṇa.

36. Beholding that a suitor who was agreeable and desirable to her in every respect had arrived in state, the princess of that great king fell in love with him, (who was the consort of goddess Lakṣmī). (She prayed:) 'If I have devoutly wor-

shipped the Lord by the observance of the vows, may this Śrī Kṛsṇa be my spouse and all auspicious benedictions prove true.'

37. What should I do whereby that glorious Lord will be pleased with me—the Lord, the dust on whose lotus-feet is borne on their heads by the goddess Śrī, the lotus-born god Brahmā, god Śiva, the Lord of mount Kailāsa along with the protectors of different worlds; Who is the Supreme Ruler and who, from time to time sportively assumes various forms with the object of enforcing the Law (of righteousness) as ordained by him?"

38. And to Kṛṣṇa who was duly worshipped, the king submitted again: 'Oh Nārāyaṇa! The Lord of the World! What more service a poor person like me can render to you who are perfectly satisfied in your own spiritual bliss.'

Śrī Śuka said:

39. The Lord who was pleased with him and occupied a comfortable seat, smilingly addressed to the king in a voice deep like the rumbling of clouds.

The Lord said:

39-A. *VJ.'s Text adds*:

'Wise men opine that that suitor (bridegroom) is the best who does not propose his suit on any other occasion except at the time of *svayaṁvara* (self-choice-by the bride-type of marriage). Oh Lord of the earth! It is such a suitor who (proposes his suit) when he gets an invitation along with other kings who might participate for the same object (as suitors)[1].

40. Wise men have strongly censured all entreaties on behalf of a prince—even if he be an humble *kṣattriya* but is following the path of the duty prescribed by *śāstras*. It is out of a strong desire for securing your friendship that I am soliciting you for your daughter (in marriage). And we are not prepared to pay any price (for the same).'

1. *saḥ arthārthī tāṁ velāṁ kālaṁ vinā āhvayati ātmānam iti śeṣaḥ*—VJ.

The king said:

41. 'What other suitor (bridegroom) superior to you can there be in this world, Oh Lord—a bridegroom most covetable for the girl, as being the only abode of all excellent virtues and on whose bosom the goddess Śrī abides permanently inseparable.

42. But with a view to securing a suitable bridegroom to the maiden, we have already laid down a condition for testing the prowess of the suitor, O Prominent *Sāttvata*.

43. These are the seven bulls untamed and ungovernable, O warrior. A great many princes have been discomfited and got their limbs pierced and broken by them.

44. (How strongly I wish it) If these (bulsl) be tamed and controlled by you alone. O scion of the Yadu clan, your honour will be the desired-most suitor to my daughter O Lord of the goddess Śrī.'

45. Hearing the nature of the convention, the Lord fastened his girdle tightly. He divided himself into seven persons and controlled the bulls easily as if in a sport.

46. With their pride crushed and spirit broken, he tied them with ropes (after passing the cords through their noses) and he sportively drew them (after him) like unto a child drawing wooden toy-bulls.

47. The king was wonderstruck. With pleasure he offered his daughter in marriage to Kṛṣṇa. The Lord espoused her with due religious formalities as she was worthy of him.

48. The Queens were extremely delighted to find that their daughter secured her beloved Kṛṣṇa as her spouse and there was a high festival (on that occasion).

49. Conchs, drums and kettle-drums were sounded. Vocal and instrumental music along with expressions of benedictions by Brāhmaṇas were heard. Rapturously exulted men and women donned excellent clothes, and decked themselves with garlands and ornaments (on the joyous occasion).

50-51. By way of dowry the mighty king gave ten thousand cows, three thousand excellently dressed young women (as maid-servants) all decked with necklaces of gold-coins, nine thousand elephants, chariots hundred times the elephants,

horses hundred times the number of chariots and men-servants hundred times the number of horses.[1]

52. With his heart overwhelmed with affection, the king of Kosalas sent the couple in a chariot escorted with a big army.

53. Although the kings were formerly worsted in their encounter with the Yādavas and the uncontrollable bulls they, out of extreme jealousy obstructed Kṛṣṇa on the way while he was taking the bride with him.

54. As those kings advanced discharging volleys of arrows, Arjuna, the wielder of the Gāṇḍīva bow, keen on obliging his relative, routed them as a lion would do to insignificant beasts.

55. On reaching Dvārakā along with the dowry, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī and the prominent leader of Yadus, passed his time in conjugal happiness with Satyā.

56. Śrī Kṛṣṇa married Bhadrā, the princess of Kekayas, the daughter of His paternal aunt Śrutakīrti (vide Supra 9.24. 30) as she was offered in marriage by her brothers Santardana and others.

57. Like unto Garuḍa swooping down upon the (pitcher of) nectar (in the teeth of opposition from gods), Kṛṣṇa, single-handedly carried away Lakṣmaṇā, the princess of the Madra-ruler, who was endowed with auspicious marks, in her *svayaṁvara* (setting at nought the assembled suitor-princess).

58. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa had thousands (sixteen thousand) other spouses, all of whom were good-looking and whom he rescued from the prison of demon Narakāsura, the son of the goddess earth, after slaying him.

1. VR calculates them as follows :
9,000 elephants, 9000,00 chariots, 9000,00,00 horses, and 9000,00,00, men-servants.

CHAPTER FIFTY NINE

Narakāsura slain. The Pārijāta tree brought to Dvārakā

The king Parikṣit enquired :

1. Be pleased to narrate to me the great prowess of Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of Śārṅga bow as to how he killed the demon Naraka, the son of the earth-goddess and those damsels (subsequently married to Kṛṣṇa) came to be taken to captivity by him (Naraka).

Śri Śuka said :

2. Kṛṣṇa was informed of the atrocious deeds of Narakāsura, the son of the Earth, such as snatching away his umbrella, the insignia of his Lordship of the heaven[1], depriving his mother Aditi of her ear-rings, his expulsion from Maṇiparvata, the peak of mount Mandara, the mountain of gods, through the complaint lodged by Indra[2]. He along with his consort (Satyabhāmā)[3] mounted Garuḍa and flew to Prāgjyotiṣapura[4] (the capital of Narakāsura).*

1. Naraka did not deprive Indra of his umbrella as complained by him, but that of Varuṇa *vide* verse 23 below. But ŚR. explains that that was an affront to Indra himself as he was the king of gods.

2. Cf. VP. 5.29.1 This chapter deals with the same episode. Hence the textual similarities.

3. ŚR. explains that Indra appraized Kṛṣṇa of these misdeeds while he was in the palace of Satyabhāmā. So to satisfy her curiosity, he took her with him. ŚR gives another reason : Satyabhāmā was an incarnation of the Earth goddess. When Narakāsura was born of the Earth through Viṣṇu's contact with her in the Boar (Varāha) incarnation, while lifting her up from the *rasātala*. He promised her not to kill Naraka without her consent. Hence Satyabhāmā—the mother earth—was taken by him as a consenting party.

4. Kāmarūpa or Kāmākṣyā in Assam (near Gauhati)—
—GDAMI p. 158.

**Vj.'s Text as given in the Vrindavana edition* :

2.1. While the highly blessed Kṛṣṇa was staying at Dvārakā, he was approached by Indra who came from the heaven in a distressed and despondent state of mind.

2.2. Lord Kṛṣṇa received him with due respect, consoled him (with a promise of help) and gave him leave to depart.

3. The city was well protected on all sides with inaccessible hilly fortifications and mounted missiles and weaponry and was unapproachable due to the moats of water and fire and belts of stormy winds and was covered on all sides by thousands of terrible and strong snares devised by the demon Mura.

4. He shattered down the hills with his mace, devastated the fortification of weaponry with his shafts, cut off the moats and belts with his discus and the wire-snares with his sword.

5. With the loud blast of his conch, He blew down the war-machinery (on the ramparts) and broke down the hearts of the proud warriors. Śrī Kṛṣṇa the wielder of the mace demolished the fortification with his heavy mace.

6. Hearing the (deafening) blast of the conch terrific like the thunders at the end of *yugas* (when the universe dissolves) the five-headed demon Mura who was sleeping under water, rose therefrom.

7. Raising up his trident, that dreadful demon extremely difficult to look at due to his glaring lustre like the Sun or the Fire (about to destroy the world) at the end of *yugas*, rushed at Kṛṣṇa, with his five mouths wide open as if to devour the world as a serpent would rush at Garuḍa.

8. Brandishing the trident with great velocity, he hurled it with all his might at Garuḍa and roared with all his five mouths. The loud roar filled the earth and the heaven, all the directions and the firmament in fact all the cavity of the Brahmāṇḍa (universe).

9. Thereupon powerfully hitting two arrows at the trident as it was dashing against Garuḍa, He cut it into three

2.3. He (Kṛṣṇa) arrived at the great city of the king of demons which was situated on a high peak of the Himālayas, and was inaccessible due to the moats, belts of water, fire and winds and was guarded by soldiers.

2.4. He quickly cut down the snares of Mura by his discus and the terrible rows of swords (round the fortification) with his sword.

2.5. Within the wink of an eye, Hari blew off the water by using the wind missile and extinguished the fire-belt with the missile of Varuṇa (creating downpour of water). And with the terrific blast of his conch, he broke down the spirit (heart) of the proud warriors.

and stuffed the demon's mouths with arrows. The demon (on his part) vehemently hurled his mace at Kṛṣṇa in that battle.

10. In that battle, the invincible elder brother of Gada (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa) shattered, with his mace, the on-rushing mace to a thousand pieces. And as the demon was rusing at him with his arms raised-up, he easily severed off his heads with his discus.

11. With his heads dissevered, the demon fell lifeless into the water like a mountain with its peak cut off by the mighty Indra. Grieved at their father's death, his seven sons, enraged and impatient to avenge it, rushed at Kṛṣṇa fully prepared[1].

12. Directed by Naraka, the son of the Earth, the seven sons of Mura viz. Tāmra, Antarīkṣa, Śravaṇa, Vibhāvasu, Vasu Nabhasvān and the seventh Aruṇa, with their commander Pīṭha at their head, sallied forth to the battlefield, fully equipped with arms.[2]

13. Overwhelmed with rage, they advanced discharging volleys of shafts, swords, maces, darts, double-edged swords and javelins on the invincible Lord. As the tradition goes, the Almighty Lord of unfailing prowess reduced with his shafts the whole volley of weapons to sesamum-seed like pieces.[3]

14. He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) despatched to the abode of the god of death all of them with Pīṭha as their leader, with their heads, thighs, arms, legs chopped off and their armours split open. Observing that his army commanders were massacred with the discus and shafts of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Naraka, the son of the

1. *VJ.'s Text differs* :

11—A. When the demon Mura was killed, a shower of flowers expressing joy at the event, fell on the head of Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa)

2. *VJ.'s Reading* :

12.1. Directed by Naraka and riding their chariots drawn by bulls, those warriors (sons of Mura) sallied forth from their homes. Overwhelmed with rage they discharged from their well-strung bow, weapons, like darts, *ṛṣṭis* (double edged weapons) and javelins at the unconquered Lord).

3. *VJ.'s Text adds* :

13.1. The remaining warriors then immediately sped to the great capital (Prāg-jyotiṣapura) and reported to Naraka that all sons of Mura were killed.

goddess Earth, could not control his rage and rushed out with his elephant-corps all exuding ichor and their pedigree traceable to Airāvata born (i.e. churned) out of the Milky ocean.*

15. Beholding Kṛṣṇa seated on Garuḍa along with his consort like a cloud emblazoned with a streak of lightening appearing just above the disc of the sun[1], Naraka discharged at him a *Śataghni*[2]. All his soldiers simultaneously struck at him.

16.* With his sharp pointed arrows equipped with variegated feathers, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the elder brother of Gada, mowed down the army of Naraka cutting down the arms, thighs, necks and trunks of the soldiers simultaneously killing the horses and elephants.

17. (What a wonderful feat) O scion of the Kuru race! Hari cut down with three sharp arrows each of the weapons and missiles discharged (at Hari) by the hostile soldiers.

18. He was borne by Garuḍa who (on his part) struck down elephants with his wings, killing them with his bill, claws and wings.

19. Distressed by Garuḍa's attacks they retreated into the city. Seeing his army killed and routed by Garuḍa, Naraka continued to fight single-handed.

* *VJ.'s Text adds* :

14.1. Surrounded with thousands of chariots and elephants and accompanied by a vast army, Naraka arrived at the battlefield.

1. *VJ.'s Text* :

15.1 Beholding Kṛṣṇa—the Sun, the four-armed Kṛṣṇa wielding an excellent bow and a conch, the Kaumodakī mace and a disc (in each hand).

15.2. Espying Naraka dark blue like a cloud riding on elephant, Govinda blew his conch and roared like a lion.

15.3. The invincible army of the demon-king showered a volley of terrific arrows on the head of Kṛṣṇa. That son of the goddess Earth discharged at Kṛṣṇa his iron *Śataghnī* and he was struck with that blow.

15.4. It was a miracle when the volley of innumerable arrows discharged by Naraka were simultaneously splintered with his shafts smilingly despatched by the Lord.

2. A weapon used as a missile, supposed by some to be a sort of a rocket—ASD p. 545.

16* VJ.'s wording of the 1st half differs :

Then with volleys of sharp arrows decked with variegated feathers discharged at Naraka's army, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, etc.

20. Naraka, the son of the Earth goddess struck Garuḍa with his *Śakti* (spear) which had beaten back even *Vajra* (Indra's thunderbolt). Though hit by it, Garuḍa did not budge (an inch) like an elephant struck by a garland of flowers.[1]

21. His attempt having been thus frustrated, Naraka, the son of the Earth goddess, took up his spear to strike at Kṛṣṇa, but before he could hurl it, Hari, with his discus (Sudarśana) of razor-like sharp edge, severed the head of Naraka who was riding on elephant.

22. The head still adorned with ear-rings and a beautiful crown, though lying on the ground was shining, splendidly 'Alas!' "Bravo! Well done" applauded the sages, while the lords ofgods, showering flowers on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eulogized him.

23. Thereupon the goddess Earth approached Kṛṣṇa and handed over to him a pair of ear-rings resplendent with jewels and chased in the purest gold (belonging to Aditi), accompanied with the necklace called Vaijayantī[2] and a garland of forest flowers (*vanamālā*), the umbrella (the royal insignia) of Varuṇa as well as a great jewel (or the peak of mount Mandara called *Maṇiparvata—vide* verse 2 above).

24. The goddess folded her palms, bowed down to him and with her heart full of sincere devotion extolled the Lord of the universe who is adored by gods.

1. *VJ.'s Text adds* :

20.1. Though deeply pierced with that *Śakti* (spear) Garuḍa did not move at all like an elephant struck with a garland, in that fight with Naraka.

20.2. Thereupon, taking up his bow Naraka discharged a shower of arrows on Kṛṣṇa, but Keśava cut them all with his shafts.

20.3. Noticing that Naraka had properly set an *ardha-candra* arrow (with semi-circular head) and was about to discharge by pulling the bow-string, Kṛṣṇa cut down his bow.

20.4. Then the son of the mother Earth picked up his heavy mace of hard iron, but Kṛṣṇa cut it with an arrow called *Kṣurapra* (an arrow with shoe-shaped sharp head).

20.5. After this, Naraka, the vanquisher of hostile forces hurled his sharp-edged axe at Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) but he cut it down with his sword.

20.6. Then he threw at Kṛṣṇa seventyfive *Tomaras* (javelins) and Naraka, the destroyer of hostile heroes, roared like a lion.

20.7. Kṛṣṇa simultaneously cut down all the javelins with one arrow. It was simply a miracle, O Prominent Kuru.

2. VJ. takes *Vaijayantī* as 'garland of flowers of five colours' and *Vanamālā* as 'a big garland of flowers and leaves reaching the foot,' but VR regards both as one : *vaijayantyā vana-mālayā saha.*

The Earth-goddess prayed :

25. Salutations to you, Oh God of gods, Oh wielder of a conch, a discus and a mace ! I bow to you, Oh Supreme Soul who have assumed form in compliance with the wishes of your votaries.

26. Hail to You, O God with a lotus in the navel (and are thus the cause—creator—of the universe). I bow to You O wearer of the wreath of lotuses (signifying your glorious renown). Salutations to You, O God with lotus eyes (soothing the torments of the world). Bow unto You, O God with lotus feet (deserving adoration and service by the world).

27. Hail to the Lord of (the highest) divine faculties (such as omnipotence etc.), Vāsudeva—the resort of all beings and the All-pervading god Viṣṇu. You are the Supreme Person, present before all the evolutes[1], the Creator (or the Cause) of the Primordial matter (*Prakṛti*). I bow to you, Perfect Spiritual Wisdom incarnate.

28. Hail to you who are yourself unborn but are the Creator of this Universe; who are the Brahman itself of infinite potencies. You are the Inner Controller of the great and the small, the Master of all elements (or created beings), O Supreme Soul.

29.* O Lord when desirous of creating the universe you assume intense form of *rajoguṇa* (viz. the four-headed god Brahmā); for the dissolution of the world you support the *Tamoguṇa* (and assume the form of god Rudra). And for the continuance of the world, you assume the *sattva* (i.e. Viṣṇu form). You are no other than the Time (*Kāla*), the Primordial

1. ŚR. quotes a Śruti text to support this :
pūrvam evāham ihāsam iti tat puruṣasya puruṣatvam /

29*. VR : O omnipresent Lord ! When desirous of creation, you do so by entering the body of the four-faced god (Brahmā) characterised by *rajo-guṇa*. For destruction (of the universe) you enter into the person of Rudra, Kālāgni (Fire burning down the universe) etc. who are dominated by *tamas*. For protection of the world, you enter into the bodies of Manu and other in whom *sattva-guṇa* is predominant as well as by incarnating yourself directly. It is due to your presence in *Kāla* (The Time Spirit), Primordial matter (*Prakṛti*) and the individual Soul that you are designated as *Kāla* though distinct from them. VR. quotes :
aitad ātmyam idaṁ sarvam, tat satyam, sa ātmā —Chāndogya 6.8.7 etc.

matter (*Prakṛti*) and the supreme Spirit itself—yet you are distinct from them.*

30. You are one without a second. i.e. the earth (and other elements like) water, fire, wind and the sky, the five *tanmātras* (the subtle elements with their qualities such as sound, taste, touch, form and fragrance), the presiding deities over senses, mind, cognitive and conative senses, *ahaṁkāra* (Ego, I-ness), *Mahat* (the Principle of Cosmic Intelligence), the mobile and immobile creation all these are illusions imposed on you.

30-A. *Vande's Bombay edt. adds in the ft. note* (P. 857).

When I was lifted by you, O Lord, in your boar incarnation, this son (Naraka) was born of me in consequence of your contact. So you gave that son to me and now he has been struck down by you.

31. This (Bhagadatta) is his (Naraka's) son. He is afraid and hence I have brought him to your feet, as you remove all the miseries of those who are afflicted. Be pleased to protect him by placing on his head your lotus-like hand which washes off all sins and impurities.

Śri Śuka said :

32. When the glorious Lord was entreated in these words by the goddess Earth in devotion and humility, the Lord vouchsafed him protection and entered the palace of Naraka, full of all affluence.

32A. *VJ.'s text adds*

Having installed him (Naraka's son, Bhagadatta) on his hereditary throne (lit. kingdom) and reappointed his ministers to their respective posts, Hari entered the series of compartments and dwelling units of Naraka's harem.

33. Hari found there sixteen thousand (and one hundred—) daughters of kings (Siddhas, gods, *asuras* etc.-) brought as captives after defeating various kings[1].

29* VB : emphasizes that God transcends the *guṇas*.

VJ. You are Kāla (the Time-Spirit) which gives effect to the Fate (*adṛṣṭa*) of beings. You are called Pradhāna as the exalted-most, Supreme Person and are so designated. *Or* You are *puruṣottama* and hence called *Pradhāna Puruṣa*.

1. ŚR. bases his interpretation on the basis of VP. 5'29.31 (regarding additional one hundred girls) but the second versequoted by him—

34.* Perceiving the great hero among men enter, the damsels were so fascinated with him that they mentally chose him as their desired-most beloved spouse brought to them by their Destiny.

35. "May this hero be my husband. May god Brahmā (or the Creator) approve and grant my prayer." With this devout feeling for him, all of them severally set their hearts on Kṛṣṇa.

36. Śrī Kṛṣṇa sent them all to Dvārakā in palanquins after they had taken their bath and put on excellent clean dress[1]. He also despatched along with them valuable treasure (of precious stones etc.) as well as chariots, horses and immense wealth.

37. Kṛṣṇa sent sixtyfour, white, four-tusked swift-footed elephants of Airāvata's pedigree to Dvārakā.

VJ.'s Text adds :

37-A. He gave to Bhagadatta one elephant, called Supratīka out of them and sent the rest to the shed.

38. Having gone to the palace of Indra and restored to Aditi her two ear-rings, he along with his beloved consort Satyabhāmā was worshipped by the king of gods along with his queen Indrāṇī.

39. Importunated by his consort, he uprooted the celestial tree Pārijāta and placed it on (his mount) Garuḍa. After defeating the celestials (who resisted the taking away of Pārijāta), he brought it to his capital Dvārakā.[2]

40. It was planted as an (additional) adornment to the garden of Satyabhāmā's palace. Covetously hankering after

deva-siddhāsurādīnāṃ nṛpāṇāṃ ca Janārdana |
hṛtvā hi so 'suraḥ kanyā rurodha nijamandire ||

is not traced in the Gītā Press edition.

34A.*—VJ.'s reading : Seeing him enter, the damsels who were all youthful, well-ornamented and of attractive features were fascinated with the great hero among men.

1. VT. explains that those girls led an austere life, wearing tawny-coloured clothes observing vows and fasts.

2. VJ,'s text elaborated this episode in two chapters. (ch. 65 and 66) which are translated in the Appendix as chapter 59-I and 59-II.

its fragrance and intoxicating honey, black bees from heaven followed it.[1]

41. Indra touched the feet of Kṛṣṇa with the crests of his crown many times while he bowed to him and begged of him to accomplish his purpose (viz. the recovery of Aditi's earrings, Varuṇa's royal umbrella and others). But once his purpose was achieved, he fought against him. What a great ignorance on the part of gods ! Fie upon that affluence !

42. Later on, the immutable Lord assumed as many forms as the number of damsels (brought from Naraka's harem) and on the same specific auspicious time, he simultaneously yet severally married each one of them in their respective mansions with due formalities (and still remained changeless and perfect).

VR.'s Text adds :

42A. Lord Hari grants all the wishes of his devotees. He is infinite and incomprehensible. What is miraculous therein that he was severally and simultaneously present with each of his spouse ?

42B. Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the Supreme of all the masters of Yoga, is still visualized within, without and all around in hundreds and thousand forms by his devotees.

43. In their mansions which surpassed all comparisons and were endowed with super-abundant affluence, the imperishable Lord of incomprehensible activities remained present (all the while simultaneously). Though he was perfectly satisfied with his own bliss, he sported with those *aṁśas* (rays) of goddess Lakṣmī (viz. those newly wedded 16000 damsels) and like other house-holders attended to his house-hold duties.

44. Having obtained the consort of goddess Lakṣmī as their own spouse whose ways (or approaches to whom) are incomprehensible even to god Brahmā and others, those damsels continuously waited upon him with ever-increasing incessant delight, by means of their affectionate smiles, side-glances in their ever-new meetings and their bashful behaviour and speech.

1. This is described in ch. 67 of VJ.'s text which is translated in the Appendix at ch. 59-III.

45. Although hundreds of maid-servants were in their service, each of them personally rendered service to the Lord by rising up and advancing to receive him, offering him a seat and excellent articles of worship, washing his feet, offering betel-leaves, removing his fatigue and refreshing him by fanning, application of sandalpaste and garlands of flowers, and by combing his hair, arranging his bed, bath and catering to him refreshments (or presents) to him.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇi (A Sweet Quarrel)

Śri Śuka said :[1]

1. On a certain occasion, Rukmiṇī, the princess of Bhīṣma was waiting upon her consort, the Creator and the Preceptor of the world who was comfortably seated on her own bed while the maid-servants[2] were fanning.

2. That Unborn Lord, the Controller of the Universe, who, out of sport, creates, protects and destroys this universe,

1. VJ.'s text gives the introductory background in 4 verses.

King Parikṣit enquired :

1.1 Every one of the queens of Kṛṣṇa was devotedly attached to him from the bottom of her heart and every one of them was confident in her heart that she was the only beloved-most queen of Kṛṣṇa.

1.2 Was Kṛṣṇa equal to all in his love of them or was he specially attached to one (of them) ? As I strongly desire to know the fact of the matter, be pleased to narrate it to me.

Śrī Śuka said :

1.3 It is widely well-known to all that out of all his queens, Rukmiṇī, the princess of Bhīṣma, was the senior-most and the Lord was loving her the most of all.

1.4 On one occasion, a love-quarrel with her was provoked by Kṛṣṇa. I shall narrate to you the whole episode. Please listen to it, O descendant of the Kurus.

2. *Vide* verse 7 below.

was born in the race of Yadus for the protection (and enforcement) of the moral ordinances laid down by him.

3-6. O King ! (In her mansion) Rukmiṇī was waiting upon her Consort, the Lord of the three worlds, as he was comfortably relaxing on a cushion, white like the foam of milk, on an excellent couch, in her inner apartment which was beautified with a canopy fringed with strings of lustrous pearls suspended from it and with refulgent precious gems as lamps. It (the apartment) was decorated with flowers and wreaths of jasmine resonant with the swarms of humming bees; it was lit up with silvery moon-beams that entered through the appertures of the latticed windows. From the garden a gentle breeze surcharged with the fragrance of Pārijāta wafted in, while the incense of the fumes of burning aloe wood escaped out of the eyeholes of the lattice.

7. The queen (Rukmiṇī) too from her (female) friend's hand the *chowrie* with a (gold) handle studded with gems and began to serve her Lord by fanning Him with it.

8. She was holding the *chowrie* in her hand adorned with rings and bracelets and was making a jingling sound with a pair of anklets studded with jewels. By the side of Lord Kṛṣṇa, she looked extremely charming with the lustre of necklace reddened with the saffron applied to her bosom covered in her upper garment and with her priceless girdle worn round her waist.

9. Gazing at her who was goddess Lakṣmī herself who was exclusively devoted to him and had assumed a form suitable to the form sportively adopted by him[1], Lord Hari, being very much pleased with her, smilingly spoke to her who appeared extremely charming with her countenance looking all the more beautiful with her curly locks of hair, ear-rings, gold necklace and her face splendidly beaming with nectar-like (sweet) smile.

1. *devatve deva-deheyaṁ manuṣyatve ca mānuṣīn |*
Viṣṇor dehānur ūpaṁ vai karotyeṣātmanas tanum ||
—VP. 1.9.145.

The Lord said :

10. O princess (of excellent beauty and virtue) ! You were desired and sought after by rulers of the earth whose affluence and power equalled to that of the divine protectors of worlds; were endowed with majestic splendour and were far-famed for their wealth, beauty of form, magnanimity and might.

11-12. O lady with beautiful eyebrows ! Why did you reject the prince of Cedi (Śiśupāla) and others who arrived (at your place) seeking your hand and were mad with intense love for you and to whom you were (already) agreed to be offered (in marriage) by your brother and father ? Why did you select us who were in no way their compeer—us, who being afraid of other Kings, have sought shelter in the sea, have contracted enmity with the powerful (monarchs like Jarāsandha) and have practically relinquished the royal throne.

13*. O damsel with lovely brows ! Women who (by marrying) follow the path of men whose ways are obscure and who generally follow paths untraversed by the (general) public, generally come to grief.

14. (Women generally approve of the rich even though they may not be good looking.) But we are have-nots and we are generally dear to people who possess nothing (and are poor). Hence affluent people generally do not resort to me, O lady with beautiful waist.

15. (It is advisable that) Marriage and friendship be contracted between those who are equal in wealth, heredity (or family prestige) sovereign power, beauty of form or future prospects but not between the inferiors or superiors.

16.** O princess of Vidarbha ! Without ascertaining the

*. The inner significance of these epithets seems to be as follows (as later brought out in Rukmiṇī's reply).

Women who seek us whose nature is incomprehensible and who do not follow the trodden-orthodox path of action, reach the abode of the Supreme Man. VR and VB give a similar (though somewhat different) explanations.

**Some epithets in the verse have double meaning :

guṇair hīnaḥ—without i.e. transcending the *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas*)

bhikṣubhir mudhā—who are eulogized by recluses disinterestedly (without any ulterior motive)

vide infra Rukmiṇī's reply—verses 34-48.

real situation, we who are really devoid of all qualities but are praised for nothing by beggars, have been selected by you due to your lack of foresight.

17. Even at this stage you may choose some prominent Kṣattriya hero who is suitable to you in every respect. You may thereby enjoy all the blessings both here and hereafter.

18. Kings like Śiśupāla, Śālva, Jarāsandha, Dantavakra and others—why even your elder brother Rukmī also—have been hating me (like an enemy), O lady with beautiful thighs.

19. In order to humiliate the pride of those haughty princes who are blinded with the arrogance of their prowess that you have been brought here by me who have to crush the pride of the wicked.

20. As a matter of fact, we do not hanker after women, children or wealth and are indifferent to the world. We are perfectly satisfied in our blissful Self. We are unconcerned to our body or to our household. Like a lamp we are simply a witness who have nothing to work for.

Śrī Śuka said:

21. Having spoken to her thus, the Lord who wished to remove the pride of Rukmiṇī who, due to her continuous association with him, regarded herself the beloved-most spouse of her Lord till then, became silent.

22. It is reported that at that time, on hearing this unpleasant speech, the like of which was never heard before —of her beloved, the Lord of the three worlds, queen Rukmiṇī shuddered at heart, began to tremble and shedding tears, sank into fathomless anxiety.

23. Scratching the floor with her shapely foot beautified with reddish nails, sprinkling profusely with tears darkened with collyrium, her breasts rendered reddish by the application of saffron, she stood there with her face cast down and her speech choked with excessive grief.

24. As her reason became benumbed and lost with excessive agony, fear and grief, the fan dropped from her hand which became instantly so much shrivelled and loose that bangels were slipping from them and her body suddenly became

unconscious and fell down with disheveled hair like a plantain tree uprooted in a stormy wind.

25. Observing that (indescribably powerful bondage of love of his beloved (owing to which) she could not understand the subtle significance of his joke, Lord Kṛṣṇa who was merciful by nature, took pity on her.

26. Quickly springing down from the couch, the four-armed Lord[1] lifted her up and gathering up her locks of hair, gently wiped her face with his lotus-hand.

27. He wiped out her eyes which were full of tears and her breasts soiled with her tears of grief. He hugged in his arms his chaste faithful consort who was exclusively and absolutely devoted to him, O king.

28. The Lord, who knew how to comfort and was past-master in offering consolation and is the last resort of the righteous and the saintly people comforted mercifully his broken-hearted queen whose mind was bewildered with the (harshness of the misunderstood) subtle joke for which she was the wrong target (*lit.* which she did not deserve).

The Lord consoled :

29. O princess of Vidarbha ! No. Please do not be displeased with me. I know that you are absolutely devoted and faithful to me. O beautiful damsel ! It is just with the desire of hearing your retort that I spoke that in jest.

30. It was just to behold your charming countenance with its lower lip throbbing with anger through love, with corners of eyes reddened while casting wrathful side-glances and the knitting of your beautiful eyebrows.

31. This is the highest benefit in the domestic life of the householders that they can spend some hours in joking and jesting with their beloved, O beautiful timid lady.

Śrī Śuka said :

32. O king ! When that princess of Vidarbha was thus cajoled and comforted in these words by the glorious Lord,

1. **The Lord manifested his four arms for the purpose of lifting her up, embracing her, wiping her face etc. ŚR.**

she realized that it was nothing but his jocular speech and got over her fear of being abandoned by her dear Lord.

33. Beholding (attentively) the Lord's face through her beautiful affectionate side-glances accompanied with bashful smile, she addressed the most prominent of men, O descendant of Bharata.

Rukmiṇī said:[1]

34. Verily, what Your Lordship has said is factually correctnamely that I am not equal and similar to you who are endowed with infinite excellences (like greatness, beauty etc). There cannot be any comparison between you who are ever established in your own greatness, the glorious Lord of the trinity of gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) and I who am *Prakṛti* (The Primordial Nature) consisting of three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and whose feet are resorted to by the ignorant.

35. O Supremely mighty Lord (or Lord of mighty strides in cosmic Form) ! It is true that you, being as it were afraid of *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* or qualities e.g. sound, smell, etc.) abide in the sea[2] (i.e. shine eternally in hearts unfathomable like the sea). Being the Supreme Self of infinite pure consciousness, you are ever hostile to wicked senses (or persons who are controlled by wicked propensities). And sovereignty has been spurned away as a position of blinding darkness by your servants. (Then what of you ?).

1. ŚR. quotes verses enumerating all the epithets Kṛṣṇa used to show his inferiority to Rukmiṇī in his jocular speech above and attempts to show the hidden meaning or the puns used in each which extol the real greatness of Kṛṣṇa as expounded in Rukmiṇī's speech here.

2. VR : What fear can exist for you who covered the three worlds in your strides? It was just to exhibit your intense love for me that you resorted to the sea which has 'sea-ness' like my father, the milky ocean. I being your beloved-most, you love everything related to me.

VJ. *samudra*—Body constituted of five elements. You abide fully refulgent (of the size of a thumb) in the heart of the body consisting of five elements.

36. The paths of sages who enjoy the honey of your lotus-like feet are not clearly understandable (discernible). And to men of bestial nature, they are certainly incomprehensible. Hence the way of their behaviour like that of the Supreme Ruler is extraordinary and supernatural. Such being the case, need it be said that your course of conduct must be much more so, O Almighty Lord.

37. Are you really *niṣ-kāñcana* (a have-not possessing nothing as your own) ? No. For there is none superior to you. Even god Brahmā and others who enjoy (sacrificial) offerings and worship (from others) offer worship to you. Persons who cater to the satisfaction of their senses and are blinded by their affluence do not know that you are the *Kāla*—the exterminator of all. Your worship is the dearmost to gods who enjoy oblations and (reciprocally) they are so to you.

38. You are indeed the embodiment of all the highest) purposes in human life, the very personification of the fruit thereof, with the desire of attaining which the wise and intelligent people renounce every thing, O Almighty Lord ! The association between your worship and them (the master-servant relation)[1] is quite proper. But not so that between a man and a woman who are attached to each other and are subject to pleasure and pain.

39. Your prowess and glory have been extolled by sages who have renounced the staff (the external index of being a recluse). You are the soul of the universe. You are ever willing to bestow your Soul (upon your votaries). Hence I have chosen you rejecting gods like Brahmā, Śiva, Indra whose blessings and positions are shattered down and destroyed by the (vehement) velocity of Time impelled by the slight movement of your brow. What of others (like Śiśupāla, Śālva and others mentioned by you).

40. O elder brother of Gada ! Your words (of having taken shelter at the sea through the fear of kings) are meaningless (as fear is impossible in your case). Oh Lord ! putting to flight all kings by the twanging of your Śārṅga bow, you carried me away like a lion which routing all beasts, appro-

1. VR calls it *Śeṣa-Śeṣī* relation.

priates his own prey. How can it be true that you became afraid of those kings and took shelter at the sea ?

41. Longing for you, great (*lit.* crest-jewels of) monarchs like Aṅga, Pṛthu (the son of Vena), Bharata (the son of Jayantī, the queen of Ṛṣabha), Yayāti (the son of Nahuṣa), gaya and others renounced their undisputed sovereignty over the whole world and entered the forest (for performing penance). Did they suffer here for having taken to the path leading to you, O Lotus-eyed one ?

42. What mortal woman with a clear vision that you, the abode of all excellences, are the real objective in life and has once enjoyed the fragrance of your lotus-feet which are extolled by saints and sages, which grants emancipation from *saṁsāra* to people and are the abode of the goddess Lakṣmī, will disregard them and take resort to another person who is ever subject to the fear of death and *saṁsāra.*

43. I resorted to you, the Supreme Ruler of the worlds, as a suitable partner, my very Soul who grant all wishes here and hereafter. May your feet which liberate from the false *saṁsāra* and protect those who resort to them, protect me who am wandering in the cycle of births.

44. O Imperishable Lord ! Annihilator of enemies ! May the kings (like Śiśupāla and others) listed by you be married to that unlucky woman to whose ears your stories sung in the assemblies of god Śiva and Brahmā, have not reached. For those kings (mentioned by you) behave like a donkey, an ox, a dog, a cat and a menial servant in the homes of their wives.

45. The stupid woman who has not tasted the fragrance of the honey in your lotus-feet will resort as a beloved to a living corpse covered from outside with skin, moustaches, beard, hair on the body, nails and filled inside with flesh, bones, blood, worms, refuse, flegm, bile and wind.

46. O lotus-eyed Lord ! You revel in your own self and you do not cherish any extraordinary outlook (i.e. any special love) for me. May my love to your feet be constant when for the advancement of the world you look at me (i.e. *Prakṛti*) with an excess of *rajas*, that itself is the highest grace on me.

47. O slayer of Madhu ! I do not regard your speech as without significance or false. For sometimes, as in the case of Ambā[1], some girls do set their hearts on somebody else (than the one for whom they are brought to marry).

48. In the case of an unchaste woman though married, her mind hunts after new persons. A wise man should not maintain i.e. marry an unchaste woman, for he falls both here and hereafter.

The Lord said:

49. O virtuous princess ! It is only with the desire of hearing this (from you) that you were deceived (by that jocular speech). Whatever you spoke after my speech i.e. the interpretation you have put upon it—is quite true and correct.

50.* Whatever blessings you seek from me shall always be fulfilled as you are absolutely devoted to me, O beautiful lady. But blessings sought from me lead to freedom from desires.

51. Your deep love to your husband and your fidelity to him has been proven, O sinless lady. Though I have tried to move you (and shift your allegiance) with my words, your mind (and fidelity) could not be alienated.

52. Those who, for the sake of conjugal happiness worship me, the bestower of emancipation from *saṁsāra*, by performing penance and observance of vows, and have given their hearts to sensual pleasure, are deluded by my Māyā.

53. Having attained to (i.e. propitiated) me, the Lord and Bestower of Liberation from *saṁsāra* as well as of wealth or worldly pleasures, those who long to have only worldly pleasures from me (and not me their Lord and Bestower) are really unfortunate, O proud lady. For, these pleasures can be obtained even in the hell or lower species of life. To men given to such sensual pleasures, life even in hell would be welcome and suitable.

1. Ambā, a princess of Kāśī, loved the king of Śālva even though Bhīṣma carried her away to marry his step brother Vicitra-vīrya.—*MBH Adi* 102.60-64.

* VJ. Whatever you long to have is always with you already. Hence you do not wish to attain any greatness or power. *Or* Whatever blessing you wish to have, you have it in me.

54. O deity of my house (and wealth) ! How glad I am that you have borne to me a constant attachment and devotion which liberates from *saṁsāra*[1] and which is very difficult to practise for the wicked and still more so for deceitful women actuated by wicked tendencies and given to the gratification of low sensual appetites.

55. O Proud lady ! In all the houses, I have not noticed such a loving wife like you who, at the time of your marriage disregarded all the suitor-monarchs assembled (at your place) and despached a Brāhmaṇa-emissary with a confidential message to me of whom you have merely heard good accounts only.

56. You have patiently borne oft-recurring occasions of grief (caused by us) such as the disfiguration of your brother after taking him captive in the battle (by me), the death of your brother (at Balarāma's hand) while playing at dice (in the gambling hall) on the occasion of (Aniruddha's) marriage.[2]

57. That a messenger with a secret clear-worded message was sent by you to secure me (as your consort), that you felt this whole world as void when (you felt that) I delayed and that then you wanted to cast away your body[3] as not worthy of any other person (except me). This supreme love of yours (is impossible for me to repay) we can receive you gladly, hailing you with joy.

Śri Śuka said:

58. In this way, imitating the human world in such amorous conversation, the glorious Lord of the Universe, though absorbed in his own spiritual Bliss, indulged in love-sport with Lakṣmī (in the form of Rukmiṇī).

59. In the same way, the Omni-present Lord, the Preceptor of the Universe was present severally in the mansions of all other queens as its Master and simultaneously carried out all the duties prescribed for house-holders.

1. Wealth in the form of Devotion characterised by Love which is itself of the nature of liberation from *saṁsāra*—VT.

2. An anachronism : *vide infra* ch. 61. 36.

3. vide Supra 29.36 :

Yarhyambujākṣa na labheya bhavat-prasādam /
Jahyām asūn vrata-kṛśān śatajanmabhiḥ syām //

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Aniruddha's Marriage : Rukmī Slain

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Each of the above-mentioned queens of Kṛṣṇa bore to him ten sons respectively who were in no way inferior to their father in qualities of head-and-heart.

2. Observing that Lord Kṛṣṇa did not move out of their mansion but was always at home, every one of the princesses, being ignorant of his divine nature, considered herself to be his most beloved wife.

3. Those damsels were enchanted with his countenance charming like a blooming lotus, (knee-) long arms, large beautiful eyes, glances expressive of winning affectionate smiles and sweet conversation, but reciprocally with all the charms at their command, they could not conquer and fascinate the heart of the Perfect One.

4. On the contrary, those sixteen thousand wives of Kṛṣṇa failed to agitate his mind with those shafts of the god of love, and other enticements conveying erotic messages by the movement of their eye-brows charming with the sentiment expressed by their smiles and stealthy side-glances.

VJ.'s Text adds :

4A. Even though their Lord occupied a high seat in their personal mansion, out of bashfulness due to their new union in marriage, those chaste and virtuous damsels cast from behind the pillars their side-glances through eyes full of love at their highly beloved consort, the Lord of saintly people, the sole asylum of the goddess of wealth.

4B. They laughed with joy when their eyes were closed from behind with his hands by their beloved while he was enjoying himself in their mansions. But being afraid of disturbing his passion of love for them, they waited only adjusting garments on their person though it may not be pleasant to him.

5*. Having obtained the consort of the Goddess of Wealth and beauty (Lakṣmī) as their own consort, the ways of approaching whom were incomprehensible even to god Brahmā and others those damsels enjoyed with ever-increasing joy and love his affectionate smiles, side-glances with a longing for union felt as ever new.

6. Although hundreds of maid-servants were in their service, each of them personally rendered service to the Lord by rising up, advancing to receive him, offering him a seat and excellent articles of worship, washing his feet, presenting him betel-leaves, removing his fatigue and refreshing him by fanning, application of sandal-paste and garlands of flowers and by combing his hair, arranging his bed, bath and catering to him refreshments.

7. Out of those (sixteen thousand, one hundred and eight) queens of Kṛṣṇa who bore him ten sons each, eight were previously mentioned as principal queens. I shall relate to you about pradyumna and other sons (of these eight queens).

8-9. Pradyumna being the eldest, Cārudeṣṇa, Sudeṣṇa, the chivalrous Cārudeha, Sucāru, Cārugupta, Bhadracāru and his younger brother Cārucandra, Vicāru, Cāru as the tenth—these sons were born of Rukmiṇī. They were in no respect inferior to their father Hari.

10-12. Bhānu, Subhānu, Svarbhānu, Prabhānu, Bhānumān, Candrabhānu, Bṛhadbhānu, and the eighth Atibhānu, Śrībhānu, Pratibhānu—these were the ten sons by Satyabhāmā. Sāmba, Sumitra, Purujit, Śatajit, Sahasrajit, Vijaya, Citraketu, Vasumān, Dravid, Kratu—these were the ten sons of Jāmbavatī. Sāmba and these others were all favourites of their Father.

13. Vīra (*v. l.* Bhānu), Candra, Aśvasena, Citragu, Vegavān Vṛṣa, Āma, Śaṅku, Vasu, Śrīmān, Kunti were the sons of Nagnajitī.

* ŚR. notes that verses 5 & 6 are extremely beautiful and they are an echo of those in a previous chapter (*Supra* 59. 44 & 45 with some modification.

14. Śruta, Kavi, Vṛṣa, Vīra, Subāhu, Bhadra, Ekala, Śānti, Darśa, Pūrṇamāsa, Avara and Somaka were the ten sons of Kālindī.

15. Praghoṣa (*v. l.* Prajaṅgha), Gātravān, Siṁha, Bala, Prabala, Ūrdhvaga, Mahāśakti, Sahas, Ojas and Aparājita were the sons of Mādrī (Lakṣmaṇā).

16. Vṛka, Harṣa, Anila, Gṛdhra, Vardhana and Annāda, as also Mahāṁśa, Pavana, Vahni and Kṣudhi were the sons of Mitravindā.

17. Saṅgrāmajit, Bṛhatsena, Śūra, Praharaṇa, Arijit, Jaya, Subhadra, Vāma, Āyus and Satyaka were the sons of Bhadrā.[1]

18-19. Dīptimān, Tāmratapta and others were born to Hari by Rohiṇī.[2] (She was the chief of the group of sixteen thousand and one hundred queens). A mighty son Aniruddha was born of Pradyumna by Rukmavatī the Princess of Rukmī in the city of Bhojakaṭa (while Pradyumna was there).

As the mothers of Kṛṣṇa's sons were sixteen thousand in number, the sons and grandsons of those sons numbered billions.

King Parīkṣit enquired :

20. Oh learned sage ! How is it that Rukmī who was vanquished in combat by Kṛṣṇa and was eagerly waiting for an opportunity to avenge, gave his daughter in marriage to his enemy's son ? Be pleased to narrate to me how the matrimonial alliance came about between these two deadly enemies.

21. For the *Yogins* can accurately and distinctly see the future, the past and the present as well as what is beyond the ken of senses, which is very remote and screened off (by something else).

Śrī Śuka narrated :

22. Being the actual embodiment of Anaṅga (the god of Love), he (Pradyumna) was selected by Rukmavatī in her *svayaṁvara* (self-election by the bride-type of marriage). Com-

1. It appears a slip on the part of ŚR. to equate her with Śaibyā-VT.
2. Obviously a similarity of name in the women of the same family.

pletely defeating the assembled kings single-handedly in his chariot, he carried her away.

23*. Although Rukmī, humiliated by Kṛṣṇa, was cherishing enmity against him (but) with a view to please his sister Rukmiṇī, he offered his daughter in marriage to his nephew.

24. It is reported that the mighty son of Kṛtavarmā married Cārumatī, the large (beautiful) eyed daughter of Rukmiṇī.

25. Though still nursing deep hostility to Kṛṣṇa and though aware of the violation of the restrictions of *dharma-śāstra*[1]

23* *Here VJ's Text adds* :

23.1. Rukmī who was humiliated by Kṛṣṇa (by deforming him after defeat) continued to (brood over and) nurse the enmity. By his penance, he propitiated god Śiva abiding on mount Śrī Śaila.

23.2-3. Rudra, the most prominent among boon-conferring gods, was propitiated by Rukmī by performance of penance. He asked Rukmī to seek a boon. He sought for a strong unbreakable bow which will be invincible for hosts of enemies and un-sunderable even to gods. "So be it", said the god Śiva and gave him the bow. But god Śaṅkara cautioned him thus :

23.4. "When you confront god Viṣṇu, this bow will desert you and will return to me. Not otherwise."

23.5 Telling him thus, god Śiva gave him the bow and disappeared. Having secured the boon, the king returned to his capital Bhojakaṭa.

23.6 With the help of the bow, Rukmī brought under his control all kings noted for their prowess in battle. Kṛṣṇa was the only exception.

23.7 With greed of retaining the possession of the bow, Rukmī did not even think of opposing Vāsudeva. Nor did he think of entering into faithful alliance with him, O great king.

23.8 Although he still cherished the enmity, he remembered the words of god Śiva. Pradyumna who was the veritable Manmatha (the god of Love) incarnate, was chosen by Rukmavatī in the *Svayaṁvara*.

23.9 Having vanquished in the battle, all the kings assembled there (for the *svayaṁvara*) single-handedly in his chariot, he carried her away. The great warrior Aniruddha was born of Rukmavatī.

23.10 Being directed by (Uṣā) Bāṇa's daughter, Citralekhā kidnapped him; and on account of him, the thousand-armed Bāṇa became a two-armed one.

1 Śrīdhara notes the popular objection that one should not dine with the enemy (*dviṣad annaṁ na bhoktavyam*) and not the real object of *dharma-śāstra* which discourages in-breeding by prohibiting cross-cousin marriages. VB quotes:

mātā pitāmahī yasya tathaiva prapitāmahī /
tisra eka-kule jātāḥ so'bhiṣasto nigadyate //

in such a matrimonial alliance, Rukmī, with the desire of pleasing his sister to whom he was bound by the ties of affection, gave his grand-daughter Rocanā to Hari's grandson (Rukmī's daughter's son).

26. For the marriage ceremony, Rukmiṇī, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa, Sāmba, Pradyumna and others went to the city of Bhojakaṭa.

27. When the marriage ceremony was over, some haughty kings like Dantavakra of Kaliṅga and others urged Rukmī, "Completely vanquish Balarāma in the play of dice".

28. Though ignorant of the game of dice, Balarāma is strongly addicted to it, O king." Thus advised, Rukmī invited Balarāma to play dice and played at dice.

29. In that game, Balarāma consecutively staked wagers of one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand (coins of gold) and Rukmī won them all. At that time the king of Kaliṅga laughed loudly at Balarāma, displaying his teeth—(an insult) with which Balarāma, the wielder of the plough, could not put up.

30. Then Rukmī staked one lakh (coins) as a bet which Balarāma now won. But resorting to deceit, Rukmī asserted, "I am the winner".

31. Agitated with anger like the swelling ocean under the full moon, the glorious Balarāma whose eyes were naturally reddish, became fiery with extreme rage and he staked a wager of ten crores (of gold coins).

32. As per rules of that game, Balarāma rightly won that bet. But Rukmī resorted to false pretext and said, "I have won the bet. Let the umpires declare their decision".

32-A. *VJ's Text* :

"So be it" said Dantavakra of Kaliṅga showing his teeth (grinning) at Balarāma. Balarāma boiled with rage but (controlled himself and) observed silence.

33. Thereupon a voice from the heaven declared. "As per rules of the game, the wager is properly won by Balarāma. What Rukmī says is false."

34. Ignoring the declaration from the heaven, Rukmī, being instigated by wicked kings and impelled so by his (impend-

ing) death, laughed loudly at Saṅkarṣana (Balarāma) and spoke to him.

35. "You are after-all cowherds ranging over the forests and not experts at the play of dice. Kings like us play with dice and with arrows (i.e. fight) and not persons (cowherds) like you."

36. When thus humiliated by Rukmī and ridiculed by kings, Balarāma flew in rage and taking up an iron bar[1], struck Rukmī down in the assembly of kings.

37. He vehemently caught hold of the (flying) king of Kaliṅga on the tenth pace and angrily knocked out his teeth exhibiting which he laughed at him.

38. Other kings with their arms, thighs and heads broken, chopped off and bathed in blood when struck with the iron bar by Balarāma, fled away in terror.

39. When His brother-in-law Rukmī was slain, Hari being afraid of alienating the relation with his queen Rukmiṇī and brother Balarāma, expressed no remark for or against the incident.

40. Seating Aniruddha along with Suryā in an excellent chariot, Balarāma and others from the Dāśārha clan of whom Lord Kṛṣṇa was the mainstay, and who had accomplished all their objects, left Bhojakaṭa and journeyed to Dvārakā (Kuśasthalī).

CHAPTER SIXTY TWO[2]

Aniruddha taken captive by Bāṇāsura

The King Parīkṣit submitted:

I. The best of Yadus (Aniruddha) married Uṣā, the daughter of Bāṇa. On this occasion a terrible and very great combat took place between Lord Hari and god Śaṅkara. O

1. v.l. with the dice-board-VJ.
2. Not traced in VJ.'s Text.

great yogin! May you be pleased to describe to me in details this episode.[1]

Śrī Śuka narrated:

2. Bāṇa was the eldest of the hundred sons of the great-souled Bali who donated in charity the whole of the earth to to Lord Hari who presented himself before him in the form of Vāmana (a dwarf, a Brāhmaṇa boy).

3. Bali's own son Bāṇa was always engaged in devotion to god Śiva. He was respectable, generous, intelligent, true of word and firm in observance of vows.

4. Formerly, he used to rule over his kingdom from the beautiful city of Śoṇitapura[2] as its capital. By the grace of god Śiva even those celestials (the sworn enemies of *Asuras*) behaved with him as his servants. Endowed with a thousand arms as he was, he pleased god Śiva (the world-delighter) by playing upon musical instruments while god Śiva performed his Tāṇḍava[3] dance.

5. The glorious god Śiva, the Lord of all beings, worthy of seeking shelter, who is affectionate to his votaries, asked Bāṇa to seek any boon. Bāṇa begged of him to be the guardian deity of his capital.

1. The Vrindāvan edition records the following verse from the Text of VT. and other commentators of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava school.

1A. Bāṇa was the eldest out of the hundred sons of the noble-souled Bali. Being endowed with a thousand arms, he pleased god Śiva by playing on a musical instrument while the latter performed his Tāṇḍava dance.

2. Assames claim Tejapur as the Śoṇitapur of Bāṇa. But the route followed by Kṛṣṇa in his expedition against Bāṇa and its siege etc. (as given in *Harivaṁśa*), show that Śoṇitapur in Kumaun on the back of Kedār-gaṅgā about 6 miles from Uṣāmaṭha near Gupta Kāśi has better claims to be this Śoṇitapur-GDAM p. 189.

3. According to Bharata, the sage Taṇḍu was its initiator. But later as *Śabdārthacintāmaṇi* notes it came to be applied to all male dances and dancing by women was called *lāsya*. It implies violent type of dance in which Rudra indulges at the end of *yugas*. The violent effect of this dance is expressed in the Ist verse (Maṅgala) of *Matsya P.* as follows:

Pracaṇḍa-tāṇḍavāṭope Praksiptā yena dig-gajāḥ /
bhavantu vighna-bhaṅgāya Bhavasya caraṇāmbujāḥ //

Matsya P. 1.1

6. On one occasion, Bāṇa who was madly elated with his prowess, touched with his crown brilliant like the sun, the lotus-feet of god Śiva who (as the presiding deity of his capital) was near to him and said:

7. "I bow to you, O great God, the preceptor and the highest Ruler of the world, the Wish-yielding tree fulfilling the desires of persons whose longings are not satisfied.

8. The (boon of) thousand arms conferred by you have resulted into a burden to me; for I do not find an equal combatant (against me in the three worlds excepting you).

9. With my arms itching for a fight and being impelled by eagerness to combat, I marched against the elephants (supporting the world) at the end of cardinal points, crushing down the mountains on the way. But being terrified, the elephants hastily took to flight, O Ancient-most Person".

10. Hearing this (arrogant speech), the glorious god Śiva got enraged and told him, "When your flag-staff (with the peacock ensign) shall be broken down automatically, your combat with some one equal to me will take place and it will humiliate (break down) your pride, O stupid fellow".

11. Thus snubbed, the Asura with perverse mentality became delighted and repaired to his place. The crooked-minded fellow was waiting for the fulfilment of Śiva's augery which indicated a crushing blow to his prowess.

12. He had a daughter called Uṣā. Virgin as she was, in dream, she enjoyed sexual pleasure with Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna as her beloved consort whom she had never seen or heard of.

13. Not finding him there near her (after opening her eyes), she got up in a bewildered state, exclaiming "Where are you my beloved lord ?", in the midst of her girl-companions and was exceedingly abashed.

14. Bāṇa had a minister called Kumbhāṇḍa. His daughter Citralekhā was her bosom-friend. Out of great curiosity, she enquired her friend Uṣā:

15. "Whom are you searching for, O friend with beautiful eyebrows ? what is the nature of your desire ? As far as I have observed, as yet there has been no suitor to your hand, O princess."

Uṣā narrated :

16. "In my dream I saw an unknown man of dark complexion, lotus-eyed, endowed with (knee-) long arms, wearing a yellow (silken) garment, captivating the hearts of women (capable of enjoying them).

17. I am seeking after him as my beloved Lord who having allowed me to drink the honey of his lips, has gone (to some unknown place) throwing me into the sea of misery even though I am still thirsty (after him)."

Citralekhā said :

18. "I shall remove (the cause of) your grief. If he who captivated your heart exists somewhere in the three worlds, I shall bring that man. Please tell me who it is."

19. Saying thus she drew graphic portraits (of elite youths) of gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, serpents, Daityas, Vidyādharas, Yakṣas and human princes.

20. Out of human beings, she drew the portrait of Vṛṣṇi's : Ugrasena, Vasudeva, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa. When she saw Pradyumna's portrait, she felt shy.

21. Seeing the carefully painted portrait of Aniruddha she looked down in shyness and exclaimed smilingly, "It is he. It is he." O Ruler of the earth.

22. Citralekhā who was endowed with *yogic* powers knew that he was the grand-son of Kṛṣṇa and through the air, she went to Dvārakā under the protection of Kṛṣṇa, O King.

23. Resorting to her *yogic* powers, she bore Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna, who was sleeping on an excellent bed and brought him to Śoṇitapura and presented her beloved to her friend, Uṣā.

24. Beholding the most beautiful of beautiful persons, she was extremely rejoiced and in her private apartment which was inaccessible to the eyes of males, she enjoyed herself with the son of Pradyumna.

25. He was respectfully received with excellent garments, wreaths of flowers, perfumes, sweet incense, lights, high seat, with drinks, foods and other eatables, with sweet conversations and personal service.

26. Aniruddha who remained concealed in the princess's apartment, got his senses captivated by Uṣā whose love for him was ever increasing and he did not know how many days rolled away.

27. As she was thus enjoyed by the Yādava hero and lost her virginity, the attendants observed through marks which could be hardly concealed, that she was enjoying specially joyous life.

28. The servants reported to Bāṇa, "O King, from the behaviour of your daughter, we mark that she is casting a stain on your family.

29. Though we were cautiously guarding her, we do not know how such pollution took place in the apartment of your virgin daughter who was closely guarded and was beyond the reach of male eyes."

30. Thereupon Bāṇa who was sorely distressed to hear of his daughter's pollution, hastened immediately to the appartment of his daughter and saw there the best of the Yadus.

31. He saw Aniruddha who was the son of Kāma (Pradyumna), the most beautiful person in the world, dark in complexion, wearing a yellow garment, of lotus eyes, long and mighty arms and with his countenance brightened with the lustre of his ear-rings and locks of hair and was beaming with smiling looks.

32. Bāṇa was shocked to see Aniruddha playing at dice with his beloved daughter who on her part adorned herself with festle ornaments—and wearing between his arms a garland of Jasmine flowers, special to the season of spring, tinged with the saffron on her bosom during his contacts with her person seated in front of her.

33. Seeing Bāṇa enter surrounded with fierce looking soldiers, Aniruddha, the descendent of Madhu, took up an iron bludgeon and took position like Yama, the wielder of the rod determined to finish with any body that may approach him.

34. Like a great boar that kicks away the attacking dogs, he struck them down who attacked him on all sides with

the intention of arresting him. Beaten thus by him, they ran out of Uṣā's palace with their heads, thighs and arms broken.

35. The powerful son of Bali got angry with Aniruddha who was striking down his soldiers and he bound him down with *Nāgapāśa* (serpent-like cords).

36. Uṣā was overwhelmed with grief and despondency to see him bound with the cords of *Nāga* and wept loudly with tears flowing down her eyes.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Bāṇa Vanquished. Aniruddha brought to Dvārakā

Śri Śuka said :

1. And thus passed away the four months of the rainy season, while the relatives of Aniruddha, (being unable to trace him) missed him and were grieving for him (for his disappearance), O descendant of Bharata !

2. Learning from Nārada, the report of Aniruddha's valorous fight and his imprisonment , Vṛṣṇis who looked upon Kṛṣṇa as their presiding deity, speedily marched against Śoṇitapura, the capital of Bāṇa.

3-4. Pradyumna, Yuyudhāna, Gada, Sāmba and Sāraṇa, Nanda, Upananda, Bhadra and others—all loyal followers of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa—these prominent Sātvata heroes accompanied with twelve *akṣauhiṇīs* of army, laid close siege to the city of Bāṇa, on all sides.

5. Noticing that the parks of the city, fortifications, gates, balconies and towers were shattereddown, Bāṇa was fired with rage and taking with him an equally strong army, sallied forth out of the city.

6. The worshipful god Rudra surrounded by the Pramathas and accompanied by his son Skanda, rode his big bull and fought with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa for the sake of Bāṇa.

7. The combat that raged between Kṛṣṇa and Śaṅkara and the duel between Pradyumna and Guha (Kārttikeya) was

tumultuous, astounding and horripilating (making the hair stand on the ends).

8. There was an encounter between Balarāma with Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa; and a duel between Sāmba and the son of Bāṇa, and between Bāṇa and Sātyaki.

9. Great gods like Brahmā and others, sages, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas (celestial singers) heavenly damsels, Yakṣas came in their aerial cars to witness the wonderful battle.

10-11. With sharp-pointed shafts discharged from his Śārṅga bow, Kṛṣṇa put to flight the followers of god Śiva viz. goblins, Pramathas, Yakṣas, Dākinīs, Yātudhānas, Vināyakas, Vetālas, and ghosts, Mātṛkas, Piśācas Kūṣmāṇḍas and Brahma-rākṣasas.

12. God Śiva, the wielder of Pināka bow, discharged various kinds of missiles on Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of Śārṅga bow. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, without expressing any surprise, neutralised each and every missile of Śiva by his counter-missiles.

13. He nullified Brahmāstra with a Brahmāstra, Vāyavyāstra (missile creating stormy winds) with Parvatāstra (a missile surrounding the winds by mountain-like obstacles), the Agnyastra (the fire missile) with the rain missile and Rudra's special Pāśupata missile with his own Nārāyaṇāstra.

14. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa stupefied god Śiva by making him yawn and lethargic with Jṛmbhaṇāstra (yawning missile) and in the meanwhile slaughtered Bāṇa's army with his sword, mace and arrows.

15. Skanda being pierced on all sides by the streams of arrows discharged by Pradyumna and bleeding in every part of the body, retreated from the battle on the back of his peacock.

16. Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa fell down pounded by the pestle of Balarāma and their armies with their leaders killed, ran away in all directions.

17. Noticing his army shattered and scattered in this way, Bāṇa became extremely enraged. He left his combatant Sātyaki, and in his chariot he rode to and attacked Kṛṣṇa.

18. Simultaneously bending five hundred bows, Bāṇa who was over-proud of his valour, applied a couple of arrows each on each of the bows.

19. The glorious Lord Hari simultaneously snapped all Bāṇa's bows, killed his charioteer, horses and shattered his chariot and blew his conch.

20. Bāṇa had a mother[1] (mother-like presiding deity) called Koṭarā. With a desire to protect the life of her son, she appeared before Kṛṣṇa completely nude with locks of her hair dishevelled.

21. Then (in that situation), Kṛṣṇa turned his face without casting a look at the naked deity. In the meanwhile, Bāṇa whose chariot was broken and bows cut down, retreated to his capital.

22. When all the army of Bhūtas (goblins etc.) fledaway, Jvara (Śiva's fever) having three heads and three feet, rushed at Kṛṣṇa burning down as it were, all the ten cardinal points.

22A. And he appeared in the battle in front of Kṛṣṇa.

23. Thereupon the refulgent god Nārāyaṇa had a look at that Jvara and let loose against him his own (Vaiṣṇava) Fever. In this way the Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite fevers fought with each other.

24. Severely beaten by the fever commanded by Viṣṇu, the Śaivite fever screamed loudly. He could not find any shelter from fear. Being terribly afraid, the fever commanded by Śiva sought refuge with Kṛṣṇa and folding his palm praised him.

Jvara prayed :

25. I bow to you, Lord of infinite potency, the controller of great gods (like Brahmā and others), the Soul of all (the universe). One without a second, (of the nature of) Absolute Consciousness, the Cause of the creation, subsistence and dissolution of the universe, you are what is known as the Brahman which is indicated by the Vedas (but not cognised directly), absolutely serene, subject to no modification.

26. (You, being beyond all attributes, are the Lord of all). The Time-spirit (that impels action), Providence (resultant from the *karma* or action), *Karma*, *Svabhāva* (the natural propensities as a result of *Karma*), substance (subtle elements),

1. The name of Bāṇa's real mother was Aśanā. VT clarifies that according to V.P. *Koṭarī* was the family deity of Daityas.

the body, Prāṇa (vital breath called *Sūtra*), the Ego, modifications (viz. eleven senses—10 conative and cognitive senses+1 mind, the internal organ) and the combination of these evolutes called the *Liṅga* or subtle body which sets in motion the stream of cause-effect relation like that of the seed and the tree—all is your Māyā. I seek shelter in you in whom there is negation of Māyā.

27. Sportively assuming various incarnations (as Fish, Tortoise, Boar etc.) you protect the gods, saintly persons who abide by the *dharma* (duties prescribed for their respective class and stage in life) and for their protection you exterminate those who deviate from the righteous path and live by committing violence. This incarnation of yours is intended for lessening the burden of the earth.

28. I am being consumed by the extremely unbearable, terrible, deadly cold fever created by your irresistible energy. Corporeal beings have to suffer, so long as they, remaining enmeshed in desires, do not take shelter at the soles of your feet.

The Lord said :

29. "Oh Triśira ! (three-headed fever) I am pleased with you. May your fear from my fear be set at rest. May he who remembers our conversation, be free from fear from you."

30. Thus ordered the Śaivite Fever bowed down to Lord Kṛṣṇa and departed. But Bāṇa mounting his chariot advanced and fought with Kṛṣṇa.

31. Then equipped with various weapons in each of his arm, Bāṇa who was extremely enraged, discharged a volley of arrows on the Lord with the discus as his weapon, O king !

32. While Bāṇa was discharging missiles, the Lord amputated with his discus, the sharp razor-like felly, the arms of Bāṇa, like branches of a tree.

33. While Bāṇa's arms were thus being lopped off, the worshipful god Śiva who was compassionate to his devotee approached Kṛṣṇa and requested him as follows :

Rudra submitted :

34. (It is not surprising that Bāṇa fights with you as he is unaware of your real nature, for you are the veritable

Brahman, the Supreme Light lying concealed in the Vedas (which are the Brahman revealed in verbal form). You reveal yourself to sages and hence those sages of pure heart realize you to be all-pervading and pure as the sky and (eternally) absolute.

35. You are indeed the Cosmic Man (*Virāṭ puruṣa*) that comprise within you (as parts of your body) all the universe. Thus the sky is your navel; the fire, your mouth; water, your seminal fluid; the heavenly region, your head; the cardinal points, your ears; the earth, your feet; the moon your mind; the Sun, your eye; myself (viz. Rudra), your Ego (*ahaṁkāra*); the seas, your belly; Indra (and other protectors of the world), your arms;

36. Herbs and plants are your hair on the body; clouds, the locks of your hair; god Brahmā, your intellect; the procreator of the worlds, your generative organ; and Dharma (the god upholding righteousness), your heart. (But this Bāṇa does not know this Cosmic Personality of yours).

37. This incarnation of yours, O Lord of undiminished glory and power (or who stay eternally in Go-loka), is for the protection of righteousness and for the prosperity of the world. All of us (protectors of various spheres) are delegated powers by you and hence we (can) protect the seven spheres of the universe.

38. You are the one without a second, the First Person (beyond all persons belonging to the three states), pure, self-luminous through knowledge, the cause of all but yourself without any cause, the controller (of the universe). Yet you manifest your self through your Māyā as an individual Soul (in every being be it gods, men or subhuman beings) and throw light on everything.

39. O Perfect Lord ! Just as the Sun, covered under his own shadow (viz. clouds, his creation) illuminates both the clouds as well as other forms, you, though the Self-luminous, get concealed under the *guṇas* (viz. Ego) and yet make all the *guṇas* and their products shine (with your light).

40. With their intellect deluded by your Māyā, men are attached to their sons, wives, houses and other belongings and they sink and come up again in the sea of misery (*saṁsāra*).

41. He who, after obtaining this human body (birth) through the Grace of the God, does not worship respectfully your feet, is certainly a self-deceiver fit to be pitied.

42. The mortal man who, for the sake of sense objects which are worthless and hollow, neglects you who are the beloved Soul and the Ruler of the world, consumes poison throwing aside the nectar.

43. I myself, god Brahmā, celestials and sages of pure heart have with all our heart and soul resorted to you who are the most beloved Soul and the controller of the world.

44. In order to get Liberation from *saṁsāra*, we seek asylum in you and worship you who are the cause of creation, subsistence and dissolution of the world, equal to all, serene, a beloved friend and deity. You are One without a second, the only goal, the one abode of all the world.

45. O god, this Bāṇāsura is my dear devotee deeply attached to me and much liked by me. Full protection has been promised by me to him. Therefore, may Your Grace be extended to him as you did in the case of Prahlāda, the king of Daityas.

The Lord said :

46. O worshipful Śiva ! We shall comply with whatever you have requested us and what is pleasing to you. Whatever you have decided (about Bāṇa) has my full approval.

47. This Asura is the son of Bali and as such I should not kill him. I have conferred a boon on Prahlāda that none of his descendants would be killed by me.

48. It was just to curb his arrogance that his arms have been lopped off by me. And his big army is annihilated because it was a burden to the earth.

49. The four arms that are left to him (Bāṇa) shall not suffer from age or destruction. From no quarters this Asura need entertain any fear and he shall be your attendant.

50. Having thus secured protection, the Asura bowed to Kṛṣṇa with his head and brought Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna along with his bride, placing them in a chariot.

51. Placing in the van, Aniruddha and his bride who were clad in excellent dress, decked with ornaments and guarded by an *akṣauhiṇī* of soldiers, Kṛṣṇa set out with compliments from Rudra.

52. He entered His capital (Dvārakā) which was tastefully decorated with flags and ornamental arches, and had its streets and quadrangles thoroughly besprinkled with water. He was warmly received by the citizens, friends, relatives and Brāhmaṇas, with the blowing of conchs and sounding of drums and kettle-drums.

53. He who rising early at dawn, recalls and contemplates on the story of combat between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and god Śaṅkara and Kṛṣṇa's final triumph, will never meet any defeat in life.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

The Story of Nṛga[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On one occasion Sāmba, Pradyumna, Cāru, Bhānu, Gada and other princes of the Yadu clan went to a park for sports and entertainment.

2. Having played there for a long time, they felt very thirsty. While in search of water, they found a dry well and noticed a strange animal in it.

3. Observing that it is a lizard as big as a hill, they marvelled in their minds. Moved with pity, they tried to lift it out.

4. The boys tied the animal fallen (in the well) with leather thongs and ropes of fiber but were unable to lift it up.

1. Nṛga, a son of Ikṣvāku, was very famous for his generosity and performance of sacrifices (MBH, *Sabha* 8.8, *Vana.* 88.5-6, 121.1-2). Due to oversight, he gifted a cow twice for which he was cursed to be a chameleon (MBH *Anu.* 70.10-28, also *Vāl. Rām.* 7.24, 7.53).

Overcome with curiosity and surprise, they reported the matter to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

5. The lotus-eyed glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the creator and protector of the world, went there (to the well). Peeping at it he sportively lifted it up by his left hand.

6. Being touched by the hand of the Lord of hallowing renown, the being instantly shuffled off his body of a chameleon and was transformed into a heavenly being adorned with wonderful ornaments, garments, and garland of flowers and distinguished by a complexion (bright) like molten gold.

6A. *VJ's Text adds* :

He bowed down to the lotus-feet of Lord Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) with his head and lay prostrate before him.

7. Although Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) was omniscient (and as such knew the reason), he enquired of him (the newly transformed god) with a view to making known to the public the cause of his birth in the species of lizards "Who are you, O glorious person blessed with most excellent personality. I believe you must be a great god.

8. My good friend ! What act of yours brought you to such a wretched plight which you certainly did not deserve. We are curious to hear your story. Be pleased to narrate it to us if you deem us worthy of being told."

Śrī Śuka said :

9. When the king (Nṛga) was thus accosted by Kṛṣṇa of infinite forms (Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of Bliss), he bowed down to the Lord of Lakṣmī with his crown radiant like the Sun, and spoke:

Nṛga submitted :

10. O Lord ! I am a king called Nṛga, the son of Ikṣvāku. My name might have reached your ears if a list of liberal donors has been (at any time) mentioned to you.

11. What is there that is unknown to you who abide as a witness in the hearts of all ? And your vision and knowledge are unobstructed by Time. It is, however, in obedience to your command that I recount my history.

12. I donated as religious gift to Brāhmaṇas as many cows as there are sand-grains on the earth or as many as there are stars in the heavens or as many drops in the showers of rain.

13. All those cows were youthful, milk-yielding, possessed of good nature, of beautiful form and excellent breed. They were tawny in colour, had their horns plated in gold and hoofs in silver. They were gifted along with their calves all duly covered with silk garment, garlands and ornaments. And everyone of them was legitimately obtained by me (by paying their price in well-earned money).

14. I used to give them to youthful prominent Brāhmaṇas possessing excellent qualities and noble character; who, though coming from proverty-stricken families, were noted for their vow of truthfulness and were endowed with penance, learning or knowledge of the Vedas, spiritual lore and generosity.

15. I gave as religious gifts cows, lands, gold, houses, horses, elephants, girls (in marriage) alongwith maid-servants, a lot of sesamum seeds, silver, beds, garments, precious stones, utensils and furniture (necessary) for (unfurnished) houses as well as chariots. I performed a number of sacrifices and constructed wells, tanks and other works of social welfare.

16. (On one occasion) a cow belonging to a prominent Brāhmaṇa strayed and mingled in the herd of my cattle. Not being aware of this, it was gifted by me to another Brāhmaṇa.

17. As the cow was being taken away, the original owner of the cow saw it and asserted to him, "This cow belongs to me". The recepient of the cow as a gift argued, "The cow is mine, for king Nṛga has given it to me as a religious gift".

18. Both the disputant Brāhmaṇas, each trying to establish his claim, (approached me and) said, "You are the donor of the cow to me". The other asserted, "In that case, you have lifted my cow." And I became confused and embarrassed to hear their claims.

19. Caught in such a religious predicament, I tried to conciliate them with a humble entreaty. "I shall give a hundred thousand excellent cows (all better than this). Please give in exchange this cow.

20. Both of you be pleased to condone this fault which has been unknowingly committed by me—your humble servant. Be pleased to lift me up from this difficult situation whereby I shall be falling in a dirty hell.

21. The original owner of the cow declared, "I am not willing to accept (your offer at all) and he left. The other (new recepient owner) went away saying, "I do not wish to have ten thousand cows in exchange for this cow."

VR.'s Text adds :

21A. O Supreme Lord ! May be due to your Māyā power or your will expressed through force of time, I died. O Lord ! I narrate in your presence where I was taken away by the force of my destiny.

22. O God of gods ! In the meanwhile (after death) I was carried away by the messenger of Yama to Yama's abode. O Lord of the world ! I was asked there by the god of death :

23. "Would you like to reap the fruit of your evil acts first or would you like to enjoy the fruits of your meritorious acts first. I do not see the limit of the charitable and religious acts performed by you nor of the glorious world that you have attained thereby."

24. I said, "O god ! I shall first suffer for my inauspicious acts". He commanded, "Fall down" and immediately I fell and while falling, I found myself transformed into a lizard, O Almighty Lord.

25. O Keśava ! I am your servant (devotee) who have been friendly and charitable to Brāhmaṇas. I have been earnestly craving and striving to have your direct revelation. It is hence that my memory is still unblurred.

26. O Omnipresent Lord ! You are beyond the ken of sense perception. You are the Supreme Soul to be contemplated and visualized in their pure hearts with the help of the 'eye' (knowledge) of *Upaniṣads* by masters of *yoga*. * (Such as you

are) I am amazed as to how you came directly within the range of my sight—I whose reason is blinded by extreme miseries—for, you are visualized by those who are to be emancipated from *saṁsāra* (Hence I believe I shall be released and this is my last birth).

27-28. O God of gods ! Lord of the world ! O Govinda (protector of cows or master of senses) ? O Supreme Man ! O Nārāyaṇa ! O Hṛṣīkeśa (the Master of Sense-organs; their prime mover) ! O Lord of hallowing renown ! O Infallible Lord ! O Immutable God ! O Kṛṣṇa ! Give me leave to return to my celestial state. O Lord ! (I pray) wherever I may be (i.e. in whatever species I be born) my mind have asylum at your feet.

29. Hail to you the source (creator) of everything ! The Master of Māyā potency ! The final resort (or abode) of all beings ! O Kṛṣṇa,[1] the Lord of all yogas, I bow down to you. (Though I am unwilling to part from you of above description, I take my leave of you to enjoy the fruits of actions conferred upon me by you".

30. Submitting to him this prayer, Nṛga circumambulated him and touched the feet of the Lord with his diadem. With his permission, he ascended an excellent aerial car, even as all people were looking on.

31. Lord Kṛṣṇa ! The son of Devakī, the God who is friendly to Brāhmaṇas—nay the very Dharma *incarnate*—spoke to person around him with a view to instruct those born in Kṣattriya class.

32. "The property of Brāhmaṇas, howsoever little it may be, if misappropriated, is indigestible even to the Fire-god (i.e. a person of immeasurable power and glory like the Fire god); what need be said that it is certainly so in the case of kings who, out of (empty) pride, regard themselves as the rulers (of the world).

33. I do not consider the most deadly poison *Halāhala* as the real fatal poison, as there is an antidote against it. But

1. ŚR. quotes a *Smṛti* (Purāṇic ?) source which interpretes Kṛṣṇa as *Brahman.*

Kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdaḥ ṇaśca nirvṛti-vācakaḥ /
tayor aikyam param Brahma Kṛṣṇa ityabhidhīyate //

the property of a Brāhmaṇa (if misappropriated) is the real poison, as it cannot be counteracted by any remedy in the world.

34. Poison kills (only one person viz.) the swallower. The fire is extinguished with water. But the fire ignited out of churning the *Araṇis* in the form of (misappropriated) Brāhmaṇa property burns the whole race along with its roots.

35. A Brāhmaṇa's property used without his (willing) permission (or with permission under duress) ruins three generations (the enjoyer, his son and grandson). But if usurped and enjoyed per force, it spells disaster to ten generations of ancestors (by forcing them to hell) and ten generation of successors after him.

36.* Kings blinded with the pride of their sovereign power and affluence, are incapable of seeing their own fall. Those kings who regard it good to covet Brāhmaṇa's property which is a veritable hell, are fools.

37-38. Those uncontrolled dictatorial monarchs, their descendants and relatives who deprive Brāhmaṇas of bountiful nature but with large family responsibilities, of their means of livelihood and their property are subjected to torture (*lit.* are cooked) in the hell called *Kumbhīpāka*[1] for as many years as the number of particles of earth moistened by the tears shed by those Brāhmaṇas while crying.

39. He who confiscates the means of livelihood of a Brāhmaṇa irrespective of its being donated to him by himself or by another person, becomes a worm in the faeces for sixty thousand years.

40. (I strongly wish that) I may not come in possession of the wealth or property of a Brāhmaṇa (at any time and in any way), by coveting which people are cut short in their prime, kings become defeated and are deprived of their kingdoms and (after death) are born as formidable serpents.

* VR. construes differently: Those kings who regard it good to covet the property of a Brāhmaṇa are blinded by sovereign power and wealth, They do not foresee and think over their falling into the hell. They are extremely stupid.

1. One of the 28 hells in which the wicked are baked like potter's arthen-ware or are immersed in boiling oil.

41. O my kinsmen ! Abstain from hatred or injury (in retaliation) to a Brāhmaṇa who has offended you, attacked you or reproached you (with words of abuse). Always pay them your respects.

42. Just as I bow to Brāhmaṇas regularly with a calm and collected mind, similarly you also salute to them. He who fails to do so, shall be recepient of the punishment at my hands.

43. The property of Brāhmaṇa, even though misappropriated without being aware of it, brings about the downfall of the sinner just as the cow of the Brāhmaṇa brought about the fall of king Nṛga though he was ignorant of misappropriation."

44. Having thus taught (*dharma*) with the actual demonstration (of Nṛga's case) to the residents of Dvārakā, the glorious Lord Mukunda who hallows all (beings in all) worlds, entered his palace.[1]

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Balarāma's Visit to Gokula—The Course of the Yamunā diverted

Śrī Śuka said:

1. (On one occasion) the glorious Lord Balarāma became eagerly desirous of seeing his friends and well-wishers (at Vraja). Mounting his chariot, he proceeded[2] to Gokula ruled over by Nanda, O the most prominent Kuru.

1. *Here VJ.'S Text adds:*

44.1 Association with the righteous persons will never fail to bear fruit, O King Parīkṣit. It was by virtue of his companionship with the pious that king Nṛga was released from hell (i.e. hellish life).

44.2 As with sacred places, everything done in relation to the righteous—their sight, touch, glorification, remembrance—brings about purification.

44.3 As you have listened to this, O chastiser of enemies, you should always (try to) adore the saintly people. If you desire to have the final emancipation, the property of a Brāhmaṇa should never be misappropriated by you.

2. *Pra-yayau*—went after wearing the dress of a Gopa (cowherd)—VT. It quotes HV. in its support and informs us that Balarāma went to convey the massage of Kṛṣṇa.

2. Balarāma was warmly embraced by Gopa men and women (at Vraja) who were yearning (to see him) for a pretty long period. He bowed to his (foster) parents Nanda and Yaśodā who welcomed him with blessings (and said):

3. "O Balarāma (of the Dāśārha clan)! May you, the Lord of the universe along with your younger brother Kṛṣṇa, protect us for a long time (just as you do to Yādavas)". With these words, they placed him on their lap, hugged him and bathed him with tears.

4. He paid respects to elderly Gopas with due formalities and was bowed down by his juniors in age. He met other Gopas (observing courteous exchanges) according to their age, friendly intimacy and according to their (respective) relations (with him).

5. He then approached the cowherds,[1] cut jokes and laughed with them, held them by hands, (expressed other friendly gestures). When he had taken rest and was refreshed, they gathered and seated themselves round him as he was comfortably seated.

6. The Gopas who had renounced their worldly pleasures for Śrī Kṛṣṇa of lotus—(petal-like) eyes were enquired about their health and of their relatives in a voice choked with emotions (and in faltering accents). They also reciprocally enquired about the health of Yādavas as per their relations).

7. "Are all our friends and relatives (at Dvārakā) hail and hearty, O Balarāma? Now that you are a married person blessed with children, do you (occasionally) remember us?

8. Luckily the wicked Kaṁsa has been slain and it is fortunate that all our friends and well-wishers are liberated (from his atrocious rule). It is really a matter of good luck that after killing and vanquishing your enemies, you have taken your abode in an inaccessible place (Dvārakā)".

9. Gopīs looked upon Balarāma's visit as an honour and paid respect to him (In spite of their pangs of separation from

1. VT. carefully collects evidence of the visits of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa from VP. & HV. and points out that they used to visit at intervals when they happened to come to that side.

Kṛṣṇa) they beamed with a smile and asked, "Is Kṛṣṇa, the darling of ladies in the city (as against us—rustic women), happy?

10. Does he occasionally remember his friends, (like the Gopa-Dāman and others), father (Nanda) and mother (Yaśodā) at Vraja? Will he come at least once to see his mother (Yaśodā)? Does that mighty-armed Lord ever remember our modest service (or constant devotion to him)?

11. It is for his sake, O Balarāma that we abandoned our parents, brothers, husbands, sons, sisters and relatives whom it was hard to forsake.

12. Instantly he cut asunder the bonds of friendship with us who were so beloved to him and he abandoned us forthwith. (The cause of our not preventing him from going was his fascinatingly sweet) words—what woman would hesitate to put forth faith in them?

13. (Some Gopīs asked): How would the wise and shrewd women of the town trust the words of that fickle-minded and ungrateful person? (Others replied:) When he provokes the passion of love in them by his fascinating words, his winning smiles and enticing looks, those women being overpowered with love, put faith in his wonderful speech.

14. (Some said): O Gopīs! What have we to do with the talk about him? Tell some other stories. (Drop all references to Kṛṣṇa). If his time can pass (happily) without us, our time (reciprocally) can do so without him (though in pangs of separation from him)".

15. Recalling in this way the smiles, sweet words, winsome looks, gait, loving embraces of Kṛṣṇa, those Gopa women wept bitterly.

16. The worshipful Lord Balarāma, past-master in the various ways of consoling, comforted them by conveying to them massages of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which were most soothing to their heart.[1]

1. *Sandeśaiḥ sāma-madhuraiḥ premagarbhairagarvitaiḥ /*
Rāmeṇāśvāsitā Gopyaḥ Kṛṣṇasyātimanoharaiḥ //

VP. 5,24.20.

17. The glorious Lord Balarāma spent there (in Gokula) two months (of the spring season)—Caitra and Vaiśākha and entertained the Gopīs at night.

18. Surrounded by a bevy of ladies (Gopīs), Balarāma sported with them in the gardens on the bank of the Yamunā brightly illumined by the rays of the full moon as the gentle breeze charged with the fragrance of night lotuses was blowing.

19. The heavenly beverage called Vāruṇī[1], sent by god Varuṇa began to flow out from the hallow of a tree and filled with its fragrance the whole of the forest.

20. Inhaling the fragrance of that stream of honey (like beverage) wafted by the gentle wind, Balarāma went to that tree and drank it along with the women.

VR's Text adds :

20-A. Glorified in songs and himself bursting out in singing in the circle of beautiful women, he sported himself like Airāvata (Indra's elephant) in company of she-elephants.

20-B. Kettle-drums were sounded in the heavens, the heavenly beings showered flowers on them in delight. Gandharvas and sages glorified Balarāma's exploits in great joy.

21. Balarāma (the plough-armed) whose exploits were glorified in songs by the Gopīs, roved in an inebriated condition in the forest, with his eyes swimming in intoxication.

22-23. Adorned with a wreath of flowers and the special garland of five-coloured flowers called Vaijayantī, wearing one ear-ring only, with a smiling lotus-face beautified with dewy drops of perspiration, in an inebriated condition he commanded the Yamunā to come near him to enable him to indulge in water-sports. Being intoxicated, he thought that the Yamunā insolently disobeyed his order. Balarāma got enraged and forcibly dragged her with the pointed plough-share of his plough.

24. (He threatened her) : "You sinful one ! In total disregard for me you indifferently do not come despite my

1. VB. *Vāruṇī*, born while churning the ocean for nectar, was given to demons. Whatever tree she occupies gives out alcoholic beverage. VT. on the authority of HV. says that Vāruṇī was Varuṇa's daughter and hence not forbidden. Likewise she creates the beverage in the hollow of the Kadamba tree.

summons to you, but go your own way. By the tip of my plough I shall now divert you in a hundred ways".

25. When threatened thus, the river-goddess Yamunā became afraid and fell at his feet. Trembling with fear she spoke to the delight of the Yadus.

26. "O Balarāma, the Delight of the world! O mighty-armed hero! I did not know your prowess. O Lord of the world, (I now know) that it is with your one *aṁśa* (part) only, viz. Śeṣa that you support the universe.

27. O Soul of the universe so kind to his votaries! I have come to seek asylum in you, O glorious Lord. It behoves you to set me free (to flow in my own bed) as I did not know your supreme greatness."

28. Thus entreated, the mighty Balarāma then let go the Yamunā. And just like a king elephant entering water with his mates, he entered the waters (of the Yamunā) with the women (Gopīs).

29. After having sported to his hearts content (in the water), Balarāma emerged from her waters when Kānti[1] (a form of goddess Lakṣmī) presented to him two clothes of non-white (blue) colour, highly precious ornaments and an auspicious (brilliant) garland.

30. Putting on those blue garments, wearing the gold necklace, he shone like Airāvata, Indra's elephant, when painted and tastefully ornamented.

31. Even to this day, the Yamunā is seen to flow through the track (river bed) through which the Yamunā was dragged. It is an index of the great prowess of Balarāma of infinite prowess.

32. Balarāma's mind was fascinated with the sweet qualities of the young women of Vraja, so he felt all nights passed in sports at Vraja as one continuous night.

1. ŚR. quotes VP 5.25.16 and states that Kānti is a synonym of Lakṣmī while VT. regards her as a form of Lakṣmī, the Spouse of the second Vyūha Saṅkarṣaṇa.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Slaying of Pauṇḍraka and others[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. When Balarāma had gone to the Vraja under Nanda's control, the ruler of the country called Karuṣa[2] being full of ignorance, sent to Kṛṣṇa a messenger declaring ' I am (the real) Vāsudeva.'

2. "You are the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the ruler and the protector of the universe who have incarnated (for the protection of the world)". Thus flattered by foolish people, he really came to believe that he was the Imperishable Lord.

3. And the dull-witted fellow (being ignorant of the real greatness of Kṛṣṇa) sent an emissary to Lord Kṛṣṇa of inscrutable ways, at Dvārakā, even as an ignorant boy who is set up as a king by other (equally ignorant) children in children's play would do.

4. The messenger on his part arrived at Dvārakā and conveyed the following message of his king to the Almighty lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa as he was attending the court-assembly.

5. " I am the only one Vāsudeva who have descended (as an incarnation on the earth) for showing compassion to all created beings. There is no other Vāsudeva. Hence you relinquish your false title.

6. O Sātvata ! Whatever emblems of ours (such as Kaustubha Vanamālā, conch, a discus etc.) you bear out of your stupidity, renounce them and come to me for shelter. If not, give a fight with me."

1. The same as Puṇḍra or North Bengal especially district of Malda and the adjoining area-*GDAMI*, pp. 95 & 161.

2. *Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra* notes its fame for excellent elephants. D.C. Sircar however identifies Karuṣa with Shahabad region of South West Bihar (*SGAMI*-332-35). This explains Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva's friendship with the King of Vārāṇasī and his stay at Vāraṇasī whence he advanced against Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Śuka said :

7. Hearing that boasting of that puny-minded king Pauṇḍraka Ugrasena and other members of the assembly laughed loudly.

8. After jocular pleasantries, the glorious Lord replied (through the same) messenger. "O fool, I shall hurl my insignia (such as discus, mace etc.) at you, your emblems and supporters on the strength of which you brag thus (*Or* : I shall relieve you of all your artificial emblems like Sudarśana etc. on the strength of which you are boasting).

9. (As to your demand for my submission to you) It is you who will be the resort (prey) of dogs with that (braggart) mouth of yours shut. You will lie down dead on the battlefield surrounded by kites, vultures and other birds of prey, you fool."

10. The messenger conveyed that defiant censure to his master in full details. Śrī Kṛṣṇa also mounted his chariot, went to Kāśī (where Pauṇḍraka was staying with his friend, the king of Kāśī).

11. Hearing the intelligence of Kṛṣṇa's invasion, even the mighty car-warrior Pauṇḍraka quickly sallied forth from the town (Kāśī) with two *akṣauhiṇis* of army under his command.

12. His friend, the king of Kāśī followed him to guard his rear with his army of three *akṣauhiṇis*, O king. Hari espied Pauṇḍraka :

13-14. Who (Pauṇḍraka) was bearing the (replicas of Kṛṣṇa's arms such as) the (Pāñcajanya) conch, the (Nandaka) sword, the (Kaumodakī) mace, the Śārṅga bow; was distinguished by the Śrīvatsa mark (on the chest), was wearing (an artificial) Kaustubha gem and was decorated with Vanamālā. He was clad in two pieces of yellow silk and had an ensign of Garuḍa (on his chariot); he was adorned with a priceless crown and very costly ornaments and was wearing two radiant ear-rings of alligator-shape.

15. Seeing him seated (in the chariot) with an artificial dress similar to His own like an actor on the stage, Lord Hari burst into a heavy laugh.

VJ.'s Text adds :

15A. The battalion of archers of the king of Kāśī, equipped with strong bows, covered Kṛṣṇa with arrows within a moment, just as rain-clouds cover a mountain with water. Some of them were seated on elephants, some on horses and some mounted in chariots, all of them marched forward to the battle-front.

16. The enemies (mercilessly) attacked Hari with darts, maces, iron bars, javelins, *ṛṣṭis* (double-edged swords) different kinds of spears e.g. *Tomara*, swords and arrows.

VJ.'s Text adds :

16A. Another king, a friend of the ruler of Kāśī came to his help with three *akṣauhiṇis* of army, in that battle.

17. Just as the cosmic fire bursting forth at the end of *yugas* completely consumes all the categories of creatures, Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his mace, sword, discus and arrows, totally annihilated the armies of Pauṇḍraka and Kāśirāja consisting of elephant-divisions, cavalry, chariots and foot-soldiers.

18. That battlefield was scattered over with (parts and limbs of) chariots, horses, elephants, foot-soldiers, donkeys and camels which were cut down and amputated by his discus. Like the terrible dancing arena of Rudra, the battlefield shone, heartening only the brave.

19. Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Śūra, (sarcastically) said to Pauṇḍraka, "O Pauṇḍraka, whatever weapons you asked me to surrender through your messenger, I now discharge at you.

20. I shall make you give up my epithet which you have falsely assumed, you ignorant fellow. And if I were not to desire to fight with you, I would seek you as a Protector today".

21. With this sarcastic reply (with reference to Pauṇḍraka's message with his emissary), he deprived Pauṇḍraka of his chariots with his sharp shafts. And just as Indra lopped of the tops (or wings) of mountain, he sundered off the head of Pauṇḍraka with his discus.

22. Similarly, he chopped off with his arrows the head of Kāśirāja from his body and made it fall down in the city of Kāśī like a lotus bud carried with it by wind.*

23. Having thus killed the jealous Pauṇḍraka along with his friend Kāśīrāja, he entered the city of Dvārakā while his nectarlike sweet exploits were being glorified in songs by Siddhas.

24. Due to the continuous contemplation of Hari, all the (Karma) bondages of Pauṇḍraka were completely annihilated. As he always put on a form similar to that of Hari, he became one with Hari.

25. Seeing the head adorned with ear-rings fallen at the palace-gate, people were puzzled as to what it was and whose head it was.

26. When they came to know that it was the head of their own king, queens, princes, relatives and citizens of Kāśī lamented loudly "Alas. We are undone. O king, O dear Lord, O Lord".

27-28. His crown Prince Sudakṣiṇa performed the funeral rites of his father. He determined, " I shall repay the debt of my father by killing his slayer". Sudakṣiṇa along with his family priest propitiated god Śiva with the deepest meditation.

29. In the holy place of Avimuktaka (or Kāśī), god Śiva who was pleased with him, offered him the boon (of his choice). He sought his desired-most boon, viz. the means to slay his father's slayer.

30-31 (Lord Śiva advised) : 'You should worship the fire known as *Dakṣiṇāgni*[1] (which is also called *ṛtvij*)[2] with the help of Brāhmaṇas according to the procedure prescribed for mastering black magic. That fire surrounded by Pramathas (goblins) will accomplish your purpose like a family priest (*ṛtvij*) appointed for a purpose, provided it is used against a person who is hostile to Brāhmaṇas and is hated by them. (This implies a warning not to use it against a friend of Brāhmaṇas like Kṛṣṇa). Observing strictly the prescribed vows, Sudakṣiṇa obeyed the directions of Śiva (for invoking the malevolent aspect of Dakṣiṇāgni) and directed it against Kṛṣṇa.

1. Out of the three fires maintained in the family, *Dakṣiṇāgni* is to be propitiated for the worship of manes and mastery over black magic (*abhicāra*).

2. *ṛtvij* is an epithet of Agni. vide RV 1.1.1 This is one interpretation.

32. As soon as the *abhicāra-prayoga* (sacrifice for mastery over black magic) was completed, there arose from the sacrificial pit, god Agni in person, but in his very terrific form. The locks of his hair, beard and moustaches were of red-hot copper. He was emitting flames of fire from his eyes.

33. He had a very grim appearance with large protruding tusks and staff-like long eyebrows. He was licking the ends of his mouth. He was naked and was brandishing a trident that threw out flames of fire.

34. Surrounded by goblins and setting ablaze all the cardinal points, he rushed against Dvārakā shaking the earth under his strides, with his legs tall as a palm tree.

35. Seeing that *Abhicāra* (malevolent) fire rushing towards them, all the citizens of Dvārakā were terribly afraid like wild beasts at the approach of the forest conflagration.

36. While the glorious Lord was playing dice in the assembly-hall, they ran to him overwhelmed with fear and prayed, "Protect us, O Lord of the three worlds, protect us from the fire that is burning the city".

37. Listening to the (report of that) public calamity and seeing the cause of their panic, the Lord, who is the shelter of his devotees, laughed loudly and assured them : Don't be afraid. I shall be your saviour".

38. The Almighty Lord who is a witness to whatever happens within and without all created beings, came to know it to be the *Kṛtyā* (female form of the malevolent force) of god Śiva and commanded his discus Sudarśana that was by his side, to destroy her.

39. The Sudarśana discus, the missile discharged by Lord Kṛṣṇa was dazzling like millions of Suns (combined). It was flaming forth like the cosmic fire destroying the universe (at the end of *yugas*). It was radiating its brilliant lustre in all directions, the heaven and the earth. It forthwith extinguished that *Abhicāra* fire.

40. Counteracted by the force of the missile (Sudarśana) of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the *Abhicāra* fire called *Kṛtyā* had all its force curbed down and blunted. As if slapped in the face, it turned back, approached Vārāṇasī and burnt down Sudakṣiṇa and his family-priests who directed the *Kṛtyā*.

41-42. Close on its heels, the discus of Viṣṇu entered the city of Vārāṇasī and reduced it to ashes along with its high towers, assembly halls, mansions, market places, towers, enclosures, treasuries, arches, stalls for elephants, horses, chariots, dining halls and kitchens and returned to Dvārakā again and stood by the side of Kṛṣṇa who does everything sportively.

43. The mortal being who listens to this attentively or relates this exploit of the most glorious Lord to others becomes completely absolved of all sins.

VJ.'s Text adds :

43A. Both of them (the narrator and listener of exploits) rid themselves of all sins including heinous ones like Brahmahatyā and when they cast off their body, they proceed to the heaven of Lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

Balarāma slays Dvivida

King Parikṣit said :

1. I long to hear again of the wonderful deeds of Balarâma, the possessor of infinite, immeasurable power and miraculous feats. Please narrate what other wondrous deeds he performed.

Śrī Śuka said :

2. There was a monkey called Dvivida, a friend of Narakāsura. He was a counsellor of Sugrīva and a brave and powerful brother of Mainda.

3. In order to avenge the death of his friend Naraka, he caused a great havoc in the country by setting on fire cities, villages, mines and cowherds' camps.

4. Sometimes he uprooted the hills and completely reduced to powder the whole of the Ānarta[1] country where Hari, the slayer of his friend, was living.

1. Western Gujarat with Dvārakā as its capital.

5. He was possessed of the strength of ten thousand elephants. Some times he used to stand in the midst of the sea and create a high tide by dashing up volume of seawater with his arms and drown the coastal area under water.

6. The wicked fellow broke down big trees in the hermitages of the great sages and desecrated the sacrificial fires with urine and excreta.

7. Like a wasp imprisoning a worm the naughty monkey shut up men and women in the valleys and caves of mountains and blocked their entrance with big stones.

8. In this way he wrought havock in the country and ravished women of noble birth. Once, hearing sweet enchanting music, he went to the Raivataka hill.

9. There he espied Balarāma, the Lord of Yadus, wearing a lotus-garland, charming in every limb, standing in the midst of a bevy of beautiful damsels.

10. While singing he was drunk with Vāruṇī and his eyes were swimming with intoxication. He had a brilliant personality and looked like an elephant exuding ichor.

11. The wicked monkey climbed the boughs of the trees and shaking the trees heavily made a chattering sound to attract their notice to his presence.

12. Beholding the insolence of the monkey those young damsels, the spouses of Balarāma, being fickle by nature and fond of fun, burst out into a heavy laughter.

13. In the teeth of Balarāma's presence, the monkey began to insult the damsels by twisting his eyebrows, making wry faces at them and showing them his hind part. Balarāma, the foremost among warriors, got enraged and hurled a big stone at the monkey.

14. But that wily monkey evaded the stone and (swooping down from the trees) took away the pitcher of wine (from Balarāma) and ridiculed Balarāma by laughing loudly and provoking Balarāma's wrath.

15. The wicked monkey dashed down the pitcher of wine, tore the clothes of women. Being puffed up with pride, he treated Balarāma with utmost contempt and caused him excessive annoyance.

16. Seeing his mischievous and arrogant behaviour and considering the havoc caused by him in the country, Balarāma flew in rage and took up his pestle and plough in hand, in order to kill the enemy.

17. Dvivida too was endowed with great strength. He uprooted a Śāla tree with his hand and rushing with great vehemence at Balarāma, struck his head with the tree.

18. The mighty Balarāma stood firm like a mountain. He caught hold of the tree (as its blow was) falling on his head and hit Dvivida with the pestle called Sunanda.

19. With his head crushed with the pestle, it became covered with a stream of blood. Dvivida shone with the torrent of blood like a mountain covered with a flow of liquid red chalk. In spite of that, he did not mind Balarāma's stroke.

20. He again pulled out another palm tree and removing all its leaves by dint of his physical power, he hit Balarāma in rage. But Balarāma splintered it into hundred pieces.

21-22. The monkey again struck him down with another palm tree which Balarāma cut into hundreds of pieces. Fighting in this way with the glorious Lord, he pulled out a palm tree to strike which was broken to hundreds of pieces. Uprooting trees on all sides, he denuded the forest into a treeless tract.

23. Being enraged, he discharged a shower of rocks on Balarāma all of which the wielder of pestle as his weapon, reduced to powder.

24. The leader of monkeys clenched his palm-like long arms into fists and approaching the son of Rohiṇī (Balarāma), he hit his chest with both the fists.

25. The ruler of Yādavas also threw down his pestle and plough and angrily hit with both of his hands on his (Dvivida's) collar-bones. And he fell down vomitting blood.

26. O king Parīkṣit (a tiger among the Kurus) ! As Dvivida fell down, the whole of the mountain along with its peaks and trees began to shake like a boat tossed with a tempest in the sea water.

27. There arose in the skies shouts of victory, salutation and approbation : 'Well-done', 'Well-done', from gods, *Siddhas*, prominent sages who were sending forth showers of flowers.

28. Killing in this way Dvivida, the scourage of the land (rendering it desolate), the glorious Lord Balarāma entered his city while he was being glorified in songs by the citizens.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

Hastināpura dragged by Balarāma

Śri Śuka said :

1. O King Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī, who was always victorious in battles, carried away Duryodhana's daughter Lakṣmaṇā, at the time of her *svayaṁvara*.

2. Kauravas were extremely enraged at this, "This is a naughty boy. Setting us at nought, he per force carried away our daughter who did not want him (as a suitor).

3. Arrest and keep in confinement this unruly, wicked fellow. What can the Vṛṣṇis do? They are enjoying that territory conferred upon them by us and that too through our grace (we are the real masters of that land).

4. If, after hearing of the captivity of their son, they come here, the Vṛṣṇis will sue for peace with their pride humbled down like senses brought under control by breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*)."[1]

5. With this resolve, Karṇa, Śala, Bhūri, Yajñaketu and Duryodhana

5A. *VJ.'s Text* :

Along with Duḥśāsana, Śakuni who always gave wrong and wicked advice—all these disregarded Vidura and glorious Gāndhārī. . .
and with the approval of the Kaurava elders (like Bhīṣma) attempted to bind Sāmba.

6. Noticing that he was being pursued by Kauravas, the great chariot-warrior Sāmba, took up his beautiful bow and stood defiantly like a single lion turned at bay.

1. v.1. like serpents whose fangs are removed.—VJ.

7. Enraged and eager to take him captive, they shouted, 'Stop', 'Stop'. And under the leadership of Karṇa, those archers covered him with a volley of arrows.

8. Though surrounded by Kauravas, that scion of the Yadu race, the son of the incomprehensible Lord Kṛṣṇa, did not tolerate them like a lion attacked by insignificant beasts.[1]

9-10. Twanging his beautiful bow, he pierced simultaneously each of the six chariot-warriors like Karṇa and others, with equal number of shafts. He struck the four horses; with four arrows, the charioteers and the great archers in the chariots with one. All of them applauded his exploit.

11. Attacking him simultaneously, they deprived him of his chariot, each Kaurava warrior killing one of his four horses one his charioteer and the remaining warrior snapped his bow.

12. With great difficulty the Kauravas dislodged him from the chariot and took him captive. Victorious they entered their capital, with the boy as well as the maiden.

13. Hearing the news from Nārada's report, Yādavas got enraged, O King. And under the direction of Ugrasena, they made preparations of an expedition against the Kauravas.

14. But Balarāma pacified the Vṛṣṇi warriors who made full preparations of war. He was disposed to wash away the dirt (bitterness) of quarrels. He did not wish that there should be a feud between Kauravas and Vṛṣṇis.

15. In a chariot resplendent like the sun, he went to Hastināpura. He was accompanied with Brāhmaṇas and elderly persons of the family like the moon surrounded by planets.

16. Arriving at Hastināpura, he camped in a park outside the town. He deputed Uddhava to Dhṛtarāṣṭra to ascertain what they intended to do in the matter.

17. Uddhava formally paid respects to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Ambikā, Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Bāhlīka and Duryodhana and intimated to them the arrival of Balarāma.

1. v.l. He did not put up with the insult like a serpent beaten by a stick.

18. They were highly pleased to hear that Balarāma, their best friend had arrived. They warmly received Uddhava and taking into their hands auspicious presents, they went to Balarāma.

19. Approaching him they received him with due formalities and honours offering him *arghya* and a cow. Those of them who knew of his prowess bowed down Balarāma with their heads.

20. Hearing that their respective relatives were hale and hearty and enquiring after their welfare and health and such friendly talk, Balarāma declared fearlessly.

21. 'Listen attentively to what His majesty Ugrasena, King of kings, commanded you : Carry out his orders without delay.

22. (We hear) that a great many of you unjustly (according to the rules of warfare) combined and vanquished Sāmba who was fighting singlehandedly (as per canons of *dharma-yuddha*) and have taken him captive. With the desire of maintaining amity among relatives, I do tolerate this. (But now immediately bring him to us along with the bride)."

23. O Parīkṣit, Kouravas became deeply indignant to hear the speech of Balarāma who was endowed with immense power, prowess, energy and whose words expressed his inner strength. They said :

24. "O ! How wonderful it is ! Due to the inexorable force of time, a shoe covets to ride over the head that is served by a crown.

25. These Vṛṣṇis are related to us by conjugal ties (through Kuntī's marriage in our family). Condescended to share with us the bed, seat and food, the Vṛṣnis are raised to royal status like us and are favoured with a royal throne.

26. It is due to our indulgence that they enjoy the royal insignia like *chowries*, fans, a conch, a white umbrella, a crown, a throne and a bed.

27. Now enough of those royal insignia to Yadus who go against their very donors like serpents made to drink nectar (Let us deprive the Yadus of those emblems) who prospered due to our grace are now giving orders to us shamelessly.

28. How could even Indra dare to take what is not given to him by Kauravas like Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Arjuna and others ? Can a ram dare to touch what is in the grasp of a lion (unless he gives it up out of grace) ?"

Śri Śuka said :

29. Being elated with inordinate pride of their noble birth, their high relations, prosperity, those wicked unmannerly Kauravas addressed unspeakable words within the hearing of Balarāma and returned to their city.

30. Observing the wicked behaviour of Kauravas and hearing their unspeakable reproaches, Balarāma became indignant with wrath and was terrific to look at. Laughing loudly, he repeated to himself :

31. "Verily these wicked persons grown madly arrogant with pride of various kinds, do not desire to have peacefulness. Just as (beating with) a stick is the sure remedy to tame a beast, sound thrashing is the only means to bring these round.

32. It is after slowly appeasing the excited Yadus and indignant Kṛṣṇa that I came here with the intent of bringing about a peace with the Kurus.

33. These dull-witted wicked fellows are naturally inclined to quarrelling. These arrogant fellows have not only treated me scornfully but have used extremely reproachful words to me.

34-35. To them King Ugrasena, the ruler of Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi and Andhaka clans is not a sovereign ruler. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of goddess Lakṣmī whose orders are obeyed by Indra and other Lords of Spheres, He by whom the celestial assembly Sudharmā is occupied and the heavenly tree Pārijāta is brought (on the earth) and is enjoyed (according to these fellows) does not deserve a high royal seat.

36. Lord Kṛṣṇa whose pair of feet are directly worshipped by goddess Śrī in person, the Controller of all beings does not deserve the royal insignia (according to them).

37. The royal throne is extremely insignificant to him the dust on whose lotus feet is borne on the crowns of their heads by all the Lords of the various worlds (in the universe) and which sanctify sacred waters (like those of the Gaṅgā)

resorted to by holy men; and we—that is god Brahmā, Śiva, I (Saṅkarṣaṇa), and even goddess Śrī are but a part of His ray and always bear those particles of dust (on our heads).

38. We, Vṛṣṇis, enjoy the piece of land granted to us by Kurus ! And we are nothing better than shoes and the Kauravas themselves the head !

39. What person capable of meting out punishment to others can tolerate the harsh and irrelevant words of those who are drunk with power and wealth and have become intoxicated and insolent ?

40. Today I shall rid the earth of all the Kurus". With this determination, enraged as he was, Balarāma lifted up his plough as if to burn down the three worlds.

41. With the tip of the plough-share, he lifted up the whole city of Hastināpura and angrily began to drag it intending to throw it into the river Gaṅgā.

42. The city that was being dragged and falling into the Gaṅgā, began to rock like a boat. Finding the city so dragged, Kauravas were utterly confounded with consternation.

43. Anxious to save their lives along with those of their families, they placed forward Sāmba and (his spouse) Lakṣmaṇā and with folded palms sought shelter of that very Lord (Balarāma whom they had insulted).

44. 'O Balarāma, O Rāma. You are the support of all. We did not know your prowess. It behoves you to pardon the transgression committed by us who have been foolish and wicked-minded.

45. (You being the substratum of all) you yourself are perfectly independent but you are the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. It is true when they say that the three worlds are your toys and you are the player.

46. (Referring to the original state of Balarāma as the Serpent Śeṣa, the support of the worlds:) It is you ! O Ananta (Serpent Śeṣa) of thousand heads, who easily hold up this globe of the earth on your head. At the end of the universe, you withdraw the universe within yourself and contain it. And repose on the cosmic waters as the only remaining unabsorbed existence without a second.

47. O glorious Lord ! You assume the *Sattva guṇa* with the intention of maintaining and protecting the world. Hence your anger is only for teaching a lesson to all and not out of hatred or jealousy.

48. We bow to you who are the Inner Controller of all creatures, O omnipotent and immutable Maker of all ! We have sought asylum in you. We offer our salutations to you.

Śri Śuka said :

49. Balarāma was thus propitiated to be gracious (unto them) by Kauravas who sought his refuge, for they were terrified as their capital city was rocking. Being highly pleased with them, he assured them protection with the words, 'Do not fear'.

50-51. Duryodhana was very affectionate to his daughter. As presents, he (Duryodhana) gave twelve hundred elephants, each sixty years old (in its prime of youth) and ten thousand horses, six thousand goldplated chariots shining like the sun and one thousand maid-servants each adorned with gold necklaces.

52. Glorious Balarāma, the prominent Sātvata, accepted it all and complimented by his friends and well-wishers, he set out with his son (Sāmba) and the daughter-in-law.

53. Returning to his capital Dvārakā, Balarāma met all his affectionate relatives and in the assembly of prominent Yādavas narrated what he did in the Kaurava country.

54. Even to this day the city shows the evidence of the exploit of Balarāma as it is elevated to the South and slopes down towards the Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Household Life[1]

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having heard that Narakāsura was killed and that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a single individual as he was, married those numerous women, Nārada became eager to see how Kṛṣṇa managed to live with them all.

2. It is really miraculous that one person (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) possessing a single personality, could severally and simultaneously marry sixteen thousand women, each in a separate house.

3. Being curious to know this, the divine sage Nārada came to see this to Dvārakā which appeared beautiful with its parks and gardens in full blossom and was resonant with the notes of singing birds and humming of the swarms of bees.

4. It was resounded with the sweet warblings and melodious notes of swans and other waterbirds which swarmed the surrounding ponds and pools covered with full blown lotuses, lilies, *Kalhāras* and lotuses that bloom by day and by night.

5. (Nārada came to Dvārakā) which was thickly studded with nine hundred thousands of palatial buildings constructed with crystals and silver and was shining with excellent emeralds thickly set therein and furnished with articles (of furniture) plated with gold and adorned with jewels.

1. VJ.'s text introduces this chapter with three additional verses. It is after the 3rd verse of VJ. that the texts of ŚR and VJ. agree as from verse 1 above.

Śrī Śuka said :

1.1 Having vanquished all his enemies, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stayed there a number of days enjoying himself with those excellent women in this way.

King Parīkṣit asked :

1.2. How could one person—Janārdana—who has assumed a human form, give satisfaction to those sixteen thousand queens?

Śrī Śuka said :

1.3 Well. I shall narrate to you what may make the listeners wonder, as to how that one person Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave satisfaction to all the numerous queens.

6. The city looked beautiful with its streets, roads, quadrangles and market places in the city distinctly laid out ; with stalls, assembly-halls and shrines dedicated to gods. The roads, court-yards, foot-paths and threshholds of the city were profusely sprinkled with water. The heat of the sun in that city was warded off by everflying flags and pennants.

7. In that city, there was (a complex of palatial buildings known as) the harem of Lord Kṛṣṇa which was highly praised by all the presiding deities protecting different spheres (in the universe). In constructing that (palatial building complex), Tvaṣṭṛ, the celestial architect had exhibited all his architectural skill and ingenuity.

8. That part of the city was adorned with sixteen thousand palatial buildings of Kṛṣṇa's queens. Nārada entered into one of the big palaces out of them.

9. It was supported on columns of coral and the ceiling was of *Vaidūrya* (a precious stone). Its walls were of sapphire and its floor of unfading lustre was paved with the same precious stones.

10. It was also furnished with canopies specially designed by Tvaṣṭṛ from which wreaths of pearls were hanging and it (was provided) with seats and beds made of ivory and set with excellent jewels.

11. It was staffed with maid-servants adorned with necklaces of gold-coins and wearing costly apparel and with men-servants wearing coats, turbans, excellent dress and diamond-ear-rings.

12. O child Parīkṣit. Darkness in that place was dispelled by the lustre of clusters of jewels radiating light like lamps. In them, peacocks perching in picturesque (artificial) caves screamed loudly and danced gaily regarding (foolishly) the clouds of fumes of aloewood issuing out of the windows, to be the real clouds.

13. The Brāhmaṇa sage Nārada saw there Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Sātvatas who was being fanned with a *chowrie* provided with a gold handle by his consort who in her turn was waited upon constantly by a thousand maid-servants who were all equal (to each other) in nature, beauty, age and excellent dress.

14. On seeing him, the glorious Lord, the foremost among those who observe the injunctions of Dharma, promptly got up from the bed of Rukmiṇī (the goddess Śrī), paid respects to his feet with his head adorned with a diadem. With folded palms, He made Nārada occupy his own (exalted) seat.

15. Though he himself was the Creator and Preceptor of the universe and the chief among the righteous, he washed Nārada's feet and bore that water on his own head. The epithet *Brahmaṇya-deva* (God who is friendly to Brāhmaṇas) is most appropriately applicable to him both in its implication and as a title. For the waters that wash his feet (viz. the river Gaṅgā) sanctifies the rest of the world.

16. Having worshipped the prominent divine sage (Nārada), the Ancient sage Nārāyaṇa, the friend and companion of the sage Nara, addressed him in measured words sweet like nectar and requested "O Lord Nārada! what service should we render to you?"

Nārada said:

17. "O almighty Lord! It is not at all wonderful in you who are the Protector of all the worlds that you entertain friendliness to all people as well as chastise the wicked (there is no contradiction in both these roles). You incarnate yourself at your own sweet will for conferring final Beatitude as well as for the maintenance and protection of the world. We realize this quite well, O Lord who are extolled as the highest one in the Vedas.

18. I have the good fortune of being blessed with the sight of the pair of your feet which in themselves are the blessed state of final Emancipation and which deserve to be meditated upon in their hearts by gods of unfathomable spiritual wisdom like Brahmā and others and which form the support to those who have fallen in the (dark) well of *saṁsāra* as a means to get out of it. (Hence I have accomplished my purpose). You, however, be pleased to favour me with unfailing, constant memory of your feet contemplating on which I shall move about in the world."

19. Thereupon, in order to fathom and know the Yogic power of the Lord of the masters of Yoga, that sage Nārada entered the mansion of another queen of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

20. Even there he found Kṛṣṇa playing dice with his beloved consort Satyabhāmā and Uddhava. He was worshipped with utmost devotion by Kṛṣṇa by rising up to receive him, offering a comfortable seat and such other formalities.

21. Nārada was enquired of by Kṛṣṇa showing as if he was not cognisant of Nārada's arrival. He asked, "When did you come, O worshipful sage? We are after all imperfect beings. What service may we render to perfect (or persons established in the Self) sages like you?

22. O Brāhmaṇa sage! Be pleased to order us and make this life of ours blessed (by giving us an opportunity to serve you)". Nārada was extremely surprised. He rose up without a word and went to another house (of another queen of Kṛṣṇa).

23. Even there, he saw Lord Kṛṣṇa playing and fondling with his infant sons. Then in another house (of another queen), he saw him preparing for his bath.

24. At some houses, Nārada saw him offering oblations to sacrificial fire, at other places, he was seen worshipping God by performing five kinds of daily sacrifices (called *mahāyajñas*); at some houses, he saw him feeding the Brāhmaṇas with a feast and at another place, he found him taking food after offering oblations to the sacred fire.

25. At some houses, he was performing *sandhyā* (twilight prayer); at other places, he was contemplating the Gāyatrī observing complete silence. At some places, he was practising various skills in fencing with a sword and a shield.

26. At some other houses, he found Kṛṣṇa the elder brother of Gada riding horses, elephants or chariots. At some other mansions, he found him lying in bed while being extolled by bards (*bandins*).

27. In a certain house, he was holding consultations with his counsellors like Uddhava and others; while at other places, surrounded by a bevy of courtesans, he was indulging in water-sports.

28. At some houses, he found him giving highly adorned cows to prominent Brāhmaṇas, while at others he saw him listening to the auspicious stories from *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇas*.

29. In a certain house, he was laughing by telling a joke to his beloved; in other places, he was carefully attending to Dharma, while at other places he was looking after matters pertaining to finance and at other places he was indulging in personal enjoyment.

30. At some houses he saw him sitting alone in meditation contemplating on the Supreme Lord transcendental to *Prakṛti*; at other places, he found him waiting upon the elders and the preceptors by offering them objects of enjoyment and articles of worship.

31. At some places, he was planning war against some kings, while at other places, he was negotiating peace; at some places he was conferring with Balarāma about the well-being of the saintly people.

32. At some place, he saw him celebrating the marriages of his sons and daughters at the proper age with brides and bridegrooms suitable to their status and royal fortune.

33. People were wonderstruck to see the enthusiasm of that Lord of Yoga in conducting festivities at the time of giving send off to children or welcoming those who returned (for example daughters going to their husbands' houses or returning therefrom after a long stay).

34. Sometimes he saw Kṛṣṇa worshipping all gods with elaborate sacrifices. Sometimes he was seen engaged in performing the *pūrta* duties of religion by digging wells, founding groves, constructing temples, etc., for public weal.

35. At some places, he saw Kṛṣṇa riding a pedigree horse from the Sindhu country and chasing a game. Sometimes followed by Yādava warriors, he hunted animals useful for sacrifice.

36. Somewhere he found him moving about *incognito* among his subjects, their houses, harems etc. with a view to understand the real feelings and plans of the people.

37. In this way, after observing this exhibition of Kṛṣṇa's vast Yogic powers, though he was following the human way of life, Nārada addressed him with a smile.

38. "O Lord of Yoga! Your Māyā is incomprehensible--nay not even easily cognisable—to the masters of Māyās.

But through the service of Your feet, our hearts are filled with the spiritual light. And we can comprehend your Yoga Māyā.

39. O Lord Kṛṣṇa ! Be pleased to give me leave. I shall range all over the worlds overflowing with your glory, celebrating in songs your sportive acts which sanctify the world."

The Lord replied :

40. "Oh Brāhmaṇa sage. I am the promulgator of Dharma. It is I who practice it and grant my approbation to it. I have descended on this world for teaching it by my example. You need not get troubled, O child."

Śri Śuka said :

41. It is reported that Nārada saw one and the same Kṛṣṇa (present in all the houses of Kṛṣṇa's queens) performing the righteous duties of householders which purify them.

42. Having observed time and anon the vast display of the Yogic powers of Kṛṣṇa of infinite prowess, the sage who became formerly curious about it, was overwhelmed with great astonishment.

43. Nārada who was duly worshipped by Śrī Kṛṣṇa who showed His faith in *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*, the three objects of human life, was greatly pleased with him. And constantly contemplating upon him only, he went his way.

44. O King ! Following in this way the course of conduct as a human being, Lord Kṛṣṇa assumed different forms for the prosperity of the whole of the world; worshipped by the sixteen thousand beautiful damsels with their bashful, affectionate looks and smile, he spent his life delightfully (at Dvārakā).

45. He who celebrates in songs, listens to or expresses approbation for the exploits of Hari which it is impossible for others to perform but which Hari, who is the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, has done, will get engendered in him the devotion to the Lord Almighty which will lead to the Final Beatitude.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Kṛṣṇa's Daily Observances : Deputation from Captive Kings of Jarāsandha

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Now, at the approach of the dawning day, the queens of Mādhava, each of whom was sleeping with the arms of their Lord round their necks, cursed the cocks crowing at dawn, as they were nervously anxious about their (prospective) separation from him.

2. Aroused from sleep by the breezes wafting through Mandāra groves while the black bees were humming sweetly, birds began to sing and warble like bards to wake up Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

3. Closely hugged within the arms of her lover, even Rukmiṇī would not tolerate that extremely auspicious period (called *Brāhma muhūrta*) for fear of separation from his embrace.

4. Getting up in the *Brāhma* period (two hours before the sun-rise), Śrī Kṛṣṇa would wash his hands and feet and rinse his mouth. Sipping three spoonfuls of water as *ācamana*, he with a serene mind, used to meditate on the Self (*ātman*) who is beyond the range of darkness (i.e. *Prakṛti*).

5. He used to contemplate upon *Ātman* also designated as *Brahman*, Who is one without any limiting condition (*upādhi*), self-luminous, immutable; Who has been eternally free from the taint of *Avidyā* (Nescience) by virtue of His being established in His own self ; Whose existence and blissfulness of nature are revealed by His own potencies that bring about the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe.

6. After meditation, he took bath in clean water after Śāstric injunctions. Putting on two garments, he performed the Twilight-prayer (*Sandhyā*), and other (prescribed observances. The prominent one among the righteous persons then offered oblations to sacrificial fire and silently repeated the *Gāyatrī mantra*.

7. He used to offer prayers to the rising sun and pour out water libations to gods, sages, his ancestors (*pitṛs*)—all of

whom were his own rays—and with a controlled mind, he used to worship the elderly persons and Brāhmaṇas.

8-9. To Brāhmaṇas who were adorned with ornaments, along with silken cloth, deer-hide (*Kṛṣṇājina*) and sesamum seeds, he used to give every day thirteen thousand and eighty-four cows, all of them docile, with horns capped with gold tops and hoofs plated in silver and necks adorned with pearl-necklaces, yielding abundant milk, with only one freshly yeaned calf, accompanied by their calves, beautifully caparisoned.

10. He used to pay respects to cows, Brāhmaṇas, elderly persons, preceptors and all beings who were his own manifestations, and he used to touch auspicious things (like a towny coloured cow, etc.).

11. He himself was one of the ornaments of the world. He used to adorn himself with his special garments (e.g. yellow silken loin cloth or *pītāmbara*) and adornments (e.g. the *Kaustubha* gem) and his special excellent garlands (e.g. the *Vanamālā*) and pigments.

12. Seeing the reflection of his face in liquid ghee and a mirror and cast his (first) glances at cows, bulls, Brāhmaṇas and gods, he used to take delight in granting the boons and desired objects to people belonging to all classes inhabiting in his city or dwelling in his harem (alike), and satisfying their requirements by supplying the needs of his counsellors and courtiers.

13. He would first distribute garlands, betel-leaves and sandal-pastes to Brāhmaṇas; then he would honour his friends, ministers and queens with them, and lastly he would accept them for himself.

14. By that time, the charioteer used to bring his most wonderful chariot drawn by Sugrīva and other horses and bowing down to him, he used to stand before him.

15. Thereupon, holding the charioteer's hand by his own, he used to mount his chariot along with Sātyaki and Uddhava, like unto the sun ascending the eastern mountain.

16. Gazed at by the ladies in the harem with their bash-

ful and affectionate looks and permitted unwillingly by them, he would proceed captivating their hearts with his bewitching smiles.

17. O king Parīkṣit then surrounded by all Vṛṣṇis, he would enter the assembly-hall called Sudharmā the occupants—members—of which are not subject to six 'waves' i.e. changes in human life (viz. hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, old age and death).

18. Seated there on an excellent, exalted throne, the Almighty Lord shone illuminating all the cardinal points by his personal lustre. Surrounded by lion-like prominent Yadus, Kṛṣṇa, the best of Yadus, appeared like the moon in the midst of the hosts of constellations and stars.

19. O King ! There, the court-jesters waited upon the Lord by providing amusements of various kinds. So did the masters indancing with their manly dances as well as dancing girls with their special performances severally.

20. Bards — *sūtas*, *Māgadhas* and *Bandins* danced, sang and extolled him in accompaniment to tabors, lutes, tambourines, flutes, cymbals and conchs.

21. There were seated some Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the exposition of the Vedas. They elucidated Vedic verses as well as told the stories of ancient kings of sanctifying glory.

22. There arrived a stranger not ever seen before. With the permission of the Lord, he was ushered in his presence by the guards at the door.

23. Having bowed to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, he, with his palms folded, submitted to him the miserable plight of kings who were kept in captivity by Jarāsandha.

24. Those twenty thousand kings who did not submissively acknowledged Jarāsandha's sovereignty during his conquest of all the quarters (of the world), had been taken captive per force and are incarcerated at Girivraja (mod. Rajgir in Bihar).

(The message of the detained kings :)

25. "O Kṛṣṇa who attract the minds of devotees and of incomprehensible nature. You are the destroyer of the fear of those who seek resort in you. We are of poor intellect and are mortally afraid of *Saṁsāra*. We seek asylum in you.

26. We bow to that ever-vigilant Time-Spirit viz. you who are all powerful and who suddenly cut short the desire for long life of this world while it is deeply involved in doing prohibited acts and is careless and negligent in performing auspicious actions such as your worship and devotion as enjoined by you.

27. O Lord, You are the controller of the Universe. You have incarnated in this world by a ray of yours (i.e. Balarāma) for the protection of the righteous and chastisement and destruction of the wicked. We do not understand how somebody else (like Jarāsandha) transgresses your orders (with impunity) and why persons (though protected by you) still take to the path of their *Karmas* (and experience misery).

28. The happiness of Kingship contingent as it is on so many conditions, is an empty dream. We carry on the burden of *saṁsāra* (and the anxiety and responsibility of wife, children, etc.). with our body which is as good as dead and stands constantly in fear of death. We are extremely miserable inas much as we abandon the spiritual bliss which is obtainable from you by those who renounce all desires and undergo miseries due to (the inexorable force of) your Māyā.

29. The pair of feet of your Lordship destroy the miseries of those who surrender to them humbly. We are at present imprisoned. Be pleased to set us free from the bondage of *Karma* now called Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas. Possessed as he is of the strength of ten thousand elephants, he singlehandedly took us, kings, captive and imprisoned us in his palace as a king of beasts (a lion) would do to sheep.

30. O Lord with uplifted discus (*Sudarśana*), Jarāsandha who was defeated by you eighteen times in the battle, has grown insolent by somehow defeating you in one of them. Though you possess infinite prowess you behave like a human being. But Jarāsandha is grinding us, knowing us to be your subjects. O unconquerable Lord, May you be pleased to do whatever you think proper to do (under these circumstances).

31. (The messenger concludes:) Thus the kings who are imprisoned by Jarāsandha are desirous of seeing your Lordship.

They have submitted themselves to the soles of Your feet. Be pleased to bestow happiness on those hapless kings.

Śri Śuka said :

32. While the messenger of the kings was thus delivering the message of the kings, there manifested like the sun, the divine sage Nārada of supreme lustre, wearing gold-coloured matted locks of hair.

VR.'s Text :

32A. Nārada entered singing of the exploits and incarnations of his beloved Kṛṣṇa making Kṛṣṇa, his followers and the world as if melt (with the sweet music) and filling them with great delight.

VJ.'s Text :

32B. (Nārada came in) singing in sweet voice and expressions the delightful acts and incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa liquidating heaps of sins and filling the world with extreme joy.

33. Seeing him, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Ruler of the rulers of the worlds, rose from his seat and bowed him with his head with great delight, along with the members of the assembly and his followers.

34. Having worshipped him with due formalities and seating him comfortably, he addressed him in sweet words, pleasing the sage with his devotion and sincerity.

35. He enquired, "Are all the three worlds now free from fear from all quarters? It is certainly a great advantage to us that your worship ranges over all the worlds (as we are thereby in a position to know what goes on in the world).

36. To be sure, nothing is unknown to you in all the creation of the Lord. We, therefore, enquire of you what Pāṇḍavas now intend to do.

Nārada replied :

37. O All-pervading almighty Lord, I have witnessed to a great extent a variety of your deluding potencies (*māyās*)[1]

1. VT : *Māyās* i.e. the creations or products of these *māyās* viz. a number of Brahmāṇḍas with all various gods such as Brahmās, Viṣṇus who possess their own *māyās* which are nothing but the powers imparted to them by you.— I have witnessed these etc.

which are inscrutable and insuperable, and which delude even god Brahmā, the great conjuror, the creator of the universe. O Perfect one ! By your powers you abide in all created beings and yet you remain with your splendour undisclosed like fire remaining latent in the logs of wood. (Although you are omniscient, you assume ignorance like a human being). Hence your query causes me no surprise.

38. Who is capable of knowing comprehensively what you intend to do, for you create as well as destroy this universe by your Māyā Potency. The universe appears to exist due to your Māyā (though it is unreal). I bow to you who are in essence distinct from everything else and are thus of incomprehensible nature.

39. O Lord ! I seek asylum in you who have enkindled the brilliant lamp (beacon-light) of your glory by sportively assuming various incarnations. This light is for those *jivas* who wander in the cycle of *saṁsāra* and do not know the way to Final Emancipation from the bondage of the body which is the source of all evil.

40. Though yourself the Supreme *Brahman*, you imitate the ways of human beings in the world. I, however, report to you what king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of your paternal aunt and your devotee plans to do.

41. King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu, aspires to be a sovereign ruler of the world. He, therefore, wishes to worship you with Rājasūya, the greatest of all sacrifices. You may therefore, be pleased to grant your approval (to their plan).

42. Gods, sages and illustrious kings will certainly attend that grand sacrifice with eagerness to see you.

43. O Lord ! Even (*cāṇḍālas* and other) outcastes become purified by listening to your stories, muttering your name or glorifying you and by contemplating on you who are Brahman *incarnate*. What need be said of those who perceive you directly and come in personal contact with you ?

44. Your glory which is absolutely pure has enveloped like a canopy all the quarters and has spread out all over the heavenly regions, the earth and the subterranean regions and it renders the world absolutely pure. O Lord ! Your very presence is auspicious to the world. The waters that wash your feet

are known as the *Mandākini* in the heavens, the *Bhogavati* in lower regions and as the *Gaṅgā* in this world and they hallow the universe.

Śri Śuka said :

45. When Yādavas, the clansmen of Kṛṣṇa, being fired with the ambition of vanquishing Jarāsandha were not in a mood to approve of Nārada's words (but insisted on an expedition against Jarāsandha) instead of going to Rājasūya. Kṛṣṇa smilingly spoke in soft words to Uddhava, his devoted and loyal servant.

The Lord said :

46. "You are our best eye, a well-wisher and knower of the crux of political deliberations. Therefore, advise us what we should do under the circumstances. We believe in you and shall abide by your advice."

47. When thus called upon to tender advice by his Master, the Omniscient Lord, as if he were an ignorant person, Uddhava respected his order with his head, bowed down and replied (as follows) :

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's visit to Indraprastha

Śri Śuka said :

1. Having heard the words of the divine sage Nārada, and considering the views of the members of the assembly and that of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the greatly intelligent Uddhava spoke as follows :

Uddhava said :

2. O Lord ! As advised by the sage Nārada, you should render help to your cousins (sons of your paternal aunt) in the

performance of that sacrifice and also should extend protection to those (kings in the captivity of Jarāsandha) who desire to seek your shelter.

3. O Almighty Lord ! It is only the conquerer of all the cardinal points who is eligible to perform the Rājasūya sacrifice.

VR.'s Text adds :

3*A*. We should at first set out from this place to go to Indraprastha. It is there (at Indraprastha) that with Yudhiṣṭhira's permission, you should slay Jarāsandha for the sake of Yudhiṣṭhira. Hence, in my opinion, victory over the son of Jarā (i.e. Jarāsandha) will serve both the purposes.

4. We shall be achieving our great object by this act (of vanquishing Jarāsandha). And great glory will accrue to you by setting at liberty those imprisoned kings, O Govinda !

5. (To Yādavas who are eager to kill Jarāsandha, Uddhava cautions :) In physical strength that king (Jarāsandha) equals ten thousand elephants and as such, is irresistible to others who (regard themselves and actually) are mighty, except Bhīma who is his equal in strength.

6. It is only in a single combat that he can be conquered and not otherwise (with a powerful army), as he commands an army of one hundred *akṣauhiṇīs*. He is friendly to Brāhmaṇas. And when requested by Brāhmaṇas, he would never refuse it.

7. Let Bhīmasena assume the guise of a Brāhmaṇa and approach him to beg of him single-handed combat with himself. There is not the slightest doubt that in your presence Bhīma will certainly kill him in that duel.

8. You are the formless Time-spirit who, as the Supreme Lord, are the real cause of the creation and destruction of the universe, while gods Brahmā and Rudra are mere instruments. So Bhīma will be the mere instrumental cause of killing Jarāsandha while (as a matter of fact) you are the real slayer.

9. (When Jarāsandha will be killed) the queens of those (released) kings will sing in their (respective) palaces your glorious act in slaying their own (common) enemy (who imprisoned their husbands) and of setting at liberty their husbands (who are dear to them as their own selves), just as Gopīs sing

of their deliverance (from the demon Śaṅkhacūḍa;) sages who resort to you for shelter glorify you for the rescue of the king of elephants (from the alligator), and the release of Sītā, the daughter of Janaka (from Rāvaṇa's captivity) and we who are protected by you, sing of your exploit in setting free your parents (Vasudeva and Devakī from the imprisonment of Kaṁsa).

10. O Kṛṣṇa ! The killing of Jarāsandha will tend to serve many great objectives (purposes) with the fruition of the meritorious acts of the kings (resulting in their release and re-instatement on their thrones), and the fructification of the evil acts of Jarāsandha (resulting in his death and that of Śiśupāla as well). For performance of the Rājasūya sacrifice meets your approval.

Śri Śuka said :

11. O King ! This counsel tendered by Uddhava was so correct and good in every respect that the divine sage Nārada, Yādava elders and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as well, expressed their approval of it.

12. Thereupon the all-pervading glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, sought the permission of his elders and preceptors and ordered his servants like Dāruka, Jaitra and others to prepare for the journey.

13. Having sent in advance, the ladies of his harem, sons, attendants and their kit, and after getting the formal permission of his elder brother Balarāma and Ugrasena, the king of Yādavas, Śrī Kṛṣṇa mounted his chariot brought to him by his charioteer and distinguished with the flag bearing the emblem of Garuḍa, O chastiser of enemies.

14. Thereupon, surrounded with his formidable army comprising of chariots, elephants, foot-soldiers and horsemen and led by their respective military leaders, Kṛṣṇa set out from Dvārakā filling all the quarters with the brilliant fanfare and tremendous sound of the beating of tabors, drums, kettledrums, conchs and horns or trumpets.

15. The devoted and virtuous queens of Kṛṣṇa, all clad in excellent garments, adorned with precious ornaments, pigments and garlands and well-guarded by attendants armed with

swords and shields--followed their husbands along with their sons in golden palanquins and vehicles borne by men and drawn by horses.

16. Mounting on vehicles and litters drawn by men, and on camels, oxen, buffaloes, donkeys, mules, carts and elephants and packing and loading their portable shelters of thatched cottages and tents, woollen blankets, cloths and other articles of their kit, on both sides of the animals, the attendants (of Kṛṣṇa) and courtesans all well-adorned, travelled in his train.

17. Like unto the sea grown agitated with roaring high waves and restless whales, the enormous army, dinning with loud noise and with its lofty flags, big banners, umbrellas, *chowries*, excellent weapons, ornaments, diadems (or helmets) and armours, was shining brilliantly under the bright rays of the sun.

18. Thereupon, the sage Nārada who was worshipped by Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yādavas, felt all his hearts and senses deeply satisfied and happy at the sight of Mukunda. After listening to his decision and accepting the reception offered to him, he bowed to Kṛṣṇa and meditating upon him (and thus installing him in his heart) he left Dvārakā, soaring up in the sky.

19. (When Nārada left) the Lord promised the messenger in a kindly tone : "O messenger ! You need not be afraid. May good betide you ! (I shall see to it that) Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas, be killed."

20. Thus assured by the Lord, the emissary departed and reported in details to the kings all that happened. The kings longed to get their freedom restored and eagerly looked forward to Kṛṣṇa's actual appearance.

21. Having travelled through Ānarta[1], Sauvīra,[2] and Marus[3] and also Vinaśana[4], he crossed over mountains and rivers and passed by towns, villages, cowherd-settlements and quarries.

1. Gujarat and part of Malwa—GDAMI, p. 7.

2. N.L. De accepts Alberuni's identification of Sauvīra with Multan and Jahrawar—Ibid, p. 183.

3. Marwar, a part of Rajasthan—Ibid, p. 127.

4. Near modern Sirsa in Kurukṣetra or Brahmāvarta—the land between the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī—SGAMI, p. 49.

22. Later on, after crossing the river Dṛṣadvatī (Mod. Ghaggar) and the Sarasvatī, he passed through the Pāñcāla country and the Matsya[1] region and arrived at Indraprastha.

23. Hearing the report of the arrival of Śrī Kṛṣṇa whose sight is very rare to ordinary human beings, king Yudhiṣṭhira who was friendly to all, was highly delighted and went out of the city (to receive him) along with his family priests and accompanied with his friends and well-wishers.

24. In the symphonic combination of vocal music (glorifying Kṛṣṇa in songs) and instrumental music and with the loud chanting of the *Vedas*, he eagerly approached Lord Kṛṣṇa just as senses do (i.e. are revived instantaneously) after the return of the chief *Prāṇa* (vital breath).

25. Having seen Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his dearest friend and relative after a long time, the heart of Pāṇḍu's son (Yudhiṣṭhira) melted with deep affection and he embraced him again and again.

26. Embracing with both of his hands the Person of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the sacred abode of the goddess Lakṣmī, the king Yudhiṣṭhira was purged of all sins. With his eyes overflowing with tears and the hair of his body standing on ends, he felt highly blessed and forgot all the delusions about the world.

27. Beaming with a smile and with all his senses and mind overwhelmed with the force of (overpowering) affection, Bhīma embraced his maternal cousin (son of his maternal uncle) and enjoyed great felicity. Arjuna and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva, with profuse tears of joy embraced Acyuta[2], the best of their friend and well-wisher.

28. Embraced by Arjuna and paid due respects by Nakula and Sahadeva, Kṛṣṇa saluted Brāhmaṇas and other elderly persons according to their seniority and other worth.

29-30. Paid respects by them, Kṛṣṇa reciprocally honoured Kauravas, Sṛñjayas, Kekayas, bards like Sūta and Māgadha

1. The territory of Jaipur including Alwar and some part of Bharatpur —GDAMI, p. 128.

2. SR. explains : While Arjuna bent to bow Kṛṣṇa, being equal in age, Kṛṣṇa held him up in his embrace while he was bowed down by Nakula and Sahadeva, his juniors.

and celestial singers, bards and court-jesters[1] praised him while others played upon musical instruments, like tabors, conchs, lutes, drums and horns or trumpets, danced and sang.

31. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel among persons with hallowing renown, was thus accompanied by friends and well-wishers who were eulogizing him. With them he entered the well decorated city of Indraprastha.

32. The roads of the city were sprinkled with scented water and the ichor that exuded from the temples of elephants in rut; it was decorated with variegated flags, golden arches and pitchers full of water (at the entrance of houses); it appeared beautiful with its well-washed citizens wearing new silken garments, ornaments, wreaths of flowers and perfumes as well as with young-women who were equally well-dressed, adorned and anointed in pigments.

33. Kṛṣṇa saw the capital of the king of Kurus (Yudhiṣṭhira) teeming with houses that were illuminated with a row of big lights, offerings of flowers, etc. It was charming on account of the latticed windows out of which were issuing out scented fumes, and flags were merrily flapping on the house-tops which were decorated with domes of gold pitchers surrounded with big crests of silver.

34. As soon as the young damsels heard of his arrival, they immediately abandoned their domestic work and even their husbands in bed and flocked to the royal road (the main street) to see the one object worthy of drinking with (the goblets in the form of) eyes by the people, even though due to their eagerness to see him and in their haste, their locks of hair got dishevelled and the knots of silken garments, loose.

35. Women who climbed the terraces of their houses saw Kṛṣṇa along with his queens on the road that was crowded with elephants, horses, chariots and footmen. They showered flowers over him and embraced him with their hearts and extended a warm welcome to him with their profusely smiling looks.

1. The annotators differ slightly in assigning these musical activities among sūtas—upto Brāhmaṇas and court-jesters. VT. is uncertain, hence VR is followed.

36. Observing the queens of Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) on the road accompanying their husband like constellations of stars surrounding the moon, the women of the town remarked to each other : (We don't know) what meritorious act must have been done by these consorts of Kṛṣṇa whereby this excellent-most personality (of Kṛṣṇa) extends (offers) delight to their eyes with his noble smiles and winsome amorous looks.

37. In the town, at every stage, citizens with auspicious things in their hands, approached Kṛṣṇa and worshipped him. So did the leaders of trade-guilds rid themselves of all sins.

38. Warmly received by ladies of the harem with their eyes blooming with joy and excited with eagerness, Kṛṣṇa entered the palace of the king Yudhiṣṭhira.

39. When Kuntī beheld her brother's son Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the three worlds, her heart was full of delight and affection. She got up from the couch along with her daughter-in-law Draupadī and hugged him (affectionately).

40. Having brought Kṛṣṇa, the God of gods to his palace, with respect and devotion, king Yudhiṣṭhira was so beside himself with joy that he could not understand how to proceed with the formalities of worship (of such a respectable guest).

41. O king Parīkṣit ! Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however, bowed down to his paternal aunt Kuntī and paid respects to elderly ladies. He himself was bowed down by Draupadī and his sister Subhadrā.

42-43. Instructed by her mother-in-law Kuntī, Draupadī duly worshipped the queens of Kṛṣṇa such as Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Bhadrā, Jāmbavatī, Kālindī, Mitravindā. Śaibyā, and the pious Nāgnajitī and other women-guests, with garments, wreaths of flowers, ornaments, etc.

44. King Dharmarāja made comfortable arrangement of lodging for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that of his queens, members of the army, followers and counsellors providing everyday with new objects of enjoyment.

45. Accompanied with Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa propitiated the Fire-god, offering him the Khāṇḍava forest for consumption. He rescued Maya (from the fire) who constructed a heavenly assembly-hall for king Yudhiṣṭhira.

46. With the desire of pleasing king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa stayed many months at Indraprastha. Occasionally, surrounded by warriors, he rode out in a chariot with Arjuna for excursion and sport.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Jarāsandha slain

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. (When Kṛṣṇa had spent a restful period for some days) on a certain occasion, king Yudhiṣṭhira was seated in his court-hall attended by sages, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas, Vaiśyas and his brothers, preceptors, elders of the family, clansmen and relatives. He addressed Kṛṣṇa within the hearing of them all.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

3. O Lord Govinda ! I intend to adore you and your hallowed part-manifestations (in the form of Indra and other deities) by performing the noblest of sacrifice called the Rājasūya. May you be pleased (to help us) to accomplish this.

4. O lotus-navelled Lord ? Your feet destroy everything inauspicious. Those pious people who constantly worship them physically, contemplate on them mentally, and sing of them vocally attain emancipation from *saṁsāra*. They obtain even worldly blessings if they so desire but not others.

5. O God of gods ! Let the world, therefore, witness the supreme efficacy of the service of your lotus-like feet. O Lord ! Be pleased to demonstrate to the Kaurava and Sṛñjaya chiefs, the status reached and fruits reaped by those who worship you and by those who do not do so.

6. O Lord ! You are Brahman himself, the Inner Soul abiding in all beings. You eternally enjoy your essential state of blissfulness and look upon all as equal. Hence the notion of difference such as 'this is mine' and 'this is not mine' cannot

be predicated of you. Like persons betaking to the celestial wish-yielding tree, your grace is conferred on those who serve you and it is commensurate to the measure (and intensity) of their service, and there is no violation of this law.

The Lord replied :

7. O King ! This resolution of yours is excellent. O destroyer of enemies ? By performance of the Rājasūya sacrifice your auspicious fame (as the conqueror of all kings) will pervade the three worlds.

8. The performance of this sovereign sacrifice is desirable not only on behalf of us, your friends and well wishers, but also on behalf of sages, your ancestors, gods and all created beings.

9. Having defeated all the kings in the world and thus brought under control the whole of the earth, collect all the necessary articles of sacrifice and then commence the performance of this great sacrifice.

10. O King ! These brothers of yours are born from the rays of the deities (such as Indra, Vāyu) who are the guardians of the worlds. And I, who am never won over by persons lacking self-control, have been conquered by you, by your control of mind and senses.

11. In this world, not even a celestial being can discomfit my devotee by his energy, glory, affluence or supernatural power, much less can an earthly being do so.

Śri Śuka said :

12. Having heard the approbatory speech of the Lord, king Yudhiṣṭhira became extremely delighted and his countenance looked cheerful like a fresh-blown lotus. He assigned the conquest of cardinal points (of the world) to his brothers who were imbued with the lustre and energy of god Viṣṇu.

13. He commanded Sahadeva to conquer the South along with Sṛñjayas and deputed Nakula to the West, and Arjuna to the North and Bhīma, in alliance with Matsyas, Kekayas and Madrakas to the East.

14. Conquering the kings with their might and energy, those warriors brought from those quarters immense wealth to king Yudhiṣṭhira who was preparing for sacrifice.

15. Hearing that Jarāsandha could not be conquered, Yudhiṣṭhira became anxious. They say that to Yudhiṣṭhira who was pondering (over the subjugation of Jarāsandha), Kṛṣṇa, the Primary Cause of the world, suggested the expedient suggested by Uddhava.

16. O Parīkṣit ? Thereupon, the three (warriors)—Bhīmasena, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa — disguised themselves as Brāhmaṇas and went to Girivraja (the capital of Magadha) where stayed Jarāsandha, the son of Bṛhadratha.

17. Those three Kṣattriyas disguised as Brāhmaṇas, went to Jarāsandha's palace at the time of receiving unexpected guests (with no previous appointment). They begged of king Jarāsandha who was friendly and devoted to Brāhmaṇas and was a keen observer of the sacred duties of the householder.

18. O king ! Please know us as unexpected guests who have come over a long distance for soliciting a request. May god betide you ! Be, therefore, pleased to grant our request.

19. Is there anything unbearable to people with fortitude and endurance ? What act is there which the unrighteous would hesitate to do ? What is there that the generous cannot give away ? What person is a stranger or an enemy to those who look upon all as equals.

20. Whoever, endowed with capability to do so, does not, by means of this perishable body, achieve everlasting glory worthy of being sung by the righteous, is worthy of being pitied and censured.

21. Kings Hariścandra, Rantideva, Śibi, Bali, Mudgala (who lived on grains gleaned from fields), the legendary pigeon (who sacrificed its life for the hunter and the hunter (who emulated the pigeon's example) and many others attained to everlasting fame at the cost of this transient body.

Śri Śuka said :

22. From their tones, appearance, the scars on the forearms caused by the friction of bow-strings, Jarāsandha came to know that they belonged to the Kṣattriya class. He also

felt that he had seen them formerly somewhere. He began to think :

23. "These are certainly Kṣattriyas who have adopted the guise of Brāhmaṇas. I shall give whatever they beg of me even if it be my body which is difficult to part with.

24. The glorious fame of king Bali is heard glorified far and wide in all directions even though he was dislodged from his sovereign position by Viṣṇu in the disguise of a Brāhmaṇa.

25. The great king of Daityas, knowing full well that it was Viṣṇu in the form of a Brāhmaṇa and though prevented by his preceptor Śukra, he gave away the earth to Viṣṇu in the guise of a Brāhmaṇa who intended to deprive Bali of his sovereignty and splendour for the sake of Indra.

26. What is the good of this life of that wretched Kṣattriya who does not aspire to attain vast renown at the cost of this perishable, ever-waning body for the good of Brāhmaṇas."

27. Reflecting thus, the noble-minded king Jarāsandha spoke out to Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna and Bhīma, "O Brāhmaṇas. Choose whatever you desire to have. I shall give even my head to you."

Lord Kṛṣṇa replied :

28. "O great king. We are Kṣattriyas who have come here to seek a fight. We do not beg for food. We want a fight with you, in a single combat if it pleases you.

29. This is Vṛkodara (Bhīma) the son of Kuntī. This is his brother Arjuna. Please know me as Kṛṣṇa, their maternal cousin and your sworn enemy."

30. Thus informed by Kṛṣṇa, the king of Magadhas laughed loudly. Getting enraged, he declared, "you dull-witted fellows, (if you so seek it) I shall give a battle with you.

31. I shall not fight with a coward like you who get confounded in battles. Out of my fear, you abandoned your capital Mathurā and sought shelter in the sea.

32. This Arjuna is neither equal in age nor surpassing me in strength. And hence he is no match for me as a combatant. Bhīma is my equal in strength."

33. With these words, he handed over a huge mace to Bhīmasena and taking another tremendous mace for himself he went out of the town.

34. There on a level ground as the arena, the two warriors closed in fight against each other, both of them, being proud and furious in battle, hit each other with their maces hard like (Indra's) thunderbolt.

35. While they were making skilful wheeling manoeuvres to the right or to the left, the combat became spectacular like the one of actors on the stage.

36. O king! When the maces hurled at each other clashed each other, there arose a harsh and cracking sound *caṭ caṭ* resembling the clapping of Vajras (Indra's thunderbolt) or like the clashing of the tusks of two fighting tuskers.

37. Just as two twigs of the sun plant are reduced to pulp when two elephants, furious with rage, fight with each other with those twigs, those two maces hurled with full force of their arms dashed against each other and came in contact with each other's shoulders, hips, feet, hands, thighs and collar-bones and were reduced to powder.

38. When their maces were broken down in this way, those furious warriors among men pounded each other, boxing with fists as hard as iron. The noise produced by the blows of their palms as they struck each other was like that of two tuskers dashing against each other and was harsh like the striking of Vajra (or clapping of thunder).

39. Both Bhīma and Jarāsandha were equal to each other in training, strength and energy. They struck each other with unabated force. The combat however remained undecided.

40. In this way twentyseven days passed while they fought by day but behaved like friends at night (when the combat was over).

41. O king Parīkṣit! On one day Bhīmasena confessed to Kṛṣṇa, his maternal uncle's son, "O Mādhava (Descendant of Madhu), I am unable to vanquish Jarāsandha in the duel.

42. Śrī Kṛṣṇa knew the secret of the birth and death of the enemy and how the demoness Jarā conferred life on

Jarāsandha. He strengthened Bhīma by transferring his energy and began to consider.

43. He hit upon a plan of killing the enemy. Kṛṣṇa of infallible insight showed it to Bhīma symbolically by splitting a twig.

44. Bhīma, a prominent warrior of enormous strength understood the suggestion conveyed to him. He took hold of Jarāsandha by both his feet and felled him on the ground.

45. He pressed down one foot of the enemy with one of his feet and with his both hands he caught hold of the other foot and tore him in two from the anus, like an elephant splitting a branch of a tree.

46. Now people beheld the two separate parts of the body each with one foot, one thigh, one testicle, one hip, half the back, one breast, one shoulder, one arm, one eye, one eyebrow and one ear.

47. There was a great outcry, when the king of Magadhas was slain. Clasping Bhīma in their arms, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa applauded him.

48. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa is the creator and protector of all beings. None could fathom his greatness and power. He installed Jarāsandha's son Sahadeva as the king of Magadhas on the throne and set at liberty kings kept in confinement by Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

Return of Kṛṣṇa and others to Indraprastha

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Twenty thousand eight hundred kings who were easily defeated in battle (by Jarāsandha) were kept confined in a valley surrounded on all sides by the mountain. (Released from captivity) they came out with unclean bodies and dirty clothes.

2. Emaciated with hunger and with mouths parched up and greatly reduced in bodies due to confinement for a long time, the kings saw Lord Kṛṣṇa of dark blue complexion like a cloud, wearing yellow silken garments.

3. He was bearing the mark of Śrīvatsa; had four arms. His eyes were reddish like the inner part of a lotus-flower and he was charming and gracious in appearance. He was adorned with brilliant alligator-shaped ear-rings.

4. He was holding a lotus in one of his hands and was wielding a mace, a conch and a discus (Sudarśana) in the remaining three arms. He was adorned with a crown, a necklace of pearls, bracelets, a zone and a pair of armlets.

5. His neck was shining with the excellent jewel Kaustubha and had a garland of forest-flowers (*Vanamālā*) hanging on his bosom. The kings appeared to drink him with eyes and to lick him with tongues.

6. They were as if smelling him with their noses and embracing him with their arms. They bowed to the Lord with their heads touching his feet and rid themselves of all sins.

7. At the sight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa they were so much overjoyed that they got over the languor and exhaustion caused by their incarceration. Folding their palms, the kings eulogized Hṛṣīkeśa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all senses) in the following words :

The kings submitted their prayer :

8. We bow to you, O God of Gods. You remove the distress of those that seek shelter in you, O Immutable Lord, Being disgusted with the terrible *saṁsāra* we have resorted to you. Pray, be pleased to protect us, O Kṛṣṇa.

9. O Lord ! Slayer of the demon Madhu ! We do not blame that Jarāsandha, king of Magadhas. It is really your Grace that we kings were deprived of our kingdoms, O Almighty Lord.

10. A king elated with pride of sovereignty and affluence does not attain the Final Beatitude, but being infatuated by your deluding potency (Māyā) looks upon the transient worldy fortune as permanent.

11. Just as children (or foolish people) mistake a mirage as a pool of water, persons without discriminatory power, ascribe reality to the everchanging Māyā which brings about modifications.

12. O Lord ! Formerly we were blinded by our pride of kingship and affluence. In our ambition to conquer this earth, we competed with each other slaughtering mercilessly our own subjects. We were so madly proud that we did not think of death or of yourself, who were ahead of us.

13. O Kṛṣṇa ! By your form called Time, of inexorable velocity and infinite prowess, we were despoiled of our former affluence and sovereignty. It is through your Grace that today we, with our pride completely destroyed, are contemplating on your feet.

14. We do not aspire after this mirage like sovereignty which is to be enjoyed by this ever-decaying body, a nursery of ailments). Nor do we seek to enjoy after death the fruits of our (religious or meritorious) actions (in heaven) which sound so pleasant to the ears, O Almighty Lord.

15. Pray, be gracious to teach us, that expedient whereby we shall never lose the memory of your lotus-like feet (and continue to contemplate on them) even while we are involved in the series of births and deaths.

16. We repeatedly pay our salutations to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, the destroyer of the misery of *saṁsāra* (even of Daityas), the Supreme Self. You are the remover of sufferings of those who bow to you, O Govinda (Lord of Senses).

Śri Śuka said :

17. O dear Parīkṣit ! Thus eulogised by the kings who were now freed from captivity, the merciful Lord who affords protection to those who seek it, spoke to them in sweet language as follows :

The Lord said :

18. O monarchs ! As desired by you, from now onwards your unflinching devotion unto me who am the Ruler of the

universe and the Self, abiding in all, shall grow strong and deep-rooted.

19. How glad I am at your correct resolution, O kings. What you expressed is the truth. For I have seen how growing pride of affluence and authority has a maddening effect on people.

20. Haihaya (Sahasrārjuna), Nahuṣa, Veṅa, Rāvaṇa, Naraka and other rulers of gods, demons and human beings have fallen down from their positions, in consequence of their arrogance, begotten of their prosperity and power.

21. Being thoroughly cognisant of the fact that everything that is created like the body (and other things connected therewith) is perishable, you worship me by performing sacrifices and be alert and protect your subjects in a righteous manner, O monarchs.

22. You secure the continuity of your family by begetting children. Bear up with equable mind, the weal and woe, prosperity and adversity, birth or death as it comes to your lot and carry on your life devoting your heart to me.

23. Remain indifferent to your body and things connected with it. Take delight in the spiritual bliss of the self and observe vows of self-discipline. Thus, concentrating your mind properly and steadily in me, you will ultimately attain to me who am the supreme Brahman.

Śri Śuka said :

24. Having enjoined the kings in the above manner, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Ruler of the Universe ordered male and female servants to give them a bath.

25. He made Sahadeva (now the king of Magadha) to receive them respectfully, by giving them clothes, ornaments, wreaths of flowers and pigments worthy of kings.

26. When the kings had taken an excellent bath and put on their rich clothes and ornaments, they were served with dainty dishes and were offered various luxuries worthy of kings such as betel-leaves, etc.

27. Having been honoured by Mukunda, these kings, wearing brilliant ear-rings and freed from their distressful

conditions, looked resplendent like planets at the end of the rainy season.

28. Mounting them in chariots decorated with gold and jewels and drawn by good horses, and cheering up their hearts with sweet yet sincere words, they were sent to their respective countries.

29. The kings who were thus relieved of their hardships by the highly noblesouled Kṛṣṇa, returned contemplating on Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe and his noble deeds.

30. (Arriving at their capitals) they told to their ministers (and subjects) the glorious deeds of that Supreme Person and carried on their life (and government) deligently as per instructions of the Lord.

31. Having slain Jarāsandha through the instrumentation of Bhīma, Keśava was worshipped by Sahadeva and accompanied with the two sons of Kuntī (Bhīma and Arjuna), he left for Indraprastha.

32. Having reached Khāṇḍavaprastha, these three warriors who had vanquished their enemies blew their conchs, thrillings their friends with delight and their foes with terror.

33. Hearing that sound, the citizens of Indraprastha became delighted in their minds. They concluded that Jarāsandha had been killed and king Yudhiṣṭhira also felt that he had accomplished his object.

34. Having bowed down to king Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Janārdana and Arjuna reported to him in details all they had severally done.

35. Having heard how compassion had been shown by Kṛṣṇa, Dharmarāja shed tears of joy and was too much overwhelmed with love to express a word.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya : Śiśupāla slain

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having thus heard about the slaying of Jarāsandha and also about Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme glory, king Yudhiṣṭhira was highly delighted. He addressed him as follows.

Yudhiṣṭhira said :

2. All the preceptors of the three worlds (like Sanaka and others) and all the great gods, the protectors of different worlds, do bear on their heads your commands when they have the privilege to receive that Grace which is rarely obtained by others.

3. O Lord of infinite prowess and glory ! That lotus-eyed personage like you bears and carries out commands of factually indigent persons who regard themselves conceitedly as rulers, is itself an extreme mockery unbecoming of you as below dignity.

4. But you are the Supreme Brahman like unto the effulgence of the Sun, the glory of the Brahman, the Supreme Self who is one, without a second is neither enhanced nor diminished by the performance of acts by you.

5. O unconquerable Lord of Lakṣmī ! Just as the beasts (or ignorant people) entertain the (perverse) notion of difference pertaining to their body indexed by such terms as "I and mine", "You and yours", even your devotees do not possess such a crooked notion of difference (Need it be said that it is totally absent in you ?)

Śrī Śuka said :

6. Addressing Kṛṣṇa thus and with his approval, Kuntī's son, Yudhiṣṭhira invited competent and worthy Brāhmaṇas who were proficient in the Vedas and the sacrificial ritual, to officiate as priests (at the Rājasūya sacrifice to be performed) in a period suitable for the celebration of such sacrifices such as the spring.

7-9. (Kṛṣṇa-) Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa), Bharadvāja, Sumantu, Gautama, Asita, Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Kaṇva, Maitreya, Kavaṣa, Trita, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Sumati, Jaimini, Kratu, Paila. Parāśara, Garga, Vaiśampāyana, Atharvan, Kāśyapa, Dhaumya, Paraśurāma (of the Bhṛgu clan), Āsuri, Vītihotra, Madhucchandas, Vīrasena, Akṛtavraṇa—these and many others were invited.

10. (And also were invited) Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Kṛpa and others, Dhṛtarāṣṭra with all his sons and the noble-minded Vidura.

11. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras whoever was desirous of seeing the sacrifice, and all kings and their ministers (and subjects) assembled there, O King.

12. Thereupon the Brāhmaṇas ploughed the sacrificial ground (where gods are to be worshipped with oblations) with gold ploughs and following the scriptural injunctions, they consecrated the king as the sacrificer.

13-15. As the tradition goes, all the utensils used in this sacrifice were of gold as they were at Varuṇa's Rājasūya sacrifice in ancient times. Indra and other protecting deities of different spheres, god Brahmā and Śiva along with their attendants, Siddhas and Gandharvas (celestial singers), Vidyādharas and big serpents, sages, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, birds, Kinnaras, Cāraṇas, kings along with their queens—all of them were invited and they attended the Rājasūya sacrifice of Pāṇḍu's son, Yudhiṣṭhira.

16. They were not surprised at all, as they thought that such a performance is quite natural to the devotees of Kṛṣṇa (to whom nothing is impossible). The sacrificial priests who looked brilliant like gods, conducted for the king, the Rājasūya sacrifice according to *śāstric* injunctions, as the gods did for the sake of Varuṇa.

17. On the day fixed for extraction of the Soma juice, the king with serene mind duly worshipped the highly respectable Brāhmaṇas conducting the sacrifice as well as the judges of the sacrificial performance.

18. The members of the assembly could not arrive at a unanimous decision as to who should be regarded as worthy

of receiving the first honour of worship as there were many deserving claimants. At this juncture, Sahadeva spoke out.

19. "(It is my considered opinion that) the imperishable Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord and protector of Sātvatas deserves this highest honour. For he is not only all deities but also Time, space, wealth and other things.

20. This universe is his manifestation. He constitutes the sacrifices. The sacrificial fire, oblations offered in the fire, the *mantras* recited at that time and the paths of knowledge and Yoga or devotion are meant for him.

21. He is One without a second; the universe is his manifestation O members of the assembly. Entirely dependent on himself and though himself unborn, he creates, protects and dissolves this universe.

22. It is through his Grace that people perform different actions, penances and *yogic* practices and everyone tries to achieve their high objects in life such as *dharma* (religious practices), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (worldly enjoyment) and *mokṣa* (Final emancipation).

23. Therefore, this highest honour ought to be offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the greatest of the great. It is thus by offering him the honour of the first worship in the assembly that we shall be honouring all created beings as well as ourselves.

24. He who desires to reap infinite merit in return for his gift should offer it to Lord Kṛṣṇa who constitutes the Soul of all created beings and looks upon all as his own self, (or attached to his devotees) quite serene (desireless) and absolutely perfect."

25. Sahadeva, who knew the supreme greatness of Kṛṣṇa addressed them in this way and observed silence. Hearing that all excellent and pious members of the assembly were satisfied and approved of the speech with the words "well said, well expressed",

26. Hearing the decision of the Brāhmaṇas and ascertaining the consensus (lit. what was desired in the hearts) of the members of the sacrificial assembly, king Yudhiṣṭhira was highly pleased. Overwhelmed with affection, he worshipped

Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of senses (as the foremost member of that assembly).

27. Then having washed the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he (Yudhiṣṭhira) along with his queens, younger brothers, counsellors and members of his family, delightfully bore on their heads (drops of) that water (with which he washed the Lord's feet) which was capable of purifying the world.

28. He worshipped him by offering yellow silken cloths, and very valuable ornaments. But he could not see him clearly as his eyes were flowing with tears (of affection and joy).

29. Seeing Kṛṣṇa so worshipped, all people (in the assembly) folded their palms and offered him salutations with the words *Namaḥ* (Bow to you), *Jaya* (Victory to you). And showers of flowers fell down (from the sky).

30. Hearing this (above-mentioned) shouts of salutation and victory, Śiśupāla, the son of Damaghoṣa, whose anger was provoked by the glorification of Kṛṣṇa's excellences, rose from his seat. He raised up his arm. Being enraged he fearlessly uttered harsh words (with reference to and) for the hearing of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

31. "The Vedic text that the Time-spirit is the real controller (capable of bringing about undesirable events) and that it is inviolable, is quite true. (For example, here, in this assembly) even the judgment of the elderly people has become vitiated by the prattling of an ignorant junior (like Sahadeva).

32. O leaders of the assembly ! You are the best judges of deciding who should be the proper recepient (of this highest honour). Please do not head the childish talk of that ignorant boy Sahadeva believing in which you consented that Kṛṣṇa deserved this honour.

33-34.* To the utter disregard of the leaders of this assembly who are endowed with austers penance, learning,

*. ŚR. takes pains to show that the inner meaning of these verses conveys the glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Śiśupāla was his attendant in his original birth and as such he would naturally praise the Lord. It appears that members of the assembly shut their ears, thinking it to be defa-

observance of sacred vows,—members who have cleared all their sins by their spiritual knowledge; the great sages who are established in Brahman and who are worshipped even by the guardian deities of different spheres, how is a cowherd, a disgrace to his clan and family, considered eligible to receive this honour ? How can a crow deserve to receive Puroḍāśa (a sacrificial oblation) ?

35. He does not belong to any class of society, (*varṇa*), stage of life (*āśrama*) or nobility of birth. He has been excommunicated by (i.e. beyond the pale of) all *dharmas*. He behaves wantonly (against moral or religious code of conduct) and is devoid of virtues. How does he deserve worship ?

36. His family has been cursed by Yayāti (the founder of his clan) and is excommunicated by all good people. He is always indulged in drinking. How is he eligible for this worship ?

37. These marauders have given up their country (Śūrasena i.e. region around Mathurā)—a land frequented and inhabited by Brāhmaṇa sages; they have resorted to their citadel in the sea—a place destitute of Brāhmaṇas devoted to Vedic studies and harass all people from that strong-hold."

38. Śiśupāla whose fund of auspicious acts and merits was exhausted, spoke these and the like defamatory words to Kṛṣṇa. But the Lord did not respond at all as a lion does to the howling of female jackals.

39. Hearing that unbearable censuring of the Lord, the members of the assembly closed their ears and left the assembly, censuring Śiśupāla angrily.

40. He who does not leave the place even after hearing reproachful words about the Lord or about his devotees, becomes deprived of his merits and goes down to hell.

mation of the Lord; the clans of Matsya, Kekaya, Sṛñjayas did not understand this double meaning and wanted to attack Śiśupāla. And Lord Kṛṣṇa also did not understand his praise and beheaded his servant who was praising him in words of double meaning and marched against him with a sword (vide verses 38-43 below). In *supra* 3.18-3-8 where Hiraṇyākṣa upbraided Lord Viṣṇu in the boar form, ŚR. has tried to read Viṣṇu's praise in it, vide vol. I pp. 320-321.

41. Then sprang to their feet the indignant Pāṇḍavas, Matsyas, Kekayas and Sṛñjayas with their arms uplifted with the desire of finishing with Śiśupāla.

42. Undaunted by them, Śiśupāla took up his sword and shield and reproached the kings who sided with Kṛṣṇa in that assembly.

43. When matters came to such a stage the Lord himself stood up in the meanwhile and restraining his own partisans, angrily cut off the head of his advancing enemy with his sharp-edged discus—Sudarśana.

44. There was a great uproar when Śiśupāla was killed. In that bustle, the kings who were his followers ran away to save their lives.

45. Thereafter, like a meteor falling on the earth from the sky, there emerged an effulgent light from the body of Śiśupāla and entered the person of Vāsudeva while all beings stood as witness to it.

46. Pondering over the Lord with thoughts saturated with hatred and anger entertained for three consecutive lives, he (Śiśupāla) attained identity with the Lord, for it is one's own brooding which determines one's future state of life.

47. The emperor Yudhiṣṭhira gave liberal sacrificial fees to the priests who conducted the sacrifice and to the members of the sacrificial assembly. And having thus worshipped them all with due respect, he performed the closing ablution of the sacrifice (*avabhṛtha snāna*) according to the injunctions laid down in the *śāstras*.

48. After having accomplished the Rājasūya sacrifice successfully for king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the masters of Yoga, lived some more months at Indraprastha at the request of his friends.

49. Thereafter, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, took leave of king Yudhiṣṭhira who was unwilling to let him go and returned to his capital along with his queens and counsellors.

50. The long narrative of how (Jaya and Vijaya) the two residents of Vaikuṇṭha (as the attendants of Lord Viṣṇu) had to undergo repeated births on the earth under the

curse of Brāhmaṇas (like Sanaka, etc.), has been described to you in details.[1]

51. When king Yudhiṣṭhira performed his closing ablution of the Rājasūya sacrifice he shone like Indra, the king of gods, in the assembly of Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas.

52. All the gods, men and celestial beings (who attended the sacrifice) were duly honoured by the king. They went back to their respective place praising with joy Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Rājasūya sacrifice.

53. The sinful Duryodhana, the veritable Kali himself, who was a bane to the family of Kurus was the only exception. He could not bear the sight of the vast affluence and the royal splendour of Pāṇḍu's son (Yudhiṣṭhira).

54. He who sings of Lord Viṣṇu's glorious deed of slaying Śiśupāla (and Jarāsandha and others) and the release of the kings taken captive (by Jarāsandha) and the performance of the Rājasūya sacrifice is released from the bondage of all sins.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Discomfiture of Duryodhana

King Parīkṣit enquired :

1-2. We have heard that all men, gods, kings and celestial beings who had assembled there for the Rājasūya sacrifice of king Ajātaśatru (Yudhiṣṭhira) were filled with joy to see its glorious accomplishment, O Brāhmaṇa sage. And Duryodhana was the only exception. Be pleased to explain to us. O worshipful sir, the reason of this.

The sage Śuka replied :

3. In the Rājasūya sacrifice of your illustrious grandfather, all his relatives attached to him with bonds of affection, accepted the responsibility of various departments and rendered him service (during the sacrifice).

1. *vide supra* Skandha VII. Ch.s 1-9.

4. Bhīma was the head of the culinary department, Duryodhana was in charge of treasury. Sahadeva was engaged in the reception department while Nakula was entrusted with the provision of supplies (of things required).

5. Arjuna was appointed to serve the elders and preceptors, while Kṛṣṇa was engaged in washing the feet (of the guests). Draupadī superintended service and catering of food while the noble-minded Karṇa was entrusted with conferring gifts.

6-7. Yuyudhāna, Vikarṇa, Hārdikya, Vidura and others as well as Bhūri and other sons of Bāhlika, Santardana and others were entrusted with different departments and duties in that great sacrifice. And all of them endeavoured to carry out their duties, as liked by King Yudhiṣṭhira, O great King.

8. When the priests, member of the assembly, persons of wide and deep erudition, intimate friends and relatives were properly honoured with sweet words, costly presents and sacrificial (and other religious) fees and when (the soul of) Śiśupāla entered the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas took the closing ablution of the Rājasūya sacrifice in the heavenly river, Gaṅgā.

9. During the celebration of the ceremony of the *avabhrtha* bath, various instruments of music such as tabors, conchs, *paṇavas*, drums, kettle-drums and horns were sounded.

10. Dancing girls danced merrily. Bands after bands of songster engaged in vocal music. And sound of musical instruments like lutes, flutes and clapping reached the heaven.

11. With their flags and streamers of variegated colours (fluttering in the air) and accompanied with battalions of well-adorned soldiers, big elephants, chariots and horses, kings wearing wreaths of gold started (for the *avabhṛtha* bath).

12. With the sacrificer (Yudhiṣṭhira) in front of them followed the clans of Yādavas, Sṛñjayas, Kāmbojas, Kauravas, Kekayas and Kosalas shaking the earth with their armies.

13. The members of the sacrificial assembly, the priests and prominent Brāhmaṇas chanting the Vedas loudly followed him. And the gods, sages, manes (ancestors) and celestial singers (Gandharvas) sang the praise of Yudhiṣṭhira and showered flowers (on the procession).

14. Men and women who have adorned themselves richly with clothes, ornaments, garlands and perfumes sported smearing and sprinkling each other with oil and saffron-mixed water.

15. The courtesans sported being smeared by men and reciprocally smearing men with oil, milk, perfumed water, turmeric powder and thick saffron paste.

16. With a desire to witness this procession and festival ladies of royal families all well-escorted by guards went out in their vehicles (palanquins, chariots etc.) just as heavenly damsels crowded the sky in their excellent heavenly cars (to have a look at it). Those ladies when besprinkled by the friends of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (their maternal cousin) appeared still more beautiful with their faces blooming with bashful smiles.

17. With their syringes, the ladies of royal families sprinkled jets of coloured water on their brothers-in-law and friends. Their garments being moist, the limbs of their persons such as breasts, thighs, and hips were exposed to the view. In the excitement of watersport, the braids of their hair got loosened and flowers dropped down from them. By their attractive sportive activities, they provoked impious thoughts in impure-minded people.

18. The emperor ascended the chariot drawn by excellent horses and decorated with wreaths of gold. Accompanied by his consorts he looked resplendent like the sovereign sacrifice Rājasūya with the attendant ritualistic processes incarnate.

19. After performing the special sacrifice called *Patnisaṁyāja* and other rituals connected with the concluding bath (*avabhṛtha*), king Yudhiṣṭhira performed *ācamana* (sipped water thrice from his right palm) and as directed by the priest, he along with Draupadī took bath in the Gaṅgā.

20. Drums from the heaven as well as those from the earth were simultaneously sounded. Gods, sages, manes and human beings showered flowers on them.

21. Thereupon, persons belonging to all classes of society (*varṇas*) and stages of life (*āśrama*) took their bath there; for even persons who perpetrated the most heinous sins are absolved of them by such a bath.

22. Then King Yudhiṣṭhira put on two new silk cloths

and was well-adorned with ornaments. He then worshipped the sacrificial priests, the members of the (sacrificial) assembly, Brāhmaṇas and others by honouring them with clothes and ornaments

23. The king who was unflinchingly devoted to Nārāyaṇa duly honoured his friends, kinsmen, kings, friends, well-wishers and all others (who were present) in all respects.

24. Being adorned with jewelled ear-rings, wreaths of flowers, turbans, long coats, silk cloth and extremely costly necklaces, all men looked splendid like gods, while women, the beauty of whose countenance was enhanced by a pair of ear-rings and (overhanging) locks of hair, appeared charming with girdles of gold (round their waist).

25-26. Thereupon highly virtuous priests (*ṛtvijs*), members of that assembly, the reciters of the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras as well as the princes who assembled to attend the sacrifice; as also gods, sages, manes and other beings, the guardians of the world along with their followers were duly honoured. They sought the permission to go and returned to their respective regions.

27. Even as a mortal being is not sated by drinking the nectar, people did not feel satiated by glorifying the splendid success of the Rājasūya sacrifice performed by that royal sage Yudhiṣṭhira who was but a humble servant of Lord Hari.

28. King Yudhiṣṭhira could not bear the idea of separation and affectionately importuned his friends, relatives, kith and kin and Lord Kṛṣṇa to stay longer.

29. Dear Parīkṣit ! The Lord despatched Sāmba and other Yādava warriors to Dvārakā. Being desirous of pleasing king Yudhiṣṭhira, the Lord continued to stay on with him.

30. In this way, with the help of Lord Kṛṣṇa, king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, crossed over the ocean of his cherished ambition (of performing the Rājasūya sacrifice) which was very difficult to be accomplished. And he was thus thoroughly cured of his fever of anxiety for proper performance of the Rājasūya.

31. On a certain occasion, Duryodhana was sorely troubled at heart to notice the glorious splendour of king Yudhiṣṭhira's harem and the grandeur of the Rājasūya (and

the eminent position attained thereby) by Yudhiṣṭhira whose heart was devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

32. In that harem, all the affluence and royal splendour of kings of men, demon kings and Lord of gods accumulated and utilised by Maya, the architect of that palace, were shining resplendently. With all these, Draupadī, the princess of king Drupada, waited upon her spouses. The heart of Duryodhana, king of Kauravas, was attached to her and hence he was tormented (with jealousy).

33. At that time, thousands of consorts of Lord Kṛṣṇa were staying in that palace. Owing to the heaviness of their buttocks, they had to walk slowly and the anklets on their feet jingled sweetly. They were slender-waisted, and their (white) pearl necklaces became reddish with saffron applied to their breasts. And their beautiful countenances appeared still more attractive with their rocking ear-rings and curly locks of hair.

34-35. Once, in a part of that assembly constructed by Maya, emperor Yudhiṣṭhira, surrounded by his younger brothers and relatives and by Kṛṣṇa who was his eye (indicating what is in his interest or otherwise), was seated on a throne of gold like Indra, the Lord of gods himself. He was endowed with imperial glory and was glorified by bards.

VJ.'s Text adds :

35A. He was waited upon by prominent Brāhmaṇas coming from different parts of the country. Fanned with many white coloured *chowries*, the tiger among the kings (emperor Yudhiṣṭhira) shone like the Lord of gods in the heaven.

36. There entered the swaggering proud Duryodhana adorned with a crown and garlands with a sword in his hand. He was surrounded by his brothers and he was angrily railing at the guards at the door and others.

37. He was so much deluded by the skill of Maya that when there was a part of the floor, he mistook it for a sheet of water and drew up his clothes and fell on the floor and at places tumbled into water mistaking it (the sheet of water) as floor.

Vj's Text adds:

37A. He regarded the floor paved with sapphires as a pond of water and took up his clothes and all people laughed at him.

37B. When king Duryodhana was proceeding to a pond of water, he thought it to be crystal pavement and fell into that pond.

38. O dear Parīkṣit. Seeing that Bhīma laughed at him; so too laughed the ladies and other kings even though king Yudhiṣṭhira tried to check them. Kṛṣṇa approved of them.

39. Duryodhana felt abashed and he hung down his head. As if burning with rage, he silently left for Hastināpura. There was a great uproar (of dismay and regrets) among the pious members of the assembly. The foe-less king Yudhiṣṭhira was dejected in mind. The Lord who was bent on reducing the burden of the earth, remained silent. It was through his deluding potency that Duryodhana was led into these mistakes.[1]

40. O king, I have narrated to you what you asked me how Duryodhana's wickedness developed during the great sacrifice of Rājasūya.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

Fight with Śālva

Śri Śuka said :

1. O King! Now listen to the account of another miraculous deed of Kṛṣṇa, who, out of sport, assumed a human form. This concerns the killing of Śālva, the master of the aerial car Saubha.

1. According to ŚR., this delusion of Duryodhana was the 'seed' of removing the burden of the earth and Bhima's laughter indicated Duryodhana's discomfiture. Hence, Kṛṣṇa kept quiet.

2. Śālva, a friend of Śiśupāla, had arrived (and was present) at the *Svayaṁvara* of Rukmiṇī. At that time (he), Jarāsandha and other partisans of Śiśupāla were vanquished by Yādavas.*

3. In the hearing of all the kings (present there) Śālva took a vow, "I shall eliminate all the Yādavas from this earth. Look at my bravery."

4. Having made this solemn declaration, the foolish king

* *Here VJ.' s Text adds the following verses.*

2.1 The Lord was desirous of lightening the burden of the earth. Contemplating over his self in himself, he remained silent. Thereupon the sage whose lotus-feet are adored by gods, revealed himself in the presence of the Lord of the world.

2.2. Nārada was welcomed by all the members of the assembly by going forward to receive and was duly worshipped by them. He was highly worshipped by Kṛṣṇa and he occupied a comfortable seat near the King.

2.3. With due formalities Dharmarāja bowed to him and enquired of him : "You have access every-where and you pay visits anywhere and at any time and are impartial (not attached to anyone), O Brāhmaṇa sage.

2.4-5. Who among all chivalrous kings ruling over many kingdoms in the world, is the warrior-prince that is engaged in war preparations all the while now ?". Hearing the question so posed by him, the sage Nārada replied.

Nārada said :

2.6. As the pride of all kings is crushed down by Kṛṣṇa of incomparable valour, they now live in their respective kingdoms with their activities curtailed and their glory lost.

2.7. There is, however, one Kṣattriya prince who is highly enterprising and is of wicked mind. He is born in the Śālva country and is a king with a powerful force of men and animals.

2.8. His brother Haṁsa, the son of Brahmadatta, was killed in the battle of the Yamunā by the high-souled Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the conquerer of the universe.

2.9. The enemy of Kṛṣṇa, with an ambition to repay the debt of his (dead) brother by avenging his death, went to Kuṇḍinapura and created an alliance with Rukmī and other princes for that purpose.

2.10. (The alliance was formed) with Śiśupāla, Druma and other kings, with Dantavakra as the prominent leader. But Jarāsandha and others were defeated in the battle.

1. V.l. entered the forest for performing Penance—VJ.

VJ.'s Text adds here :

4. A : When he departed and did not return for many years though his ministers waited for him, his younger brother was installed by them as the king, for they were in need of a monarch (to rule).

propitiated the Almighty god Śiva, subsisting himself only on a handful of dust (flour?) once a day.

5. At the end of the year, the glorious god Śiva, the consort of Pārvatī, who is easily propitiated in a short while, offered to bestow a boon on Śālva who had sought asylum with him.

6. As a boon, he prayed the god to grant him an aerial car which would go anywhere at his will and which should be impregnable to gods, Asuras, human beings, Gandharvas, serpents and Rākṣasas (demons) and which could strike terror in the heart of Vṛṣṇis.

7. "Be it so" said god Śiva, the Lord of mount Kailāsa. Commanded by Śiva. Maya, the conquerer of cities of enemies, constructed a city (like spacious aerial car) of steel, called Saubha and handed it over to Śālva.

8. Sālva obtained (in his possession) the aerial car that could move anywhere at his will and was shrouded in darkness and was inaccessible (to others).*

* *Here VJ's Text adds* :

8.1. He has now returned to his country which is militarily fully prepared with army and transport (horses, chariots, etc). Out of (all) princes, he is the only king actively preparing (for war), O king.

8.2. Having heard this report as detailed by Nārada, the affluent king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, quietly looked at the face of the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who was seated by his side.

8.3. Listening to that report, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the essence of courage and fortitude, was not disturbed at all. Laughing a bit loudly he remarked, "So be it", That is the index of his greatness.

8.4. Having worshipped the sage and paying him respects with sweet words. he thought, "It is a good thing that he who was wanted and expected for a long time, has also come now."

8.5-6. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmi, immediately despatched Ugrasena, King of Yādavas, Yuyudhāna, Akrūra, Kṛtavarmā and other prominent Yādava warriors along with his contingent of army to defend Dvārakā (against the expected attack from Śālva.)

(End of the Eightyfourth chapter in VJ.'s Text)

Śrī Śuka continued :

8.7-8. While the noble-souled Govinda was thus staying at Indra-Prastha and king Yudhiṣṭhira along with his younger brothers had accomplished his purpose (the completion of the Rājasūya sacrifice), Śālva heard that his friend Śiśupāla, the son of Damaghoṣa and Jarāsandha had been killed and the Rājasūya had been completed and he got enraged.

9. Śālva laid siege to Dvārakā with a mighty army, O prominent Bharata. He razed to ground city parks, gardens, completely.

VJ. adds :

9.A He based his camp in the air over the city and fought.

10. He destroyed the city along with its towers, gates, mansions, balconies, terraces and places of recreation. Destructive weapons were showered from that formidable aerial car (a veritable floating city).

11. Heavily fell down (upon Dvārakā) huge stones, trees, thunderbolts, serpents, a shower of gravel (hail-stones ?). Terrific tornadoes swept (across the city) ; the cardinal points were darkened with heavy dust.

12. Just as the earth was (formerly) oppressed under the scourage of Tripura, the city of Kṛṣṇa was subjected to extreme harassment by Saubha and could not get any respite or comfort.

13. The glorious Pradyumna noticed how his people were subjected to distress. Encouraging them with words "Don't fear", the highly illustrious warrior mounted his chariot.

14-15. Sātyaki, Cārudeṣṇa, Sāmba, Akrūra and his younger brothers, Kṛtavarmā, Bhānuvinda, Gada, Śuka and Sāraṇa and other renowned leaders of the army followed him in their chariots equipped with bows and arms and accoutred in coats of mail and protected by chariots, elephants, cavalry and foot-soldiers.

16. Then there raged a battle between the army of Śālva and that of the Yādavas, tumultuous and horripulating like the (bitter) struggle between gods and Asuras (in ancient times).

17. Just as the sun (the hot-rayed luminary) dispells the darkness of the night instantaneously, Pradyumna, the son of Rukmiṇī destroyed in a moment all the black magical spells of Śālva, the master of Saubha, with his celestial missiles.

18. He pierced the commander-in-chief of Śālva's army with twenty shafts with gold feathers, iron tips and well-polished knots (known as *sannataparva*)

19. He struck Śālva with a hundred arrows and every

one of his soldiers with one shaft each, leaders of every battalion (or charioteers) with ten arrows and the horses with three each.

20. Observing that great and wonderful feat of the high-souled Pradyumna, soldiers on both the sides applauded him.

21. But the aerial-car Saubha constructed by Maya had such a magical structure and contrivances that sometimes it appeared many, sometimes one, and at times it was invisible. It was thus very difficult for the enemies (Yādavas) to locate it or conceive its nature and whereabouts.

22. Sometimes Saubha was on the ground; sometimes it flew into the sky; at times it rested on the summit of a mountain; sometimes it floated on water; sometimes it whirled round like a fire-brand and was not stationary at any point—(and thus was impossible to locate).

23. So the leaders of the Yādava army discharged arrows at every such point where Śālva with his aerial car Saubha and his soldiers made their appearance.

24. With his floating city Saubha and his army being sorely oppressed by the arrows discharged by the Yādava enemies — arrows the touch of which was scorching like the fire and the sun and unapproachable like venomous serpents Śālva fainted.

25. Though the Yādava warriors were severely beaten by the volleys of weapons discharged by the leaders of Śālva's army, none of them deserted the battlefield or his respective (appointed) position, for they wanted to win both the worlds (viz. their sovereignty in the world if survived or heavenly happiness if killed) in the battle.

26. A minister of Śālva called Dyuman, a mighty warrior himself but who was previously heavily beaten (by Pradyumna), made a surprise attack on Pradyumna and striking him with a heavy iron mace, roared loudly.

27. Pradyumna's charioteer, the son of Dāruka (Kṛṣṇa's charioteer) who knew his duty (as a charioteer), carried away from the battlefield Pradyumna, the chastiser of enemies whose chest was gravely wounded by the stroke of the mace.

28. When Pradyumna, the son of Kṛṣṇa regained his consciousness after some time he blamed his charioteer, "Alas !

you have not done well in that you have removed me from the battle-field.

29. No person born in Yadu's race is known to have turned away from the battle-field except me who incurred the blemish through a weak-minded charioteer like you.

30. Having deliberately and obviously left the battlefield, what should I plead to my uncle Balarâma and father Kṛṣṇa when they meet me and enquire about my ability.

31. My brothers and sisters-in-law will jeer at me and openly ask me, "How did you fare with your enemies in the battle? How is it that you played the coward?"

The charioteer replied :

32. (It is) With full knowledge of my duty as a charioteer that I have done this, O longlived one. My Lord, the prescribed duty is that the charioteer should protect the warrior in times of peril and the warrior should reciprocally protect him.

33. Knowing this duty as a charioteer, I took you away from the battlefield as, when attacked by the enemy and struck down with a mace, you became unconscions in a Swoon.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

Slaying of King Śālva

Śrī Śuka said :

1*. Pradyumna sipped water (as *ācamana*), clad himself in armour, equipped himself with a bow and commanded his charioteer, "Please take me to the side of Dyumat".

2. While Dyumat was slaughtering his (Pradyumna's) forces, Pradyumna checked him and with a smile, he pierced him with eight arrows.

1* *VJ.'s Text adds* before verse 1.

1.A. Hearing the words spoken by the charioteer, Pradyumna, the delight of Yadus re-armed himself with weapons and told his charioteer on the battlefield.

3. With four shafts he struck the four horses (of his chariot); he hit the charioteer with one; with two he snapped his bow and flag (staff) and with another shaft he cut off his (Dyumat's) head.

4. Gada, Sātyaki, Sāmba and other Yādava heroes slaughtered the army of Śālva, the master of Saubha. All the inmates of the aerial car Saubha fell down into the sea with their necks lopped off (from the trunk of their bodies).

5. In this manner the armies of Yādavas and Śālva went on striking at each other. That terrific and tumultuous battle continued for twenty seven days and nights without break.

6. On being invited by Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, Kṛṣṇa who went to Indraprastha, stayed on there even after the completion of the Rājasūya sacrifice and slaying of Śiśupāla.

7.* He took his leave of the elders of the Kuru race, sages, Kuntī along with her sons. While he travelled to Dvārakā, he noticed very terrible portents.

4* *VJ reads*

4.A. Gada, Sātyaki, Akrūra, Sāmba, Śuka, Sāraṇa, Vasudeva and Ugrasena slaughtered the army of Śālva.

7* For verses 7-18 in ŚR.'s Text, VJ.'s Text reads the following verses (in *Vrindāvan edition*).

7.1. He noticed terrible evil omens prophesying war.

7.2. Taking leave of elders of the Kuru clan and sages and followed by Pāṇḍavas along with their ministers and accompanied by Brāhmaṇas, he set out from the city (Indraprastha).

7.3. After travelling for a short distance, he asked the citizens and the sons of Kunti to stop. He bade goodbye to the sons of Kunti who were bowing him down with tearful eyes.·

7.4. He travelled in the westerly directions with his queens riding golden palanquins, accompanied with thousands of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers and followed by a battalion of princes.

7.5. Even Śālva who (i.e. whose force) was soundly battered retreated from the battlefield with his aerial car and returned to his own dominion.

7.6. While Śālva was going, Sāmba quickly pursued him and with his arrows he sent Śālva's minister Kṣemadhūrti to the abode of the god of death.

7.7. Pradyumna ambushed Śālva's most beloved general vininda while he was passing by the way and struck him with his arrows.

8. (On the way) he said to himself, "I have come here to Indraprastha accompanied by my elder brother Balarāma. The Kṣattriya princes, the allies of Śiśupāla must have surely attacked my city (Dvārakā), in our absence.*

9. After his arrival at Dvārakā he noticed the havoc wrought upon his subjects. He then entrusted the defence of the city to Balarāma. Perceiving the aerial car Saubha and the King of Śālvas, he commanded Dāruka.

10. "Quickly bring my chariot near Śālva, O charioteer. You need not be afraid (even though) this master of Saubha is skilled in the use of black magic in war-fare."

11. Dāruka, thus commanded by Kṛṣṇa, brought the chariot near Śālva. The friends and the enemy saw him enter the battle-field.

12. Śālva whose forces were practically wiped out, saw Kṛṣṇa enter the battle. At Kṛṣṇa's charioteer he darted a lance (that sped through the air) making a roaring sound.

7.8. Deeply pierced and wounded by Pradyumna, he took up a sword and shield and fought with Pradyumna, the son of Rukmiṇi. And it was a wonderful combat.

7.9. While he was making wonderful circular manouvers, the great Yādava warrior sundered his head off his body in that duel.

7.10. When its chief commanders were killed, the army lost its way and took to heels helter-skelter, with the main object of saving life.

7.11-13. The Eagle-bannered Lord Kṛṣṇa also hastily rushed to Dvārakā and found the mansions, balconies and towers in the city, in debris; the city gates, arches and ramparts broken down; main streets and quadrangles wiped out; parks and gardens devastated; and ponds and wells filled with stones; The recitation of Vedas and the sound 'Vaṣaṭ' (of priests offering oblations to fire) were silent. Kṛṣṇa was deeply troubled at heart and asked Kṛtavarmā how this devastation took place.

7.14. Hearing from Kṛtavarmā, the details how the King of Śālva wrought this ruin (of Dvārakā) Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yādavas announced his vow while all the Sātvatas (Yādavas) were listening.

7.15. "Just now I chase Śālva and enter Dvārakā only after killing that wicked Śālva and drowning his aerial car Saubha into the sea."

7.16-17. Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the god with the emblem of Garuḍa on his banner, mounted his excellent chariot to which were yoked (the four famous horses) Śaibya, Sugriva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka; was equipped with various weapons and had Dāruka in front as the charioteer. He followed the track of Śālva with the speed of the mind and wind.

7.18. After crossing a long distance, He saw Śālva concealed under the waters of the sea but seated fully adorned in his aerial car Saubha.

* *VJ.'s Text adds* :

8-A. Pondering thus, the glorious Lord hastily arrived there coming to the battle-field, he saw Pradyumna and others.

13. Observing the lance rushing through the air with great speed and illumining all the quarters like a big meteor (or firebrand), Kṛṣṇa splintered it in hundred pieces with his arrows.

14. Hitting Śālva with sixteen shafts, he pierced the aerial car Saubha which was moving through the sky, with a volley of arrows just as the sun fills the space in the sky, with his rays.

15. Śālva wounded the left arm of Kṛṣṇa in which he wielded the Śārṅga bow. And the Śārṅga bow fell from Kṛṣṇa's hand. And it was indeed a miracle.

16. There was an outburst of wild outcry of consternation and wonder from all beings who witnessed it. The king of Saubha (i.e. Śālva) roared loudly and (boastfully) said to Kṛṣṇa:

17. "You stupid fellow ! You abducted the fiancee of our brother-like friend (Śiśupāla) in our very presence and killed our friend in the assembly at the time of Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya while he was unaware.

18. In your pride you (falsely) regard yourself as invincible. Only if you stand before me (in this battle), I shall, with my sharp arrows, send you to a place (Yama's abode) whence nobody returns."

The glorious Lord replied:

19. "You are vainly bragging, O dull witted one ! You do not perceive the god of Death standing near you. Really valiant people do not indulge in idle prattling but exhibit their valour in fighting."

20. With these words Lord Kṛṣṇa, in extreme wrath, struck down Śālva on the collar-bone with his mace of terribly vehement force. (Under that blow) Śālva was thoroughly shaken and vomitted blood.

21. While the mace returned (to Kṛṣṇa) Śālva disappeared. Then within a short while a man approached him, bowed to him with his head and while sobbing told him, "I am sent by Devakī (with a message).

22. O Kṛṣṇa, of powerful arms. O Kṛṣṇa, so affectionate to parents ! Your father is captured and dragged away

by Śālva even as a butcher does to an animal to be slaughtered."

23. Hearing this unpleasant news, Kṛṣṇa exhibited His human nature. Deeply troubled at heart, despondent and overcome with filial affection, he exclaimed like an ordinary mortal.

24. "How is it possible that unperturbable Balarāma who is invincible to gods and Asuras (together) was defeated by this despicable Śālva and my father was taken away as a captive. (Ultimately) Providence is all powerful."

25. While Govinda was uttering these words, Śālva, the Lord of Saubha, made his appearance bringing with him someone resembling Vasudeva and threatened Kṛṣṇa :

26. "This is your own father who brought you forth in this world and for whom you live. Before your very eyes, I shall slay him. Save him if you can, you childish fellow !"

27. Having threatened him thus, Śālva, the master of black magic cut off the head (of the semblance) of Vasudeva and taking it with him, he entered his aerial car Śaubha that was near him in the air.

28. By nature, Kṛṣṇa was the embodiment of pure knowledge. But even he was overwhelmed with human weakness and remained plunged for a while (for a *muhūrta*) in sorrow, due to his affection for his relative (father). Then that Lord of majestic lustre realized all that scene to be nothing but an illusion of *Asura* type spread by Śālva as per instructions of Maya.

29. Just as a person awakened from the dream finds the dream-scene vanished, that Immutable Lord Kṛṣṇa, after 'waking up' (disenchantment) from the illusory effect of Śālva's Māyā, found that there was neither the messenger nor the dead body of his father on the battlefield. Seeing his enemy ranging through the sky in his aerial car Saubha, he determined to kill him.

30*. In this way, O royal sage, some sages give an in-

*. Verses 23-28 give the view of inconsistent thinkers as ŚR. points out that Balarāma never went to Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya.

consistent version. They do not remember that their words will prove contradictory.

31. Where are grief, delusion, attachment or fear which are possible to be found only in the ignorant ? How can these be presumed to affect the Absolute Lord, the master of Perfect knowledge, wisdom and Divine potencies of omnipotence, omnipresence.

32*. How could there be any possibility of Lord Hari being subjected to delusion—the Lord who is the shelter of those saintly persons who through the worship and service of his feet have obtained enlightenment in the knowledge of *ātman* (the self). With this knowledge of *Ātmavidyā*, these righteous people completely destroyed wrong notions existing from times

VR. From Vyāsa's words it is clear that Balarāma was in charge of Dvāraka in Kṛṣṇa's absence at Rājasūya. Śālva did not invade Dvārakā—in Kṛṣṇa s absence. VJ. emphasizes the impossibility of Hari being deluded by the magic spell.

* *VJ.'s Text adds* :

32.1. O Scion of the Kuru race ! When Kṛṣṇa heard the words spoken by them, he began to strike down Śālva along with his aerial city Saubha.

32.2. Taking up his sharp discus Sudarśana, Kṛṣṇa charged it with the spell of the missile of the Fire-god and discharged it to destroy Saubha completely.

32.3. That discus charged with the spell of the missile of the Fire-god (pronounced on it) and hurled from the fore-hand of Nārāyaṇa (Lord Kṛṣṇa) and terrific with its flames went on burning upto the region of Brahmā.

32.4. All the celestials in their aerial cars felt scorched with the heat of the discus Sudarśana, cleared out of the sky and fled in all directions.

32.5. The Sudarśana discus dazzling like a hundred suns cut asunder the city of Saubha in two and again returned to the hand of Nārāyaṇa, O king Parikṣi t.

32.6. Thus the city (of Saubha) lay shattered in the sea. But the irresistible Śālva made his appearance with a mace in hand. The wicked fellow hurled his mace at Kṛṣṇa.

32.7. Getting into the chariot brought up by the Daitya army—a chariot equipped with a heap of arms—Śālva discharged innumerable weapons on the head of Kṛṣṇa and roared like a lion.

32.8. Hari split the mace hurled by Śālva, in three pieces with his arrows. He blew his conch Pāñcajanya and roared like a lion.

immemorial about the identification of the body with soul and thereby they have secured their own essential, infinite Lordly state.

33. While Śālva was vigorously attacking him with a volley of weapons, Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Śūra, of unfailing prowess, wounded Śālva deeply with his arrows and shattered to pieces Śālva's armour, cut down his bow and the jewel on his head, and knocked down to pieces (Sālva's aerial car) Saubha.

34. Knocked down by the mace darted by Kṛṣṇa's hand, Saubha was splintered into thousands of pieces and fell into the water in the form of powder. Abandoning it, Śālva landed on the earth and raising his mace quickly rushed at Kṛṣṇa.

35. With a special kind of arrow called *bhalla*, Kṛṣṇa cut down Śālva's arm with the mace as he was rushing against him (to assault). In order to finish with Śālva, Kṛṣṇa took up his miraculous discus Sudarśana which was dazzling like the burning sun at the time of the destruction of the universe. (With the discus held up in the position of hurling), he shone resplendent like the Eastern mountain with the disc of the rising sun on its summits.

36. Just as (in ancient times) Indra chopped off the head of Vṛtra, Hari, with that very Sudarśana severed the head decked with a crown and ear-rings of Śālva of extensive capacity in black-magic. And there arose an outcry of grief (alas !) from his men.

37*. O king Parīkṣit ! When that sinful Śālva fell struck

**VJ.'s Text adds* :

37.1. Celestial drums were sounded and showers of flowers were let down. Glorified by the sages and by bards like Sūta, Māgadha and Bandins, Hari came to his capital Dvārakā, surrounded by his armies.

37.2. He entered the charming city decorated with a number of flags and other decorative work, and with clean quadrangles besprinkled with water.

37.3. He (Kṛṣṇa) was honoured by elderly Yādavas as well as by men in the city and the rural areas. He delighted the sixteen thousand queens who were over-whelmed with love for him. Thus the son of Devaki lived happily and in joy, O descendant of Kurus.

were sounded in heaven by gods. Then Dantavaktra angrily attacked him for avenging the deaths of his friends (viz. Śiśupāla, Śālva).

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Dantavaktra and Vidūratha Slain :

Balarāma's Pilgrimage

*Śri Śuka said** :

1. The wicked Dantavaktra wished to demonstrate his friendship with Śiśupāla, Śālva and Pauṇḍraka who had gone to the next world (being killed by Kṛṣṇa). He wished to avenge their death by slaying Kṛṣṇa.

2. (Unaccompanied by an army or without riding a chariot) the foolish but mighty Dantavaktra rushed alone in rage with a mace in hand. Shaking the earth under his feet while walking, he confronted Kṛṣṇa.

3. Beholding him thus advancing, Kṛṣṇa quickly took up his mace and jumping down from his chariot, he resisted him as the seashore stops the flowtide of the sea.

4. Raising his mace, the foolishly arrogant king Kāruṣa (Dantavaktra) exclaimed : "How lucky it is ! I am glad that

* *VJ.'s Text adds at the beginning.*

1.1-1.2. : Having heard that Kṛṣṇa had gone to the bank of the Yamunā for the concluding bath (*avabhṛtha snāna*) of the Rājasūya sacrifice, Dantavaktra, the king of Kaliṅga, accompanied by his younger brothers and a big army consisting of elephant corps, quickly marched to ambush Kṛṣṇa while he would proceed to Dvārakā.

1.3-1.5 : Like unto a jackal obstructing a lion, the foolish Dantavaktra blockaded Kṛṣṇa who was accompanied by young Yādava princes, and was surrounded by the palanquins of his sixteen thousand queens, was followed by a group of kings, by a number of great sages, priests who officiate at sacrifices, family priests, preceptors and other Brāhmaṇas.

down with the mace and Saubha was smashed to pieces, drums you have come within the range of my sight to-day !"[1]

5*. O Kṛṣṇa ! You are the son of our maternal uncle[2]. But you are treacherous to friends (and have killed them). You Fish to slay me as well. Hence I shall kill you with my mace which is as hard as thunderbolt.

6. Being affectionate and loyal to my friends I shall pay off my debt (of friendship) to them by killing you, an enemy in the form of a cousin, just like a disease in one's body, O ignorant fool."[3]

1. As in the case of Śiśupāla's censure of Kṛṣṇa (vide *Supra* 10.74. 34-37) ŚR. gives another interpretation of Dantavaktra's reproachful speech implying Kṛṣṇa's glorification as Dantavaktra was Viṣṇu's attendant in Vaikuṇṭha.

ŚR's glorificatory interpretation of this verse :

Dantavaktra whose pride had already disappeared (at the sight of his master Viṣṇu in his original birth in Vaikuṇṭha) welcomed him, "How fortunate it is! How glad I am that your worship has presented yourself to my vision. It is certainly lucky ! Really very lucky!

*. *VJ.'s Text gives the following version* :

5.1. O Kṛṣṇa ! You are our maternal cousin but you are tracherous to friends and hunt after the wives of others. You are a traitor committing breach of trust, a murderer of relatives, fond of picking quarrels.

5.2. You have killed the son of my maternal uncle Pauṇḍraka in a battle. You have slain my cousins' brothers Rukmī and Śiśupāla. (It was Balarāma and not Kṛṣṇa who killed Rukmi).

2. Dantavaktra was the son of Śrutadevī, the sister of Vasudeva.

ŚR.'s interpretation of some adjectives to show that this is Kṛṣṇa's praise is far-fetched. For example the 2nd line in verse 5.

atastvāṁ gadayā manda haniṣye Vajrakalpayā is taken as *gadayā amanda haniṣye a-vajrakalpayā*

"O Lord capable of bearing anything! Bear up with the stroke of my gadā which is tender like a wreath of lotus.

3. ŚR.'s second interpretation of some adjectives in this verse :

ajña-(na vidyate jñaḥ yasmāt saḥ) Omniscient, *Vyādhi*—One who abides in the body as Inner Controller.

hatvā—Having arrived at the realization of your essential nature (*han* to go) *ānṛṇyam upaimi* : Pay off the debt of my ancestors (by realization of the Brahman).

"O Omniscient Lord ! Due to Sanaka's curse, I have become your cousin and enemy. But having realized your essential nature as one who abide as Inner Controller of all beings or facing you in the ways of Kṣattriyas, I shall pay off the debt of my manes."

7. Cutting to the quick Kṛṣṇa, with such harsh words like piercing an elephant with a goad, he hit Kṛṣṇa on the head with his mace and roared like a lion.

8. Though struck down with a mace in that battle, the descendant of Yadu (Kṛṣṇa) remained unshaken. Kṛṣṇa on his part hit Dantavaktra on the chest with his mace Kaumodakī.

9. With his heart shattered with the stroke of the mace, Dantavaktra vomitted blood through his mouth and he fell dead on the ground with his hair dishevelled and arms and legs outstretched.

10*. Just as it happened after the slaying of Śiśupāla, a very subtle ray of light emanated from the body of Dantavaktra and entered in the person of Kṛṣṇa — a wonderful sight indeed — while all beings were witnessing it.

11. Overwhelmed with grief for his brother, Vidūratha, Dantavaktra's brother, armed with a sword and a shield, came there having heavy sighs, but desired to kill Kṛṣṇa.

12. As he was advancing, Kṛṣṇa with his discus of sharp edge, severed off his head adorned with a diadem and ear-rings.

13-15**. Having thus demolished (the aerial car) Saubha and slain Śālva, Dantavaktra and his younger brother (Vidūratha) who were irresistible to others, Kṛṣṇa entered the decorated city of Dvārakā while his victory was being glorified

* *VJ.'s Text* : 10.1. Practically the same as verse 11 above.

10.2. He quickly jumped down from his chariot and brandishing his excellent sword and shaking the ground under his feet, he dashed against Kṛṣṇa.

10.3. When Kṛṣṇa cut off his sword with an arrow, he took up a terrible sharp-pointed *śakti*.

10.4. Determined to strike down Kṛṣṇa in the battle the foolish fellow darted towards him like an arrow discharged from a bow.

** *VJ.'s version* :

13-15.1. Having thus killed both Dantavaktra and Vidūratha in the battle, the Lord put to flight their army and captured their elephants (horses, etc.)

13.15.2. Kṛṣṇa again mounted his divine chariot *Puṣpa-ratha* which was tastefully decorated. He was accompanied by the Yādava clansmen and was praised by gods and men (in songs).

in songs by gods, men, sages, siddhas, Gandharvas (celestial singers), Vidyādharas, big serpents and by celestial damsels (*apsaras*), manes (ancestors), Yakṣas, Kinnaras and while he was being showered over with flowers and was accompanied by prominent Vṛṣṇis.

16*. In this way, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of Yoga and the Almighty controller of the Universe is ever victorious, though to the ignorant (lit. persons with the vision of brutes), he appears at times vanquished.

17. It is reported that when Balarāma heard of the war-preparations of the Kauravas against the Pāṇḍavas, he, being neutral** (with reference to the belligerent parties) went

16* *VJ.'s Text adds after verse* 16:

16.A. O descendant of Bharata ! The noble deeds of the Lord of hallowing renown are such as cannot be recounted in tens of thousands of years (even god Brahmā and others cannot do this, what of me ?).

16. B. O chastiser of enemies ! In this way the slayer of the demon Madhu (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) began (the destruction of Rākṣasas) with the demoness Pūtanā and killed all the Asuras who were a burden to the earth.

(Here ends Chapter No. 101 in VJ.'s Text)

VJ.'s introduction :

Though the life of Balarāma is interwoven with that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, two more chapters are added specifically to the life and deeds of Balarāma.

King Parikṣit said :

1. I pay my obeisance to the Soul of the universe who through dint of his deluding potency brought about the destruction of the eighteen *akṣauhiṇīs* of army (in the Mahābhārata war) in equal number of days.

2. By listening to his stories and deeds in aggregate, my bewilderment, wonder and fear go on increasing again and again.

3. I consider that most probably my sinfulness which is difficult to cross has ceased to be. My senses are wide awake and the mind is extremely delighted and serene.

4. My hunger and thirst have subsided. My soul (mind) is filled with ecstatic delight. It is through your grace, O expert in religion (religious discourse) that I feel that I have accomplished all my objects in this world.

5. I, however, wish to hear from you something more. When Balarāma found that his friends (both Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas) were bent on fighting and that he could not prevent them from doing so, he went to perform ablutions in sacred places. O sage rich in penance ! Narrate to me what Balarāma did.

* KD. states that Balarāma, out of sympathy, wanted to intervene between the warring parties incidently, when he would reach Kurukṣetra in the course of his pilgrimage—78.146.

away on the pretext of a pilgrimage for performing ablutions in sacred waters.

18. After taking bath at Prabhāsa[1] and propitiating gods, sages and manes (*pitṛs*) by offering oblations of water and satisfying men (by serving them food), Balarāma, surrounded by Brāhmaṇas, went from the mouth of the Sarasvatī[2] to its source.

19*. (On the way) he visited various holy places like Pṛthūdaka[3], Bindusaras[4], Tritakūpa[5], Sudarśana[6], Viśāla, Brahmatīrtha,[7] Cakratīrtha and the spot where the Sarasvatī flows to the east[8].

1. Somanath or Verawal in Saurashtra. It is also called Devapattana. Somanath is one of the famous twelve *jyotir-liṅgas* of god Mahādeva. In its neighbourhood are the spots where Yādavas' internecine battle and death of Kṛṣṇa took place.

—GDAMI, p. 157.

2. It appears that at that time, the Sarasvatī was still flowing into the Gulf of Cutch i.e. The Arabian sea. There is a small river Rauṇākṣī, also known as the Sarasvatī in *Vāmana P.*(ch. 84) which falls in the sea near Prabhāsa. But the later description shows that Balarāma followed the course of the Vedic Sarasvatī to its source.

* It appears that no geographical sequence is followed in the description of this pilgrimage.

3. Pehoa in the Karnal district, Panjab. It is 14 miles to the west of Thanesvar. This *Tīrtha* is on the Sarasvatī, near the famous (*Brahmayoni Tīrtha*—GDAMI, p. 16. Vainya performed nine *aśvamedha* sacrifices at Prthūdaka (VT).

4. VT. states this to be the hermitage of the sage Kardama near Siddhapura in Gujarat. N.L. De identifies it with thr same : Sitpur to the northwest of Ahmedabad—GDAMI, p. 38.

5. Tritakūpa—A place near the Sarasvatī. In that well Trita fell and was taken out of it by god Soma (VT). Probably this refers to the incident supposed to be the basis of RV. 1. 105.

6. In Kurukṣetra, the same as Rāma-hrada—a sacred tank to the north of Thanesvar. ŚR identifies Sudarśana and Cakra Tīrtha.—GDAMI, p. 43, 166.

7. A certain Tīrtha on the Sarasvatī.

8. The Kurukṣetra Sarasvatī is called Prāci or Eastern Sarasvatī (*Padma P. uttara khaṇḍa* (ch. 67). N. L. De states that this name is specially applied to the Sarasvatī that issues out of the Puṣkara Lake—GDAMI, p. 187.

20. And passing through the various sacred places which were on the Yamunā and the Gaṅgā, he went to the Naimiṣa forest[1] where sages were holding a prolonged sacrificial session.

21. Having come to know that the distinguished guest was Balarāma, the sages who were engaged in the prolonged sacrifice, received him with due formalities, rose from their seats, bowed down to him and worshipped him.

22. Balarāma who was thus worshipped, took his seat along with his followers. He noticed that Romaharṣaṇa, the disciple of the great sage Vyāsa, remained seated there, occupying a higher seat in front of the Brāhmaṇas.

23. Balarāma, the descendant of Madhu, got enraged when he found that Romaharṣaṇa, a sūta, did not rise from his seat to show reverence to him after his arrival, nor did he fold his palms to bow him and continued to occupy a higher seat in the presence of the Brāhmaṇas.

24. (He said to the Brāhmaṇas) "Why does this Sūta, a child of irregular marriage (between a Kṣattriya father and a Brāhmaṇa (mother) occupied a seat higher than Brāhmaṇas and us who are the protectors of religion and social code of conduct. This evil-minded fellow deserves to be killed.

25-26. In spite of being a disciple of that worshipful sage Vyāsa and having studied many *smṛtis* (codes of righteous and religious conduct—social and personal) along with all the works on *Itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, he lacks self control, has no sense of discipline or modesty; he vainly pretends to be a learned man. His scholarship and learning do not contribute to his real excellence as in the case of an actor who lacks control over his mind and senses.

27. It is with this specific purpose that I have taken incarnation in this world, viz. those imposters and hypocrites who merely pretend to be religious should be done away with by me; for such people are more sinful than the unrighteous."

28. Balarāma had desisted from slaying even the wicked ones (as he was a pilgrim then). But as fate would have it,

1. Modern Nimsar on the left bank of the Gomati in the Sitapur district of U.P. It is 20 miles to the North-West of Lucknow.
—GDAMI, p. 135.

the mighty Lord spoke these words and pierced the Sūta with the end of a *Kuśa* grass.

29. Terrified and dismayed in their minds, all the sages screamed out exclaiming, "Alas ! Alas". They said to Balarāma, "O Lord ! You have perpetrated an irreligious and unrighteous deed.

30. O descendant of Yadu ! This elevated seat of a Brāhmaṇa has been offered by us to him as also, a long period of life and indefatiguate body till the sacrificial session lasts.

31. May be unknowingly but you have committed what amounts to be the sin of killing a Brāhmaṇa. (It is true that) being a master of Yoga, even the Vedic injunction against killing a Brāhmaṇa is not binding on you.

32. O purifier of the world ! If your worship, however, performs, of your own accord, the expiation for the sin of *Brahmahatyā* without being prompted to do so by others, you will be setting a noble example to others.[1]

The glorious Lord Balarāma said :

33. I shall expiate for this act of *Brāhmaṇa-cide* in order tc set an example to the world. Be pleased to prescribe to me the best course of atonement for such an act.

34. Be pleased to tell me whatever is expected by you for him—such as a long span of life, strength, sound-ness of sense-organs—and I shall accomplish it for him by my Yogic potency.

The sages replied :

35. O Balarāma ! May you be pleased to act in such a way as will preserve the infallibility of your missile (charged in the *Kuśa* grass), the efficacy of your prowess, the inevitability of death and that our boon (that the sūta should narrate the *purāṇas* to the end of our sacrificial session) also may not prove untrue.

1. *yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ /*
sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate // —BG.3.2

Lord Balarāma said :

36. It is declared by the Vedas that it is one's own self that is born as a son.[1] His son Ugraśravas will now be the expounder of the Purāṇas and he will be blessed with a long life, bodily strength and keenness of senses (and intelligence).

37. O great sages ! Be pleased to tell me what else you wish to have and I shall accomplish it for you. O learned sages ! Please consider and advise me the course of expiation for the sin committed by me unknowingly.

The sages said :

38. There is a terrible Dānava, named Balvala, the son of Ilvala. On every *parva* (full-moon and new-moon) days, he comes here and pollutes the sanctity of our sacrifice.

39. He showers (on the sacred sacrifice) puss, blood, faeces, urine, wine and flesh. Please kill that wicked demon and that will be the most valuable service rendered to us by you, O descendant of Daśārha.

40. Thereafter, for twelve months you go round the Bhāratavarṣa and with a serene mind take bath in the sacred waters. Thereby being absolved of the sin, you will be purified.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-NINE

Balvala Killed : Balarāma's Pilgrimage

Śrī Śuka narrated :

1. O king Parīkṣit ! When the next *parva* (full moon) day came, a terrible, violent stormy wind swept over the place showering heavy dust and filling the whole atmosphere with obnoxious odour on all sides.

1. *aṅgād aṅgāt sambhavasi hṛdayād abhijāyase /*
ātmā vai putra-nāmāsi sa jīva śaradaḥ śatam//
—Kauṣitaki Up. 2.7.

Balarāma exhorts the sages to install Ugraśravas in the place of Romaharṣaṇa and all the boons promised to him by the sages will be now effective in the case of the son of Romaharṣaṇa.

2. Then there was a downpour of filthy things on the sacrificial ground, caused by Balvala, after which he appeared with a trident in hand.

3-4. Beholding that *asura* of gigantic body, extremely black like a heap of collyrium, with hair on the head, moustaches and beard like red-hot copper and a face terror-inspiring with its fierce tusks and terrific knit brows, Balarāma remembered (his weapons)—the pestle that shatters hostile forces and the plough which vanquishes demons. And both the weapons immediately presented themselves to him.

5. With the point of his plough, he pulled to the ground, Balvala who was ranging through the sky and full of indignation, he struck that sworn enemy of Brāhmaṇas on the head with a pestle.

6. With his forehead shattered and split open and bleeding profusely, the demon gave out a helpless yell and fell down to the ground like a mountain struck with Vajra and covered with liquid red chalk.

7. The sages applauded Balarāma (for this feat) and pronounced their unfailing benedictions. Those highly blessed sages sprinkled sacred waters on Balarāma (as *abhiṣeka*) as gods did to Indra when he killed Vṛtra.

8. They presented to Balarāma a celestial five-coloured *Vaijayantī* garland of unfading flowers (chiefly lotuses, two excellent pieces of cloth and very valuable ornaments.

9. Then with the permission of those sages, Balarāma, accompanied with Brāhmaṇas went to the Kauśikī[1] river. After taking bath therein, he proceeded to the lake[2] from which the Sarayū flows out.

10. From its source and travelling along the current of the Sarayū, Balarāma reached Prayāga. He took his bath there-

1. Modern Kośī running from Nepal by the western border of the Purnea district in Bihar. The river has been tamed by dams now. Was it in the *Kokāmukha tīrtha* where Balarāma took his bath? —SGAMI, pp. 278-80, 340.

2. The Purāṇas believe that the Mānasa lake is the source of the Sarayū. But the river rises in the mountains of Kumaun and after its junction with the *Kālī nadī*, it is called the Sarayū. Ayodhyā is on its bank. —GDAMI, p. 181-82.

in, offered water oblations to gods (sages and manes) and proceeded to the hermitage of Pulaha.[1]

11-12. He bathed in the Gomatī, Gaṇḍakī, Vipāśā[2] the Śoṇa and visited Gayā and worshipped his ancestors. After taking his bath at the confluence of the Gaṅgā with the sea, he met Paraśurāma and paid his respects to him on the Mahendra[3] hill. He took bath in the seven branches of the Godāvarī, the Veṇā, the Pampā[4] and the river Bhīmā.

13. After paying a visit to the temple of Skanda, he went to Śrī Śaila[5]. The great Balarāma then visited the holy mountain Veṅkaṭa in the Draviḍa land.

14. Lord Balarāma then visited the city of Kāñcī[6] known as Kāmakoṣṇī[7] (Kāmakoṭī) and the great river Kāverī, he paid visit to the holy place known as Śrīraṅga[8] (Srirangam) where Lord Hari ever abides.

15. He then went to the Ṛṣabha[9] hill, a sacred place dedicated to Hari. He then visited Setu[10]—the dam built across the sea (by Rāmacandra) where people are absolved of very heinous sins.

1. The same as Śālagrāma, near the source of the Gaṇḍak —GDAMI, p. 161 & 174.

2. The Beas. It is difficult to plot the route followed by Balarāma as the *purāṇa* writer has vague idea of the geography of north India.

3. The range of hills extending from Orissa to the district of Madura. It is applied to Eastern Ghats in general—SGAMI, p. 61. N.L. De states that Mahendra hills separate Ganjam from the valley of the Mahanadi—GDAMI p. 119.

4. A tributary of the Tuṅga-bhadrā. It rises in the Rsyamūka hills in Bellary district.

5. Also called Śrī Parvata (GDAMI, p. 193) It is a hill in the Nallamalur range and a famous Tīrtha in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh.—SGAMI, p. 336.

6. Modern Conjeveram on the river Palar, 43 miles south-west of Madras. The eastern part of the town is called *Viṣṇu Kāñci* and western part as *Śiva kāñci* —GDAMI, p. 86

7. N.L. De identifies it with Kumbhakonam but he is doubtful about it.—GDAMI, p. 86.

8. Śrīraṅgam, 2 miles to the north of Trichinopoly, Tamil Nad. Famous for its Viṣṇu temple (Śrī Raṅgam) —GDAMI, p. 193.

9. The Palni hills in Madura. They form the northern portion of the Malaya mountain. The hills are locally known as *Varāha Parvata*—GDAMI, p. 169.

10. The Adam's bridge between India and Ceylon Rameshwaram is the first island in this chain of islets. It is called *Saṅgama Tīrtha* also —GDAMI, p. 184.

16. Balarāma gave ten thousand cows to the Brāhmaṇas there. He then visited the rivers Kṛta-mālā, Tāmraparṇī and the mountain-chain called the Malaya (one of the seven important mountain ranges in India).

17. There he paid respects to the sage Agastya who was established on the mountain. After receiving blessings from him and with his permission, Balarāma went to the south-sea where he visited the goddess Durgā (Pārvatī), known there as Kanyā (at Kanyā Kumārī).

18. Next he visited the sacred place called Phālguna[1] and the lake called Pañcāpsaras (five celestial damsels) noted for the special presence of Viṣṇu. He performed ablution therein and gave ten thousand cows (to Brāhmaṇas).

19. Then Lord Balarāma went to Kerala, Trigarta.[2] (From thence he proceeded to the famous Śaivite holy place Gokarṇa where god Śiva is ever-present.

20. Having visited the shrine of Pārvatī (designated as Āryā) on the island, Balarāma proceeded to Śūrpāraka (Sopara, Dist. Thana, Maharashtra). After taking bath in the Tāpī, the Payoṣṇī[3] and the Nirvindhyā[4], he entered the Daṇḍaka forest.

21. (From that forest) he entered the river Narmadā on the banks of which is situated the city of Māhiṣmatī[5]. He performed ablution in the Manutīrtha and again returned to Prabhāsa.

22. Having heard from the Brāhmaṇas the report of the destruction of all Kṣattriya princes (participating) in the war

1. ŚR identifies it with Anantapur, fiftysix miles to the south-east of Bellary. Pañcāpsarā tīrtha is near it. VB. calls it 'Anantaśayana'. He states that the five divine damsels were restored to their original status by Arjuna. Hence it is called *Pañcāpsaras*.

2. North Canara in Karnataka—GDAMI, p. 205.

3. The Pain-gaṅgā. a tributary of the Godavari—SGAMI, p. 57.

4. The Newuj, a tributary of the Chambal flowing between the Betwa and the Kalisindh—SGAMI, p. 57.

5. Modern Maheshwar, forty miles to the south of Indore. It was the capital of Haihayas. In the Buddhist canon in the *Mahā Govinda sutta* (*Dīgha Nikāya* 29.36) it is called Māhissati and it was the capital of Avanti (Malwa).

between Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, he considered it as the removal of the burden of the earth.

23. The scion (or the delight) of the Yadu's race (Balarāma) went to Kurukṣetra with the desire of preventing Bhīma and Duryodhana from their single combat with their maces on the battle-field.

24. As soon as Yudhiṣṭhira, the twins Nakula, Sahadeva and even Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna saw him, they bowed to him but they kept quiet, as they were afraid why he had come over there and what he wanted to say.

25. He saw both Bhīma and Duryodhana, with maces in hand, both highly enraged and bent on vanquishing the other, were making wonderful manoeuvres (in the combat with maces). He spoke to them :

26. "O king (Duryodhana), O Bhīma, both of you are warriors equal in strength. I think one of you is superior in physical strength while the other excels in training.

27. As both of you are equal in prowess, I do not see that either of you will be victorious or vanquished. Hence, such a fruitless combat should be stopped altogether.

28. O Parīkṣit ! The enmity of these two inveterate adversaries was so deepseated that neither of them accepted his advice, though it was salutary and significant. For they did not forget their mutual offensive words and the wicked deeds.

29. Considering that the combat was destined (as a fruit of their past acts and hence inevitable), Balarāma returned to Dvārakā. He was received there warmly by Ugrasena and other relatives who were glad at his arrival.

30. (Balarāma took him with all the necessary materials and assistants for performing sacrifices). He again visited the Naimiṣa forest. The sages, acting as his sacrificial priests, gladly helped Balarāma whose person was constituted of sacrifice (or sacrifices formed a part of his personality) and who kept himself aloof from the (Kaurava-Pāṇḍava) war, in the performance of all sacrifices.

31. The almighty Lord Balarāma imparted to them highly pure spiritual wisdom by virtue of which the sages re-

alized that the whole universe is in their Self and that their self pervaded all the universe.

32. Having performed the concluding bath of the sacrifice along with his consort Revatī and accompanied by his clansmen, relatives and friends, Balarāma who put on excellent dress and was well adorned, shone like the moon radiating its own (moon-) light.

33. Innumerable are other feats and exploits (of such a nature) of the mighty Balarāma who is infinite (or Ananta or the serpent Śeṣa himself) and incomprehensible by nature. He has assumed the form of a mortal being by his own Māyā potency.

34. He who remembers and contemplates over the feats of Balarāma who performed miraculous deeds, both in the morning and the evening, becomes a beloved of the infinite Lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTY*

The Story of the Brāhmaṇa Śrīdāman[1]

King Parikṣit requested :

1. O worshipful sage ! We desire to hear of other glorious exploits of the noble-souled Kṛṣṇa of infinite powers and glory, O master.

2. What person (on earth) who has the power of discernment of what is excellent and the quintessence of things but has suffered sorely from the shafts of passions and desires, and had once the opportunity of listening to the holy and true

* VJ. : Before beginning the description of Kṛṣṇa's placid life at home in Dvārakā after the Mahābhārata war, VJ.'s text describes the interim activition of Kṛṣṇa such as visiting Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī and departure from Hastināpura. (for this refer Appendix, Chapter eighty-I.)

1. The text of the Bh. P. is silent about the name of the Brāhmaṇa. The name given here is on the strength of the colophon of the chapter.

stories of the Lord of hallowed renown, would desist from listening to them, O Brāhmaṇa sage ?

3. That is the only real speech (tongue) with which Lord's excellences are extolled. Those hands deserve their designation as hands which engage themselves in his service. That mind is worth its name which contemplates on him who abides in all the mobile and immobile creation. Only that ear (is the blessed and) deserves to be called such (viz. the ear) which listens to the holy stories of the Lord.

4. That head deserves to be called such as bows down to him as manifested in both mobile or immobile forms (or lays itself on the ground to bow to him and his votaries). That is the real eye which sees the Lord (in everything and everywhere). Those are the real parts of the body, which always resort to the waters that wash the feet of the Lord as well as those of his devotees (i.e. sprinkle themselves and get purified with those waters).[1]

Sūta said :

5. When the worshipful son of Bādarāyaṇa was thus requested by king Parīkṣit, Śuka whose heart is immersed in (the meditations of) the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, said.

Śri Śuka began to narrate :

6. There was a certain Brāhmaṇa friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He was a pastmaster in the knowledge of the Vedas (or the supreme Brahman), free from attachment to the objects of senses. He was perfectly serene in mind and possessed complete control over his senses.

7. Though he was leading the life of a householder, he subsisted on whatever came his way without asking or trying for it. He was (naturally) ill-clad and his wife also who was like him (had no sufficient clothing to cover her person) but was of the same spirit, had grown emaciated with hunger.

8. That poverty-stricken chaste lady who was devoted to her husband but whose body was trembling (with weakness)

1. VT. cautions that this sprinkling is limited to the limbs of the upper part (*nābher ūrdhvam*) of the body.

and with a withered countenance, approached her husband and submitted :

9. "Is it not a fact, O Brāhmaṇa, that Kṛṣṇa, the Consort of Lakṣmī incarnate, is a personal friend of your worshipful self? The glorious Lord, the leader of Sātvatas, is a friend and devotee of Brāhmaṇas and a worthy asylum to those who seek shelter in him.

10. Blessed Sir, be pleased to approach him who is the ultimate resort of the righteous and saintly people. He will (immediately understand your circumstances and) bestow abundant wealth on you, who are a poverty-stricken householder.

11. That Lord of Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi and Andhaka clans now resides at Dvārakā. If his lotus feet are remembered, he gives away even his own self (to them. He is so generous). Will not that father and preceptor of the world confer wealth and worldly desires on his devotees, as both these are not very important comparatively (as gifts to his votaries).

12. When he was thus softly entreated by his wife many times, the soft-natured Brāhmaṇa thought, "It will be a supreme blessing at least that I shall gain at the sight of the Lord of holy renown.

13. With these considerations, he made up his mind to go (to Dvārakā). (As it was customary not to see a king or a guest empty-handed, but to offer him something as a present) he said, "Is there anything in the house worth giving as a present to Kṛṣṇa? If so, give that with me, O blessed lady."

14. The lady solicited the (neighbouring) Brāhmaṇas to give her some *pṛthukas* (fried and beaten rice). Having secured four handfuls of such rice, she tyed them up in a rag and handed over them to her husband as 'Present' to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

15. With those handfuls of rice as present, the Brāhmaṇa travelled the city of Dvārakā anxiously thinking all the while, "How will it be possible for me to gain a sight of Lord Kṛṣṇa?"

16. Accompanied by other Brāhmaṇas, he crossed the three check posts of guards[1] and the defensive ramparts of the city

1. According to verse quoted by VT. a *gulma* or checkpost consists of nine elephants, nine chariots, twentyseven horsemen and fortyfive foot-soldiers.

and the mansions of Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis who followed the path of righteousness ordained by Lord Kṛṣṇa—which were inaccessible to other persons.

17. Out of the sixteen thousand palaces of the queens of Kṛṣṇa, the Brāhmaṇa entered one of them which appeared specially affluent and splendid, with the feeling of supreme bliss in merging with the Brahman.

18. Noticing from a distance that the Brāhmaṇa was coming, Lord Kṛṣṇa who then occupied a sofa with his beloved (Rukmiṇī), instantly rose from his seat, went forward to receive him and joyfully embraced him closely with both of his arms.

19. The lotus-eyed Lord felt extremely happy at the touch of the person of his beloved friend, the Brāhmaṇa sage and he shed tears of joy from his eyes.

20-21. Then he seated him on his own couch; and personally washed his feet and sprinkled his own head with the drops of water with which he washed the Brāhmaṇa's feet. O king Parīkṣit, the Lord who purifies the whole universe, smeared the Brāhmaṇa with excellent perfumes such as pastes of sandal aloe-wood and saffron.

22. Having worshipped his friend with perfumed fumes and rows of lamps, he offered him a cow as a gift, a betel-leaf (with its usual contents of areca-nut powder, cloves, etc.) and greeted him warmly with sweet words of welcome.

23. It is said that the queen Rukmiṇī herself, with a *chowrie* in her hand, fanned the ill-clad Brāhmaṇa of emaciated dusty body the veins of which were visible.

24. The ladies in the harem were really astonished to see that a semi-nude Brāhmaṇa is worshipped with so much affection by Lord Kṛṣṇa of such a spotless reputation.

25-26. (They commented) : "What meritorious act must have been performed by this naked beggarly Brāhmaṇa, destitute of wealth and censured as worthless in the world, that he was greatly honoured by the preceptor of the three worlds, the abode of the goddess Śrī. But he discarded the goddess Lakṣmī who was occupying the sofa with him and embraced him as if he were his elder brother."

27. O king ! Holding each other by the hand, they recounted to each other the sweet stories of the incidents that

happened while both of them lived together in their teacher's hermitage in their student days.

The glorious Lord enquired :

28. O dear Brāhmaṇa, expert in religion ! Please tell me if, after the completion of your course of education and after honouring your teacher with the payment of fee for education, you have married a wife suitable to you or have not done so as yet.

29. I learn that even as a householder, your mind is not interested in objects of enjoyment and being a learned man you are not so much after money.

30. Like unto myself who perform action to set example to the world, there are some people who discharge their duties without being affected by desires at heart and avoid the fascinations created by the celestial potency of the Lord.

31. Do you remember, O Brāhmaṇa, our stay in the house of our preceptor? It is there that a twice-born one knows everything worth knowing from his preceptor and ultimately reaches beyond the darkness (of *saṁsāra*).

32. Dear friend ! He from whom one is born (and thus invested with the body) is the first *guru* (preceptor). He from whom one becomes twice-born (by performance of the *upanayana*—investiture of the sacred thread) and becomes eligible for study of Vedas and performance of religious duties is the second preceptor. And one who imparts spiritual knowledge directly to persons belonging to all *āśramas* (stages of life)—is the Third *guru*(preceptor) and is veritably identical with me.

33. (Hence, those who resort to me as the preceptor giving enlightenment in spiritual knowledge, and cross the *saṁsāra* are the really intelligent ones) O Brāhmaṇa ! Those who, in this mundane existence, obtain oral instructions (in spiritual matters) from me as their preceptor, easily cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*, as they know the real essence in the order of *varṇas* (social classes) and *āśramas* (stages of life).

34. I abide in all beings as their Inner Controller. Just as I am pleased by rendering services (to the spiritual preceptor), I shall not be pleased (that much) by performance of sacrifices (or the duties of a householder's life), by birth in

excellent family, by the performance of the investiture of the sacred thread of *upanayana* (implying the observance of duties of a *brahmacārin* or a celibate person). Nor shall I be pleased so much with penance (in the *Vānaprastha* stage of life) or by the path of quietism (followed by *sannyāsins*).

35. Do you remember, O Brāhmaṇa, the incident which happened while we were staying at our preceptor's hermitage and were once sent by our preceptor's wife to bring fuel.

36. And how when we entered into the thick jungle, suddenly, out of season, there was an outbreak of a mighty violent storm, heavy down-pour of rain and terrible roaring of thunder over our heads.

37. In the meanwhile the sun set and all the quarters were enveloped in darkness and the undulations of the ground being covered under water we could not discern the high or the low level of the land.

38. Then failing to discern the direction to be followed and sorely beaten by the repeated violent blasts of wind and showers in the forest flooded with water, we were afraid and holding each other by hand, wandered here and there.

39. Having come to know of this after sunrise, our teacher Sāndīpani came in search of us with his disciples and found us in a bewildered condition.

40. He cried out, "O my children, you have undergone extreme hardships for our sake. Life or the soul is verily dearest to all. But you evinced devotion unto me disregarding even that (your life).

41. It is in this manner that a good disciple should repay his debt (of gratitude) to his preceptor, namely that he should offer with a sincere heart, whatever he has with him (including his very life).

42. O prominent among twice-borns ! I am really very much pleased. Let all your desires be fulfilled. May your knowledge of the Vedas never fail you either here or hereafter."

43. Many other such incidents took place during our residence in the house of our preceptor. It is by the grace of the preceptor that a man becomes perfect and eligible for supreme peace.

The Brāhmaṇa (Śrīdāman) replied :

44. O God of gods ! O Preceptor of the universe ! When we stayed in the preceptor's house, what was there that we did not accomplish through the help of you whose resolutions always turn out to be true.

45. O Almighty Lord ! Your person is constituted of the Vedas and you are the repository of all blessings; your stay in the house of the preceptor is certainly a wonderful imitation of the ways of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The Story of the Parched Rice

(The story of Śrīdāman continued)

Śri Śuka said :

1. While Hari was conversing with the prominent Brāhmaṇa on such matters he, knowing as he did the minds of all beings, spoke to him smilingly.

2. Lord Kṛṣṇa was friendly to Brāhmaṇas and he was certainly the asylum of the pious. Looking at his dear Brāhmaṇa friend with an affectionate glance, he laughed loudly and asked in a joking mood:

The Lord said:

3. "What present have you brought for me from your house, O Brāhmaṇa? Even the slightest offering—a particle given with affection by my devotees is considered by me as very great, but even if a lot of presents are given to me by one who is not my votary, they are not conducive to my joy or satisfaction.

4. A person who devoutly offers me a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water, I enjoy that which has been brought to me with devotion by a person of controlled and pure mind."

5. Even though the Brāhmaṇa was thus requested, he felt so much abashed that he did not hand over the present of

pṛthukas (parched, flattened rice) to the Lord of the goddess Śrī and simply hung his head, O king.

6-7. But the Lord can directly see what goes in the minds of all beings and he knew definitely the cause of Śridāman's visit. He thought to himself, "This Brāhmaṇa never approached me or worshipped me for money. This friend of mine has come here for pleasing his virtuous wife (in compliance of her entreaty). I shall bestow upon him wealth which is rare even for immortal gods.

8. Thinking thus within himself, he, of his own accord, snatched from under the clothes of the Brāhmaṇa, the parched flattened rice tied up in a rag (and brought by way of present to Śrī Kṛṣṇa) asking him, "What is it ?

9. My dear friend ! This present (parched rice-eatable) is exceedingly to my liking. These flattened parched rice will thoroughly satisfy me who am the Soul of the universe."

10. Saying thus, he ate handful of those rice and took another handful for eating when his consort Śrī (i.e. Rukmiṇī who was so devoted to him caught hold of the hand of the Supreme[1] Lord, (claiming that other handful of rice to herself).

11. "O Soul of the Universe ! This (handful of eaten rice) is more than sufficient in granting him all kinds of wealth and prosperity both here and hereafter. This much is quite enough for your satisfaction."

12. The Brāhmaṇa passed that night happily in the palace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He partook of the feast and drink and felt himself to be in the celestial world itself.

13. The next morning, he set out for his home. He was however, followed some distance by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Creator of the Universe, the very embodiment of essential spiritual bliss who delighted him with his friendly talk.

14. But the Brāhmaṇa who was happy with seeing his great friend, returned home abashed on account of the mean-

1. ŚR. explains the significance of this prohibition to eat another handful as follows : one handful is enough to bestow on the poor Brāhmaṇa all the wealth and affluence. But by eating another handful, she will be at the service of the Brāhmaṇa (instead of Lord Kṛṣṇa)—a calamity she wanted to avoid.

ness of his heart as he did not get any money from Kṛṣṇa nor did he of his own accord request him for it.

15. (On the way, he said to himself): "How wonderful ! The Lord is known for his friendliness to Brāhmaṇas which has been personally experienced by me, as the bearer of the goddess Lakṣmī on his bosom held me in close embrace—me who am the wretchedmost.

16. What a world of difference there is between me, a poverty-stricken sinner and Lord Kṛṣṇa, the abode of Lakṣmī. But I have been embraced by him with both of his arms because of my birth as a Brāhmaṇa (so kind and friendly he is to Brāhmaṇas).

17. Just like a brother, I was seated on the same sofa that was occupied by his beloved queen. Fatigued as I was, I was fanned by the Queen herself with a chowry in her hand.

18. I was adored like a god by Kṛṣṇa, the God of gods who treats Brāhmaṇas as his deities. He rendered me the highest service by personally shampooing my feet, applying sandal-pastes, etc.

19. Worship of his feet is the primary cause for men to be blessed with happiness in heaven or the bliss in the *Mokṣa* and all the affluence available either in this world or the nether-world and of mastery over all miraculous powers (*Siddhis*).

20. The Lord thought that if a penniless fellow (like me) should gain wealth, it would turn his head and would not remember me. It is with this consideration that the merciful Lord has not bestowed any wealth on me."

21. While he was musing thus, he arrived at the site of his home-stead. And Lo ! It was surrounded on all sides by a palace several storeys high and resplendent like the sun, fire and the moon.

22. It was surrounded with wonderfully beautiful pleasure gardens and groves swarming with the melodiously warbling birds and with pools and tanks in which various types of lilies, lotuses, night-lotuses were in full blossom.

23. It was manned by well-adorned male attendants and beautiful female attendants with gazelle-like eyes. The

Brāhmaṇa could not recognise what it was, whose place it was and how was it that it was transformed so wonderfully.

24. While the Brāhmaṇa was pondering over that metamorphosis (of his humble home-stead) god-like glamorous men and women advanced to welcome the highly fortunate Brāhmaṇa with excellent vocal and instrumental music.[1]

25. Hearing that her husband had returned, the Brāhmaṇa's wife was transported with ecstatic delight. And in her joyous impatience, she hurriedly came out of the house (to receive him) like unto the goddess Lakṣmī incarnate coming out of her (heavenly) abode.

26. At the sight of her husband, the chaste lady had her eyes full of tears of love and eagerness. (Out of shyness) she closed her eyes and mentally paid respects to him and embraced him in her mind.

27. He was astonished to see his wife gloriously glamorous like a celestial damsel and shining (in her deportment) in the midst of maid-servants adorned with necklaces of gold coins.

28. Being beside himself with joy, he entered in the company of his wife, his own mansion which was furnished with hundred(s) of columns of precious stones and which resembled the palace of the great Indra.

29. His palace was furnished with beds white (and soft) like the foam of milk. The bedsteads were of ivory chased in gold and the fans and *chowries* had gold handles.

30. The seats were of gold provided with soft cushions. And wreathes of pearls were hanging from brilliant canopies.

31. The palace walls were of pure crystals studded with big emeralds and in them he saw excellent dolls of precious stones holding refulgent jewel lamps in their hands (to illumine the room).

1. VT in his com. on Verse 22-23 clarifies that when Śridāman stayed that night at Dvārakā and his wife in her humble cottage, this miraculous transformation of her cottage took place. When she got up and was astonished to see the change, the attendants explained how this metamorphosis was due to Lord Kṛṣṇa's, Grace. So in order that her husband should not feel confused, she instructed the attendants to receive him, etc.

32. Beholding such abundance of wealth, affluence and luxury, the Brāhmaṇa, with a dispassionate mind began to reflect upon that 'cause-less' un-sought-for windfall of wealth in his care.

33. "I am indeed unfortunate (from my childhood) and am confirmed in eternal poverty. But the cause of this unexpected prosperity can be traced to nothing else but the gracious visit (I had the privilege to obtain) of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the leader of Yadus, the master of infinite wealth.

34. My friend, the foremost of the Dāśārhas is infinitely liberal and is perfect in all blessings. Though he bestows abundantly upon his suppliants like the rain-god, he regards his gift as insignificant and nominal. Knowing the minds of his devotees he gives immense riches to them but does not promise them directly. (He is a silent but highly munificent donor).

35. Although what he gives is immensely abundant, he looks upon it as very little. And whatever insignificant is offered by his friends, he regards it as very great. That high-souled affectionate friend accepted with pleasure only a handful of the parched, flattened rice taken by me for him.

36. May I, in every future birth, be blessed with his good-will, friendship, love and service. May I have the fortune of associating myself with his devotees and may I cherish (ever-increasing) devotion to that abode of excellences and glorious powers.

37. For the Eternal Omniscient glorious Lord himself notices the downfall of the rich caused by the pride of their wealth, and does not wish to confer wonderful affluence, kingship and other spiritual powers or authorities on his devotee (even though he may solicit it) but grants them to the shortsighted ones.

38. Having come to this conclusion by intelligent thinking, the Brāhmaṇa who was devoutly and excessively attached to Kṛṣṇa, did not become much attached to those pleasures, but with the intention of renouncing them, he enjoyed those pleasures with his wife, but with little attachment to them.

39. To the Almighty Lord Hari, the God of gods, the

Lord and Protector of Sacrifices, Brāhmaṇas are his deities. To him, nothing is higher then Brāhmaṇas.

40. In this way, the Brāhmaṇa friend of the Lord realized that the Unvanquished Lord Kṛṣṇa is easily agreeable to the will of his devotees. His personal bonds (of ignorance or attachment) were cut asunder by the force of his intensive meditation. And in a short while, he attained to the Lord's region (Vaikuṇṭha), the highest goal of the righteous people.

41. A person who listens to this account of the grace showered on a Brāhmaṇa by the God who is friendly to Brāhmaṇas attains devotion unto the Lord and becomes free from the bonds of Karmas.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO[1]

Meeting of Vṛṣṇis and Gopas of Vṛndāvana

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On one occasion, while Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were staying at Dvārakā, there occurred a complete eclipse of the sun, as it was at the time of deluge.

2. Being informed of it (beforehand astronomically), all (religious-minded) people from all sides went to the sacred place called Syamantapañcaka (Kurukṣetra) with the object of securing merits.

3. It was at that sacred place that Paraśurāma, the most prominent warrior, caused those big pools filled with the bloods of kings, while attempting to exterminate all Kṣattriyas from the earth.

4. Though the glorious Lord Paraśurāma was untouched by any *Karma* (despite his punitive action), in order to set a model example to people, he performed a sacrifice there for expiation of that sin (of killing Kṣattriyas) as an ordinary person will have to do.

1. The additional verses from VJ.'s Text are added here from Ch. 70 as printed on pp. 309-310 of the Vrindaban edition.

5. People from all over Bhāratavarṣa came to that most important place of pilgrimage.

VJ.'s Text adds :

5A-B. Śrī Kṛṣna accompanied with the palanquins of his sixteen thousand queens, by his sons, grandsons, multitudes of citizens, army-units, courtesans, she-elephants, by bevies of ladies from the city and other women-friends.

5-6. Vṛṣṇis as well as (elderly persons like) Akrūra, Vasudeva and Āhuka assembled to that sacred place to absolve themselves of their sins. And Gada, Pradyumna, Sāmba and others did the same.

7-8. Along with Sucandra (Rukmiṇī's son Cārucandra), Śuka and Sāraṇa, Aniruddha and the chief of the army Kṛtavarmā were posted for the protection of the city. With their chariots resembling celestial cars, with fleet horses springing like waves, with trumpeting elephants like thundering clouds and men appearing splendid like celestial beings (Vidyādharas), Yādavas who were adorned with wreaths of gold appeared extremely splendid and pompous on the way.[1]

1. *VJ.'s Text adds*:

8.1-2. With loud chantings of Vedic hymns and playing of instrumental music, and in accompaniment of the flourish of the sounds of conchs and beating of drums, they went on singing and repeating the name of Kṛṣṇa and Govinda continuously. In this way, they filled all the quarters with great noise as they went, O best of Kurus.

8.3. As they reached the holy place Syamantapañcaka, well known all over the three worlds, they built up hutments (dwelling places) with thatched roof, matting and wood (lit. with long grass and sticks).

8.4 Tents with blankets, deerskin and canvass were pitched up for kings. They were hundreds and thousands in number and had a variety of forms.

8.5 There arrived a number of kings, thousands of Brāhmaṇas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras and innumerable persons of lower castes.

8.6. And noble-souled sages of high reputation and of praiseworthy observance of vows, with preceptors, some maintainers of consecrated fire (*agni-hotrins*), some life-long celibate students and householders.

8.7. The blind, the deaf, the hunchbacks, dwarfs and physically handicapped people, persons with retarded intelligence, dumb persons—all are desirous of being absolved of their past actions.

8.8 All of them adorned their heads with the dust on the lotus-feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, beautified with ornaments like bracelets, armlets (both on the lower and upper part of the forearm), garlands and ear-rings.

9. Like celestials ranging through the sky, along with their wives, they put on heavenly garlands, rich clothes. Arriving at Syamanta-pañcaka, those highly blessed people took their bath, observed a fast and were perfectly serene and self possessed in mind.

10. They gave to Brāhmaṇas gifts of cows covering them with clothes and adoring them with garlands and chains of gold. (And after the eclipse was over) the Vṛṣṇis again took a bath as per formalities in the pools created by Paraśurāma.

11-12. The Vṛṣṇis to whom Kṛṣṇa was their deity, served delicious food to prominent Brāhmaṇas and prayed, "May we be blest with constant devotion to Kṛṣṇa. With the permission of the Brāhmaṇas, they broke their fast. And they took rest according to their wish and pleasure under the dense, cool shade of trees. They interviewed their friendly kings and relatives who congregated there (for the same religious purpose).

13-14. They saw kings (their friends and relatives) of Matsya, Uśīnara, Kosala, Vidarbha, Kuru, Sṛñjaya, Kamboja, Kekaya, Madra, Kuntī, Ānarta and Kerala and hundreds of many other kings who were their allies or strangers. They met their friends and well-wishers like Nanda and other cowherds and Gopīs (cowherd women) who were anxiously longing to meet them.

15. Owing to overwhelming ecstatic joy of mutually looking at each other, their lotus-like hearts and faces became fully blossomed and full of splendour. They hugged each other in close embrace, with tears of joy trickling from their eyes; their hair stood on their ends; their voice choked with emotion and faltering—all of them were transported with joy.

16. Looking at each other with affectionate side-glances and exceedingly friendly smiles, the women also embraced each other closely, pressing against each other their breasts which were besmeared with saffron and their eyes full of tears of joy and affection.

17. After paying respects to the elders, they were bowed by their juniors. Welcoming each other, they enquired after the well-being (of their friends and relatives) and they told each other the stories of Kṛṣṇa.

18. When Kuntī saw her brothers, sisters, their sons, her parents, sisters-in-law and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, she felt relief as her grief soothed during her conversation with them.

Kunti said :

19. Dear (elder) brother ! I feel I am unlucky as no desire of mine becomes fulfilled. Or it may be that excellent-most brothers like you do not remember of me, even though I am entangled in calamities.

20. It appears that friends, relatives, sons, brothers—nay even parents—do not remember their own relative if the Fate frowns upon him.

Vasudeva replied :

21. Mother (a term of endearment for younger sister) ! Please do not blame us, who are ordinary mortals—toys or pawns in the hands of Providence. The world is completely under the control of the Almighty Lord and everyone acts or is compelled to act according to his will.

22. (As you know it) due to the harassment of Kaṁsa all of us had to flee and were scattered in all directions. Dear sister ! It is only recently that the Providence has rehabilitated us together.

Śri Śuka said :

23. The kings who were duly worshipped by Vasudeva, Ugrasena and other prominent Yādavas felt deeply satisfied and delighted at the sight of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

24-26. (Those kings and prominent persons were) Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Ambikā, Gāndhārī and all her sons, Pāṇḍavas and their queens, Kuntī, Sṛñjaya, Vidura, Kṛpa, Kuntibhoja, Virāṭa, Bhīṣmaka and Nagnajit, the mighty; Purujit, Drupada, Śalya, Dhṛṣṭaketu along with the king of Kāśī; Damaghoṣa, Viśālākṣa, the kings of Mithilā, Madra and Kekaya; Yudhāmanyu, Suśarmā, Bāhlīka along with his princes.

27. O king of kings ! These princes and those who were the allies of Yudhiṣṭhira were astonished to behold the per-

sonality of Lord Kṛṣṇa which was the abode of the goddess Śrī (of affluence and beauty) in the company of his queens.

28. Thereupon, the kings who were duly honoured by Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were greatly delighted and eloquently praised Vṛṣṇis who were the relatives of Lord Kṛṣṇa and were under his protection.

29. (They complimented:) "O Ugrasena, the king of Bhojas! Inasmuch as you are lucky to have constantly the sight of lord Kṛṣṇa who is very difficult to be seen even by Yogins, you must deem to have accomplished the purpose of human existence among all men born in this world.

30. His spotless glory sung by the Vedas purifies the world; so does the water that washes his feet and his word, viz. the Vedic Śāstra[1]. The earth which has all its potential productive capacity burnt up by the Time-Spirit, has all her powers resuscitated by the touch of his lotus-feet. Hence, she yields to us all our desired objects.

31. The householder's life paves the way to hell. But though you lead that (householder's) life, Lord Viṣṇu himself who makes one unattached both to celestial life as well as salvation (*mokṣa*) stays in your houses, and you can see him, touch him, go after him, speak with him, sit close to him, eat with him, share the bed with him and have contacts and relations with him.[2]

Śrī Śuka said :

32. Learning that Yādavas of whom Kṛṣṇa is prominent, have arrived there, Nanda accompanied with Gopas and carts loaded with milk-products, came there with a desire to see them.

33. Seeing Nanda all the Yādavas were overjoyed and rose up to receive him, as the bodies do after the return of

1. VJ. : The *Śāstra* such as The *Brahmasūtras* issued out of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mouth purifies the world.

2. VJ. : You have really accomplished the highest purpose in your life as you are in direct contact with Lord Viṣṇu—The source of the bliss in the heaven and in the Mokṣa. He of his own accord has been in your house, so in your case householder's life will not lead to hell.

vital breath. Being extremely anxious to see him for a long time, they embraced him closely.

34. Vasudeva was especially pleased. Being overwhelmed with affection, he embraced him fast, remembering how Kaṁsa subjected him to harrowing persecutions and how he had to entrust his son to Nanda's care at his Gokula.

35. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma embraced and bowed to their (foster) parents. But due to overwhelming affection, and the throat being choked with emotions (lit. tears of joy) they could not utter a word, O best of Kurus.

36. The highly blessed Yaśodā placed both the sons on her seat (v.l. on her lap) and clasping them together in her arms in close embrace, forgot her (longfelt) distress (of separation from them).

37. Remembering their close friendship with Yaśodā, both Rohiṇī and Devakī embraced her. With their voice choked with emotions (tears), they exclaimed in faltering tones.

38. "O queen of Vraja ! Who can ever forget your everlasting (act of) friendship. Even if one attains to the fortune and status of the Lord of Heaven, the great debt (of your friendship) is unrepayable in this world.

39. Worshipful lady ! These two children who had not seen their own parents, were entrusted to your filial care. They lived under your care like eyes protected by eye-lids without any fear from any quarter. You gave them protection, nourishment, loving care, caressing growth and development. For the good and righteous persons do not discriminate between a child who is theirs and the one who is not theirs.

Śrī Śuka said :

40. Having seen their beloved Kṛṣṇa after a pretty long time, they (yearned to gaze at him continuously without the interruption of winking of the eyelids and so) they blamed the Creator who created the eyelids and thus interrupted (even for a wink), his vision. Mentally they closely embraced him, who was ushered in their hearts through their eyes, and instantly became merged in him—an accomplishment not

within the easy reach of Yogins who always practice to attain one-ness with him through Yogic meditation.

41. (Kṛṣṇa assumed as many forms as there were Gopīs. And at night in a secluded place simultaneously met them all severally). When the Lord saw them in that (absorbed) state of meditation, he met each of them, in privacy, embraced them, enquired about their health and spoke to them smilingly.

42. "O friends ! Do you remember us who in order to serve the cause of our relatives have left Vraja and who were busy, as our heart was distracted elsewhere in annihilating the party of our enemies, and hence, were out of sight and have returned after a long time.

43. As a matter of fact, it is the will of the Almighty Lord which unites or disunites beings. Do you form a low opinion about us suspecting us to be ungrateful to you (despite your consistent friendliness during our stay at Gokul)? (Our absence was an act of God. Please do not misunderstand us).

44. Like unto the wind bringing together, or dispersing clouds, blades of grass, cotton, particles of dust, the Lord—the creator unites or disunites beings created by him.

45. It is a matter of great joy and fortune that the loving devotion entertained by you for me shall lead to my Self-realization and absorption in me, for it is only loving (and constant) devotion unto me that leads people to immortality i.e. Final Liberation.

46. O beautiful damsels ! Just as the elements such as the sky, water, earth, wind and fire constitute the inside and outside, beginning and the end of all material objects, I am really the beginning and the end of all beings permeating them all from within and without.

47. In this way all these elements constitute all (gross) products and beings (and are thus in them but they are not in the Soul). The Soul abides in them as the enjoyer and thus pervades them. You, therefore, observe clearly that both these (The soul and the elements) appear in me, but I as the Supreme Perfect Brahman transcend them, all.

Śrī Śuka said :

48. In this way, the Gopīs were initiated and instructed in the spiritual Lore by Lord Kṛṣṇa. By dint of constant contemplation on him, they destroyed the sheath of the subtle body (*jiva-kośa*) and became merged in him.

49. And they prayed : "O Lotus-navelled Lord ! May your lotus-feet worthy of being meditated upon in their hearts by masters of Yoga of unfathomable spiritual wisdom and which form as a support (or supporting plank) to get out of the well of *saṁsāra* to people who have fallen into that well, may these lotus feet ever remain manifest in our hearts even though we lead a domestic life in *Saṁsāra*.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Narration of Their Marriage Episodes
by Kṛṣṇa's Consorts

Śrī Śuka said :

1. The glorious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who was the spiritual preceptor as well as the goal (to be attained), showered his grace on the Gopīs in that way (described in the previous Chapter). Thereupon (secondarily) he made enquiries about the welfare of Yudhiṣṭhira and all other friends and well wishers.

2. They were kindly enquired after and were duly honoured (with various presents). Their sins were destroyed at the very sight of the Lord's feet. With their minds full of joy they replied :

3. "O Lord, whence can anything inauspicious befall them who with (the goblets of) their ears, drink to their heart's content the nectar of your lotus-feet (making them forget all their griefs with its intoxicating effects)[1] the nectar which (after filling the heart of the great-souled persons and

1. *mādakatayā sarva-duḥkha-vismārakatvaṁ ca dhvanitam—VT.*

having been thoroughly enjoyed by them) flows out of the heart through their lips on some occasions (in the form of the glorification of his sportive actions). It is this nectar which rids all embodied beings of Nescience which is the root-cause of the repeated mundane existence (Lit. assuming bodies repeatedly).

4. We stand offering our salutions to *you only* (leaving all our attachment to our bodies and household properties[1]). By the effulgence of spiritual knowledge, you have shaken off (and are untouched by) the three states (of wakefulness, dream and dream-less sleep) produced by contact with the mind. Hence, you are a flood (or fathomless and limitless ocean) of blissfulness; you are the Absolute and infinite intelligence. You have assumed a (human) form through your Yogic potency for the protection of the Vedas (which were lost or whose influence disappeared) through the force of the Time-spirit. You are the ultimate goal (or abode) which the recluses of the highest order aspire to reach.

The sage (Śuka) resumed :

5. While people (like Yudhiṣṭhira and others) were glorifying in songs the praise of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crest-jewel among persons of hallowing renown (or the utterance of whose names is auspicious), the ladies of Andhaka (Yādava) and Kaurava families met together and narrated to each other the stories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which are sung all over the worlds. Please listen as I shall describe them to you.

Draupadī asked :

6-7*. O Rukmiṇī who are never separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa, Bhadrā, Jāmbavatī, Kausalā, Satyabhāmā, Kālindī, Śaibyā, Rohiṇī[2], Lakṣmaṇā—O consorts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, be pleased to tell us this—how did Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is the embodi-

1. *hitvā kim ātma-dhāma : ātmā śarīraṁ dhāma gṛhaṁ dehadaihika-sambandham parityajya—ŚR.)*

* 6-7 VT tries to defend the sequence in the names of Kṛṣṇa's queens but it is for metrical convenience that the seniority is not observed.

2. She was honoured like another Chief queen—ŚR.

ment of God himself, come to espouse you imitating the ways of ordinary mortals, through his own Māyā Potency.

Rukmiṇī replied:

8. Like a lion taking away its share (prey) from the herds of goats and sheep, the Lord carried me away, placing his foot on the heads (lit. covering with the dust of his feet the heads) of invincible warrior princes (like Jarāsandha, allies of Śiśupāla) who determined to make me over (in marriage) to Śiśupāla, stood (ready to fight) raising up their bows (and arms). May those feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the abode of Śrī (goddess of beauty and wealth), be available to me for worship, forever.

Satyabhāmā said :

9. In order to (disprove and) wipe out the charge (of murder of Prasena) imputed (to him) by my father whose heart was extremely grieved at the death of his brother (Prasena), the Lord vanquished Jāmbavān, the king of bears, and bringing back from him the (syamantaka) gem restored it to my father. Afraid of the consequences (of the false allegations made against Kṛṣṇa and in order to pacify him), my father offered me to him even though I was promised (to be given in marriage) to another (Akrūra).

Jāmbavatī said :

10. My father could not recognize him (Lord Kṛṣṇa) to be his (former) Master and deity, Rāmacandra, the husband of Sītā. He fought with him for twenty seven days. When he stood the test, my father came to know him, (to be no other than Rāmacandra). Then he (my father) took hold of his feet and offered me along with the jewel as a present. (O Draupadī) I am not very great. I am his female slave.

Kālindi said :

11. Having come to know that I am performing penance in the hope of (getting the privilege of) touching his feet, he approached me through his friend (Arjuna) and accepted

my hand in marriage. I am just a sweeper (a female servant) in his house.

Bhadrā said :

12. Attending my *svayaṁvara* and defeating my brothers and kings who offered resistance, my Lord carried me away to his capital (Dvārakā) just as a lion seizes away his share (prey) from a pack of hounds. May I have the good luck of washing the feet of him who is the abode of the goddess Śrī, in every birth.

Satyā said :

13. In order to put to test the prowess of the kings (who came as suitors for my hand), my father procured seven extremely mighty, energetic bulls with very sharp (pointed) horns. These bulls humiliated the pride of dauntless warriors. The Lord (however) quickly controlled them (by putting a string through their nose) and yoked them playfully as children do with lambs.

14. He won me as a prize for his prowess. He vanquished the kings who way-layed us and brought to Dvārakā me along with my maid-servants and an army of four divisions, (consisting of elephants, chariots, horses and infantry). May I ever be blest with the fortune of serving him.

Mitravindā said :

15. O Draupadī, my father of his own accord invited Kṛṣṇa who is my maternal cousin and as my mind was (attached to and) fixed on him, gave me in marriage to him along with my maids of honour and an *akṣauhiṇī* of army.

16. May I be blest with the opportunity of serving his feet (lit. touch of his feet) in every birth whenever I may be tossed by my Karman. That (touch of his feet) will confer on me the highest good (*Mokṣa*).

Lakṣmaṇā said :

17. O Queen (Draupadi)! By frequently hearing about the miraculous incarnation and deeds of the Lord as glorified by Nārada in songs and duly considering (to myself) that the

Lord is chosen as a consort by goddess Lakṣmī[1] discarding (Indra and other) guardians of the spheres,[2] I set my heart on him.

18. O chaste Lady, my father who is well known as Bṛhatsena is very affectionate to his daughter (to me). When he came to know my wish, he contrived a plan to fulfill it.

19. O queen, just as at the time of your *svayaṁvara* the device of an artificial fish was contrived with the desire of securing Arjuna (for you), in my case, the fish was covered from outside and only its reflection in water was visible.

20. Hearing of this *svayaṁvara*, thousands of kings experts in the secrets of missiles, archery and of arms and accompanied by their preceptors came from all sides to my father's capital.

21. They were received with honour by my father with due regard to their seniority in prowess and age. With their hearts set on me, they all took up the bow and the arrow kept in the assembly to hit the target.

22. Some kings who took up the bow were unable to string the bow and left it. Some (who could string the bow) could pull it upto their elbow (but were unable to fix the string on the other end) fell down struck by the bow.

23. Other warriors like the kings of Magadha (Jarāsandha) Cedi (Śiśupāla) Ambaṣṭha, Bhīma, Duryodhana and Karṇa were able to fix the string on the bow but could not know the location of the fish.

24. Arjuna became ready. He located the fish from its reflection in the water and discharged the arrow, but it just touched the fish at tangent and did not pierce through it.

25-26. When the proud kings found their pride crushed (thus humiliated), they retired to their seats. Lord Kṛṣṇa took

1. There is a pun on the following word :
Paćma-hastayā— (i) By goddess Lakṣmi (ii) By me with a lotus in hand.

2. *Lokapa*— (1) Guardians of spheres like Indra.
(2) Kings on the earth.
The second interpretation is : discarding other kings, I selected him with a lotus in my hand.

up the bow, strung it easily (as in a sport), fixed an arrow on it. Looking at the reflection of the fish in water (with that arrow) he felled it on the ground. At that time the sun was at the meredian.[1]

27. Drums were sounded in the sky while shouts of victory were raised on the earth. Gods were transported with joy and sent forth showers of flowers.

28. With anklets jingling sweetly at my feet (while I moved), dressed in a (specially prepared) rich silk *Sāri* and a similar costly upper garment decorated with a wreath of flowers in my braid (of hair) and holding forth a brilliant necklace of jewels wrought in gold in my hands, I entered the arena beaming with a bashful smile.

29. Lifting up my face beautiful with thick tresses of curly hair over-hanging and the cheeks illuminated by the brilliance of the ear-rings, I looked round at the (assembled) kings with a gentle smile and side-long glances and with my heart deep in love with the Lord, I (slowly approached him and) softly placed the necklace round his neck.

30. At that time *mṛdaṅgas*, tabors, conchs, drums and kettle-drums were sounded. Dancers (both male and female) began to dance and songsters began to sing.

31. When I selected Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa (as my consort) the rival kings being overcome with lust for me, did not tolerate it, O Draupadī.

32. Placing me in the chariot drawn by (jewel-like) excellent four horses, the four-armed Lord, completely accoutered with armour, raised his Śārṅga bow and became ready to fight.

33. Dāruka (the charioteer) drove the gold plated Chariot while all the suitor-kings were merely looking on and he set out for Dvārakā with me, just as a lion proceeds (with his prey) through a pack of deer, O queen.

34. Like dogs trying to obstruct a Lion, those Kṣattriya princes, with a view to ambush him on the way, girded up their lions, raised their bows and pursued him.

1. The sun's position with *abhijit* is regarded as the auspiciousmost time conducive to achieve success in everything—ŚR.

35. With their arms, thighs and necks lopped off by the flood of arrows discharged from the Śārṅga bow, some kings fell in that fight while others withdrawing from the battle fled away from it.

36. Thereupon the Lord of Yadus (Kṛṣṇa) entered the city of Dvārakā (Kuśasthalī) which was specially decorated (for that occasion) with arches, banners and streamers which obscured (even) the sun—a city highly appreciated (for its beauty) both in the heaven and on the earth like the sun returning to his (glorious) residence Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered his Palace.

37. My father respectfully received and worshipped his friends, relatives and clansmen presenting them very costly clothes, ornaments, beds, seats and other articles.

38. Though my Lord is Perfect (and needs nothing) out of devotion, my father presented to him maid servants, all kinds of wealth, foot-soldiers, elephants, chariots, horses and very costly weapons.

39. (Abashed at her boastful description of her own marriage and to please her senior co-wives she concludes). All of us must have performed penance renouncing all attachments (in our previous life by virtue of which) we have the real privilege of being maid servants of our Lord who revels in his own blissful self.

The queens (*representing* 16000 *queens*) *said* :

40. Having killed Bhaumāsura along with his army in the battle, when the Lord came to know that Bhauma had kept in captivity the princesses of the kings vanquished by him during his expedition for the conquest of the earth, he set us free. Though he had all his desires accomplished, he was pleased to marry us who were constantly contemplating his lotus-feet which emancipate people from Saṁsāra.

41-42. O Chaste queen Draupadī ! We do not covet imperial sovereignty over the whole earth or kingdom of the celestial world or enjoyment of both the positions here and hereafter or the attainment of supernatural powers nor the exalted position of god Brahmā, *Mokṣa* (liberation from Saṁsāra) or residence in his eternal abode (known as *Salokatā*) but we love

to bear on our heads the glorious dust on the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (the wielder of the Kaumodakī mace)—the dust which is enriched with fragrance of the Saffron paste applied to the breast of goddess Śrī.

43. We earnestly crave for the touch of the feet of the great-souled Lord who tended cows—the touch which the Gopas and Gopīs of Vraja, women of Pulindas (hill-tribes), grass and creepers longed for.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Vasudeva's Sacrifice[1]

Śri Śuka said :

1. Listening to the bonds of intense love (expressed in the speeches) of his queens to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Soul of the universe, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadrā and other queens of the royal house along with all the Gopīs so devoted to Kṛṣṇa were greatly surprised and their eyes were filled with tears of joy.

2. While they were thus engaged in conversation, men with men and women with women, there arrived a number of sages with the desire of seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

3-5. (They were as follows :) Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa), the divine sage Nārada, Cyavana, Devala, Asita, Viśvāmitra, Śatānanda, Bhāradvāja, Gautama, Paraśurāma along with his disciples, the worshipful Vasiṣṭha, Gālava, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Kaśyapa, Atri, Mārkaṇḍeya, Bṛhaspati, Dvita, Trita, Ekata, sons of god Brahmā (such as Sanaka, Sanandana and others) Aṅgiras, Agastya, Yājñavalkya and others.[2]

1. In the colophon the title of this chapter is *Description of Pilgrimage.*

2. Under 'others' VT. includes Parāśara, Maitreya, Vaiśampāyana, etc. Historically these were not contemporaries but the epic-writer credits them with inordinately long life or persons belonging to these *gotras* are implied. Biographical sketches of these have been given in the footnotes of the previous volumes of this work.

6. Beholding those sages who were universally respected, all the kings and others present there as well as Pāṇḍavas, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma immediately rose from their seats to show respect and bowed to them.

7. Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma and all others (present there) respectfully honoured the sages with sweet words of welcome, offering them seats, water to wash their hands and feet, flowers, incense, sandal paste, etc.

8. When they were comfortably seated, the glorious Lord, whose (human) form (incarnated in this world) was for the protection of *Dharma* (Religious order or path of righteousness) addressed them, while the great assembly was silently listening to him.

The glorious Lord (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) said :

9. How blessed are we ! Today we have attained completely the fruit (the highest objective) of having taken birth (in this world), as we have been blessed with a visit by masters of Yoga, the sight of whom is very difficult to obtain even for gods.

10. How can men whose (even concept of) penance is poor (limited to pilgrimage to sacred places, etc.) and who look upon the (stone or metal) images as God get the rare privilege of enjoying your sight, touching your feet), conversing with you, paying personal obeisance to you, worshipping your feet, etc. ?

11. Waters in sacred places consisting of sheets of water are not the real holy waters; the images made of clay and stones are not the real gods. It is after a long course of time that they purify people. But saints like you purify instantly by their very sight.

12. If the deities presiding over the fire, sun, stars, planets, earth, water, heavens, air, speech and mind are worshipped and propitiated they cannot wipe out the sin (i.e. ignorance in spiritual matters which is the root cause of sins) but promote the notion of diversity and difference. But the service rendered to persons of spiritual wisdom, even for a short time (a *muhūrta*) eradicates it completely.

13. He is really a donkey, carrying a fodder for the cattle[1] who looks upon this stinking dead body constituted of three humours (bile, phlegm and 'air') as the soul, regards wife and other relatives related to such a body as his own, believes a material image (of clay, stones, etc.) as an object of worship, and thinks that waters (absolve from sins and hence) are purificatory, but does not entertain such notions (of being saviours from sins) towards the spiritually wise.

Śrī Śuka said :

14. Hearing this speech of the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa of unfailing infinite intelligence, which was very difficult to comprehend, the Brāhmaṇas got confounded and remained silent.

15. Pondering over for a long time, they realized that though he is the Supreme Controller of the universe, it is for teaching the world by his own example, that he behaved like an ordinary person (under God's control). And beaming with a smile, they addressed him.

The sages said:

16. We, the best ones among the knowers of Truth and the chief among the progenitors of the world, are deluded by your Māyā, (Though you are the Lord of the Universe) you keep your universal rulership concealed by your apparent human acts, showing to be controlled by God's authority. How wonderful is the behaviour of the Lord.

17. Though he is one and no activity can be attributed to him (or whose activities are not determined or ordained by his *Karmas*), he appears in many names and forms just as the earth though one has many names and forms (e.g. a pot, a pitcher and others) through her own products[2] and (though

1. *go-kharaḥ* : VC. quotes *Bṛhaspati Saṁhitā* which states : Persons, even though paid respects by kings, should be regarded as 'donkeys among brutes' (*gokharāḥ*) if they do not know the religion (*dharma*) of the glorious Lord and the secrets of *mantras*.

2. *Vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttiketyeva satyam* |—*Chāndogya Up.* 6.1.4.

one) by himself he creates, protects and eats up (i.e., withdraws within himself) the universe but is not bound by any of these acts. O ! How mysterious is the working of (you) the Perfect One, whose (birth and other) acts are merely an (outward) imitation of human beings (The real you are different).

18. Even though Your Lordship is the Supreme Person (transcendental to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*,) from time to time, you assume the pure *sāttvika* form for the protection of your devotees, and for the chastisement and control of the wicked, and by your example, you maintain the path of the Vedas—and you are the embodiment of different castes (*varṇas*) and stages in life (*āśramas*).

19. The Veda constitutes your extremely pure heart. Through study, penance, self-control, you—the Brahman are realised there in both your manifest and unmanifest forms and your transcendental form is beyond the ken of these two.

20. O Lord Kṛṣṇa who are the Brahman yourself ! As you are known through Śāstras (and Brāhmaṇas are the repository of these *Śāstras*) it is the Brāhmaṇas who form the best shrine as a means of realizing you. Hence, you are the most prominent amongst those who patronize the Brāhmaṇas and respect them.

21. Today in meeting you who are the shelter of all saintly persons, we have achieved the real benefit of our very existence, learning, penance and ability to see, as you are the highest consummation of all blessings.

22. Salutation to you, O glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa of boundless wisdom and intelligence. You are the Supreme Soul who have shrouded your glory by your yogamāyā (yogic deluding potency).

23. These kings in the assembly and your clansmen (Vṛṣṇis) who share life and enjoyment together with you do not know that you are the Almighty God, the Time-spirit and the Supreme Soul concealed under the veil of your Māyā.

24-25. Just as a person who is asleep does not (during that stage) remember his body in his wakeful stage and looks upon all objects (he sees in the dream) as real and supposes his self in the dream which is perceptible to the mind and exists in name only, to be real, similarly, (even while awake),

a person loses his power of discrimination as his sense-activities are directed towards objects which exist in name only (and are not real) by your Māyā and his mind being deluded and bewildered, he does not realize you.

26. To-day we had the good fortune of seeking the feet of you (who are of the above description)—your feet which are the source of the sacred river Gaṅgā which absolves people of heaps of sins; which are enthroned in the heart by *yogins* whose *yogic* practices have been ripened and perfect. Those who have been able to wipe out evil proclivities or ego by means of overflowing tide of devotion have attained the highest stage of realizing you (or have secured resort in you). Hence, O Lord, be pleased to be gracious unto us your devotees."

Śrī Śuka said :

27. Having thus (prayed and) taken leave of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Dāśārha, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Yudhiṣṭhira, the sages made up their minds to return to their respective hermitages, O royal sage.

28. Seeing that the sages were departing, the far-famed Vasudeva approached them, bowed them, clasped their feet and with great self-restraint, he requested them as follows :

Vasudeva said :

29. Salutation to you, O sages, in whom all deities abide.[1] It behoves you to listen to my request. Be pleased to advise me by adopting which course of *karma*, one can clear one's self of all *karmas*.

Nārada said :

30. It is not strange or wonderful that Vasudeva, regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa as a child, is desirous of being enlightened in spiritual knowledge and is asking us about the way of attaining to his spiritual good.

1. ŚR. quotes the following Vedic text in support of this supposition: *Yāvatīr vai devatās tāḥ sarvā veda-vidi Brāhmaṇe vasanti |*

31. In this world, over-familiarity in the case of mortals, breeds negligence or lack of reverence. Persons who live on the bank of the Gaṅgā discard the water of that very river and go to another place of sacred waters.

32. Kṛṣṇa's spiritual knowledge is not diminished by the force of Time which causes the creation and dissolution of the universe, nor by itself or by any external cause or action of *guṇas*.

33. His wisdom is unaffected by any affliction or hindrances (*kleśa*)[1] or the effect of *karmas* or flow of *guṇas*. He is the Almighty Lord, one without a second. But ordinary people regard him just like themselves[2] as he has shrouded himself under his own potencies, vital airs, etc., just as the sun is concealed by clouds, mists and eclipse, etc.

34. Then, O king, the sages, addressed Vasudeva (Ānakadundubhi) as follows while all including Acyuta and Balarāma, were hearing them.

35. "The cause of wiping out of *karmas* through performance of *karmas* has been seen (and declared) well by the good. One should devoutly propitiate and worship Viṣṇu, the Lord of sacrifices by performing sacrifice.

36. This course has been shown as the way to serenity of mind, an easy type of *Yoga* and *dharma* that brings delight to the soul, by wise sages who perceive with the eye of *śāstras*.

37. It has been regarded as the most auspicious course for householders of the twice-born castes, that they should devoutly worship the Supreme Person by sacrifices performed with pure self-earned wealth with fair means.

38. One should give up covetousness for wealth by spending it in the performance of sacrifices, and in gifts, the desire for wife and children by enjoying conjugal happiness in married life, the aspiration for celestial world and the pleasures

1. Patañjali enumerates the following *kleśas* :

Nescience (*avidyā*), feeling-of-personality or ego (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and will-to-live or fear of death (*abhiniveśa*).

2. VJ. Vasudeva being an ordinary person regards the Almighty Lord Kṛṣṇa just a common person like himself, as Kṛṣṇa has shrouded himself under his own potencies, etc.

thereof by considering that they are subject to damaging effects of Time, leaving all these (three) desires at home in one's village, the wise have proceeded to the forest for performance of penance, O Vasudeva.

39. O Lord Vasudeva, a twice-born person is born with three debts which one owes to gods, sages and manes. If one were to renounce the household life without repaying these debts by performance of sacrifice, Vedic studies and begetting sons, he is sure to fall.

40. You are now free from two debts, O highly intelligent Vasudeva, the obligations to sages and to the manes (*pitṛs*): Now discharging the debt to gods through performance of sacrifices, absolve yourself of all obligations and be a house-less recluse.

41. O Vasudeva, you have with the most intense devotion worshipped Hari, the Lord of the universe. He has become your son."

Śrī Śuka said :

42. Hearing the words of the sages, the noble-minded Vasudeva bowed those sages with his head and beseeched them for their favour and requested them to officiate as priests for his sacrifice.

43. Those sages who were appointed with proper religious formalities, assisted the righteous-minded Vasudeva to perform a number of sacrifices in the best possible manner (or on the largest scale) in that holy place, O King Parīkṣit.

44-45. When Vasudeva was being initiated for the sacrifice, O King, members of the Vṛṣṇi clan and other kings took their bath, dressed themselves in excellent clothes, wore wreaths of lotuses and adorned themselves with ornaments. Vasudeva's queens also who had besmeared their persons with (fragrant) pigments, put on gold necklaces and clad in their best apparel, came to the sacrificial hall with offerings in their hands.

46. Musical instruments like *Mṛdaṅgas*, tabors, conchs, drums and kettle drums were sounded. Actors (male) and female dancers danced. Sūtas and Māgadhas sang the panegyrics. Sweet-voiced Gandharva ladies along with husbands presented vocal music.

47. Collyrium was applied to Vasudeva's eyes. His body was besmeared with butter. The sacrificial priests with due formalities consecrated with sprinkling water Vasudeva alongwith his eighteen queens, as the moon god was formerly consecrated in the company of his (twentyseven) consorts, in ancient times.

48. The consecrated Vasudeva who was clad in deerskin, appeared extremely splendid with his queens, all of whom were clad in silken garments and were excellently adorned with gold bangles, pearl necklaces, anklets and ear-rings.

49. Wearing silk garments and jewels, the priest, who officiated at Vasudeva's sacrifice along with the members of the sacrificial assembly, appeared splendid like the corresponding priests in Indra's sacrifice, O great king.

50. At that time, Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa (the former representing the *jīva* and the latter the Almighty Lord) the rulers of living beings, accompanied with their brothers, sons and consorts shone forth with all their supreme glorious powers (*vibhūtis*).

51. In every sacrifice, by performing with due rites and formalities, the *Prākṛta*[1] and *Vaikṛta* categories of sacrifices characterised by Agnihotra, he worshipped Lord Viṣṇu who is the controller and master of the materials for the sacrifice, the knowledge of *Mantras* employed and the formal act of performing the sacrifice.

52. Then at the appropriate time as prescribed in the Śāstras, Vasudeva gave to his sacrificial priests who were already adorned with ornaments, very richly[2] adorned cows, girls and land as the sacrificial fee.

53. Having made the sacrificer's wife to perform the *Samyāja* part of the sacrifice and after the rites of *avabhṛtha* ablution, the great sages who officiated at the sacrifice followed the *Yajamāna* (the performer of sacrifice) to the pools (created

1. ŚR. : *Prākṛta Jyotiṣṭoma, Darśa, Pūrṇamāsa, Vaikṛtta*: *saura sattra* and others going under the name *Agnihotra*.

2. The v.l. *mahādhanaḥ* means 'the extremely affluent Vasudeva'. VT. takes '*Mahādhanāḥ*' as qualifying *Dakṣiṇāḥ* and interpretes, 'sacrificial fees consisting of costly jewels, gold, money, etc.'

by and known after the name) of Paraśurāma and performed the concluding bath.

54. After taking his bath, Vasudeva richly adorned himself with ornaments and distributed clothes and ornaments to bards and his queens also gave gifts. He then entertained with food, people of all castes and communities and animals down to dogs to their complete satisfaction.

55-56. With rich liberal presents, Vasudeva honoured his relatives, their wives, and children—the princes and people of Vidarbha, Kosala, Kuru, Kāśi, Kekaya and Sṛñjayas; and also the members of the sacrificial assembly and the priests; various categories of gods, men, *bhūtas*, *pitṛs* (manes) and Cāraṇas. All of them took leave of Kṛṣṇa, the abode of the goddess Śrī and praising him and the sacrifice, returned to (their respective) home.

57-58. Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his younger brother Vidura, the sons of Pṛthā, Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Kuntī and the twins (Nakula and Sahadeva), Nārada, the glorious sage Vyāsa, friends, relatives and kinsmen with their hearts softened with friendly feelings, embraced their relatives of the Yadu clan and with heart heavy with the pangs of separation, left for their own states along with other people.

59. Highly honoured with extensive rich presents by Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Ugrasena and others, Nanda who was very affectionate to them, stayed on along with the Gopas (for some time more).

60. Having thus crossed the ocean of his desire (of performing sacrifices) with such an ease, Vasudeva was greatly delighted at heart. Surrounded by his friends and well-wishers, he took Nanda by the hand and said:

Vasudeva said :

61. O brother Nanda ! A bond called friendly affection has been forged by the Almighty Lord. I think it is very difficult even for valiant warriors and *yogins* to snap it asunder.

62. For, the great friendliness extended by the virtuous-most persons like you to ungrateful persons like us is unsurpassed and too valuable to be repaid. Though your friendliness bears no reciprocal return, it will never be withdrawn from us.

63. We, being ourself helpless and simply incapable of doing it, did not do any good turn to you. And now our eyes being blinded by the intoxication of affluence, we do not see you even when you are before us, O brother.

64. O respectable brother, royal fortune should not come to the lot of a person who aspires after the final beatitude, for his eyesight gets blinded by it and he does not recognize his people or relatives."

Śrī Śuka said :

65. In this way, the heart of Vasudeva was softened with the feelings of friendliness. Remembering the warm friendship borne by Nanda to him, tears welled-up in his eyes and he wept (with tears gushing down his cheeks).

66. With a view to giving the pleasure of his company to Vasudeva and out of deep affection from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, he postponed his departure from day to day and stayed on there for three months more, respectfully treated all the while by the Yadus.

67. During his stay, Nanda together with relatives (Gopas) and the inhabitants of Vraja (who accompanied him there) were catered to their heart's content, whatever they desired and wanted, by offering them valuable ornaments, silk cloths and other costly presents.

68. Taking with him all the valuable gifts presented to him by Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Uddhava, Balarāma and others, he took leave of the Yādavas and returned home (with a big Yādava army to guard him during his return journey).

69*. Nanda, Gopas and Gopīs whose hearts were attached

* *VJ.'s Text adds* :

69.1. Droṇa, Bhiṣma, Karṇa, Bāhlika, Vidura and others and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, along with his sons returned to their respective homes severally.

69.2. All other kings who had come there on a holy pilgrimage (stayed there for three months at the end of which) they returned to their respective kingdoms.

69.3. And the noble-souled Pāṇḍavas and Kunti, speaking in faltering accents (as their voice was choked with tears) accompanied with all their relatives, returned to Indraprastha, taking leave of Kṛṣṇa.

and fixed on the lotus-feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa found themselves unable to retract them from there and returned to Mathurā.

70. When all the relatives departed (to their respective places), Vṛṣṇis who looked upon Kṛṣṇa as their Deity, noticed the approach of the monsoons and returned to Dvārakā.

71. On their return, they narrated to the people (who could not come to that pilgrimage) the great festival of the sacrifice performed by Vasudeva, the leader of Yadus and their meeting of friends and other incidents during the course of that pilgrimage.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Restoration of his Elder Brothers by Kṛṣṇa
From the Realm of Death

The Son of Bādarāyaṇa (Śrī Śuka) said :

1. On one occasion, (after their return from the sacrifice at Kurukṣetra), Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa went (as usual) (to pay respects to their parents), and bowed down to Vasudeva. Vasudeva affectionately received them when they saluted his feet, and spoke to his sons as follows :—

2. Having heard the speech of the sages indicating the glorious powers of their sons and feeling a sense of confidence by their exploits, he affectionately addressed them and said.

3. O Kṛṣṇa ! Kṛṣṇa ! O great Yogin ! O eternal Saṅkarṣaṇa ! I (now) realize that both of you are the Supreme Persons (ruling over) *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, the direct causes of the universe.

4. You are the place (Substratum), the agent and the instrument of the universe. You are its source and its object or purpose; whenever or whatever form it assumes is yourself. As and when this universe evolves, all the causes thereof including time and manner are the Almighty Lord yourself who control both the *Prakṛti* (to be enjoyed) and *Puruṣa* (the enjoyer) and transcend them both.

5. O Supra-sensuous Lord ! Having created this universe of a diversified nature out of yourself, you enter it as its soul, the Indwelling Controller, and you, the eternal (unborn) Lord, become the active force (*Prāṇa*) and the cognitive force (*Jiva*) and maintain it.

6.* The powers with which *Prāṇa* and *Sūtra* are endowed and other forces which go to create the universe, are really the potencies of the Supreme Self, for these powers depend (for their existence on you and there is a great dissimilarity between (the nature of) *Prāṇa* and the Supreme Soul, (the former is physical or material while the latter is spiritual). The activity of *Prāṇa* and others is only apparent (the real motive force is you, just as the velocity of an arrow is not in the arrow itself but in the physical force of the man who discharged it.

7. The lovely light of the moon, the heat and glare of the fire, the brilliant splendour of the sun, the twinkling of stars and the streaks of lightning, the stability of mountains, fragrance which characterises the earth—all these special characteristics are as a matter of fact yourself only.[1]

8. The qualities of water, viz. satisfying the thirst, the life-giving effect, are yourself, O God. The waters themselves and their essential characteristics, viz. liquidity and taste are yourself. The energy of senses, the mental power (firm will-power), bodily strength, the activity of the body, the activities and the force of the wind are your qualities (though they are attributed to the wind element).

9. You are the space that is delimited by cardinal points; You are the quarters themselves and the ether with its characteristic the Subtle sound (*sphoṭa*) which is the *parā* form of speech. You are the sound *Om*, the *Paśyantī* form of speech. You are (the Madhyamā form of speech) and the articulate speech) (*Vaikharī*) which separates letter sounds and words which denote different objects.

6* The verses following these are the echoes of *Vibhūti Yoga. BG.* Ch.X.

1. *na tatra sūryo bhāti, na candra-tārakam, etc. tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṁ, tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti /—Kaṭha* Up. 5.15 *Śveta.* Up. 8.14. *Muṇḍaka* 2.2.10 *Śvetāśvatara*

Also Yadādityagataṃ tejo, etc. in *BG.*15.12.

10. You are the real sense organ, the power revealing its special objects; You are also the presiding deities of the senses and their potency. You are the cognitive and retentive faculty of the Intellect. You are the co-ordinating power of different experiences inherent in *Jīva*.

11. You are the *Tāmasa* aspect of Ego (*Ahaṁkāra*) which is the root cause of the gross elements; the *Rājasa* type (*Taijasa*) of Ego, as the cause of the sense-organs; the *Sāttvika* kind of Ego (*Vaikārika*) which creates the deities presiding over the senses and the mind (and the *Pradhāna* or *Māyā* which makes *jivas* wander in the *Saṁsāra*[1] (*or* : You are the Chief *Prakṛti*, the cause of *Mahat* and other principles and which involves the *jivas* in *Saṁsāra*.)

12. Just as the material substance (e.g. gold) is the constant factor all through its various modifications (e.g. various ornaments like bangles, armlets, etc.), you are the constant factor abiding in all these perishable objects and are not subject to modification or decay

13. The attributes of *Prakṛti* viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and their products (such as *Mahat* and other principles) have been superimposed on you, the veritable Brahman, by your Yoga Māyā (but you are untouched by them)[2].

14. These created things, therefore, do not really exist, when they are not seen as projected on you (at the time of *Pralaya*) by *Yoga Māyā*; they are non-existent. (i.e. their very existence depends on you as the substratum on which they are superimposed). You abide in them (when you create and sustain the universe). Otherwise you remain unconnected with these modifications and abide in your absolute (blissful) state.

15. Those who are ignorant of the subtle course of yours who are the soul of all, and are present in this universe or Saṁsāra, which is a constant flow of *guṇas*, (wrongly identify themselves with their bodies through their ignorance and there-

1. VR : You constitute the *Karma* which makes *jīva* experience the fruit of the balance of his *Karmas*.

2. *Mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ jagad avyakta-Mūrtinā /*
matsthāni sarva-bhutāni na cāham teṣvavasthitaḥ //
BG 9.4

by) get enmeshed by their Karmas, and continue to whirl in the *Saṁsāra*, as a consequence of those *Karmas*.

16. (I sincerely regret that) after having attained by a lucky chance, birth here (in Bhārata Varṣa) as a man endowed with vigorous sense-organs—which is really very difficult to obtain, I remained negligent about the main object of human life (viz. Pursuit of *Mokṣa*) through the influence of your Māyā and have wasted my life, O Lord.

17. Your Lordship binds down the whole of the world with bonds of affection to the body as being my own self and relations and belongings of the body (such as sons, etc.) as they are absolutely mine.

18. I realize that both of you are not our sons but directly the controllers of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (The Primordial Matter and individual souls). As you have stated (at the time of your incarnation in our prison-cell), both of you have taken this descent (in human form) for the annihilation of the Kṣattriya Kings who have become a burden to the earth.

19. O friend of the afflicted! I have, therefore, now sought asylum with your lotus-feet which dispel the fear of *Saṁsāra* of those who resort to them (your feet). Absolutely enough of this craving for objects of sense-enjoyment under the influence of which I looked upon this mortal body as my soul and you who are the supreme person, as my child.

20. Indeed, you did tell both of us in the lying-in-chamber, that you are, as a matter of fact unborn (not actually born) but for the protection of the order of righteousness (ordained by you), you reveal yourself as "born" from us (formerly as Sutapas and Pṛśni, Kāśyapa and Diti, now Vasudeva and Devakī) in every Yuga. You assume various forms like the sky and discard them (though you are one), O Lord whose glory is widely sung (in *Śrutis*). Who can comprehend the wonderful Māyā (Potency) of yours, O Omnipresent Lord?

Śri Śuka said :

21. Hearing such a speech from his father, the glorious Lord, the leader of Sātvatas (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) smiled. Saluting his father with all humility, he replied in sweet words.

The Lord said :

22. Your speech is pregnant with philosophical significance, O father, and we accept it; as thereby you have expounded to us, your sons, the whole body of Philosophic principles.

23. I, you, this elder brother Balarāma, all these inhabitants of Dvārakā and all the mobile and immobile creation should be regarded as such (*Brahman*), O the greatest of Yadus.

24. The (Supreme) Soul is really one, self-illuminating, eternal, different and distinct from the body, devoid of any attributes; it is however due to his alliance with *guṇas* created by him and in bodies of various creatures produced out of those *guṇas*, that he appears diversified (as a man, a god, etc.), visible, momentary, identical with the body and possessed of attributes.

25. Just as the elements, sky, air, fire, water and earth become diversified (as small and great, manifest, and unmanifest, etc.) according to their products, so does the soul, though one, assume different forms and becomes many, manifest or unmanifest, small or great.

Śrī Śuka said :

26. In this way, O king Parīkṣit, Vasudeva who was thus enlightened by Kṛṣṇa became divested of the notion of diversity, remained silent and delighted at heart.

27. Devakī, the embodiment of all deities was there at this time (of conversation). She was wonderstruck, O prominentmost Kuru, to hear that her sons had brought back to life, the son of their preceptor.

28. Addressing Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, Devakī, who remembered her sons killed by Kaṁsa, piteously appealed to them, with tears of grief flowing down from her eyes.

Devakt said :

29. O Balarāma, Delighter of hearts and of immeasurable prowess ! O Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the masters of Yoga! I recognize you both as the Lords of the progenitors of the universe and the First persons in the universe.

30. It is (traditionally) reported that both of you have been born of me for the extermination of Kings whose virtue

(or *Sāttvika* nature) is lost through the influence of the Time-spirit and who transgress the injunctions (you laid down for their behaviour) in the scriptures (*Śāstras*) and have proved to be a burden to the earth.

31. O Soul of the Universe (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) ! I resort to you for shelter to-day—you who bring about the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the Universe by your minutest part, viz. the particles of the *guṇas* (*Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*) which are evolved out of a part of Māyā which in its own way is an evolute of a part of Puruṣa who is but a part manifestation of you.

32. Both of you, being urged by Time and desired by your preceptor Sāndīpani to bring back to life his son who died long ago, you brought back his son from the region of *Pitṛs* (manes) i.e. the abode of death, and presented him to your preceptor as a homage (and thus paid the debt of your preceptorship)

33. You should similarly fulfil my desire as both of you are the Lords of the masters of Yoga. I desire to see, brought to life, my sons who have been killed by Kaṁsa, the King of Bhojas.

The sage Śuka said :

34. Directed thus by their mother, O Parīkṣit, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa resorted to their Yogamāyā (Super-human Yogic potency) and entered the nether world called Suṭala.

35. Beholding both of them enter Sutala, King Bali recognised them to be the Deity, the Soul of the Universe and especially his own God (Lord Viṣṇu). His heart was overflowing with joy at their appearance. Instantaneously, he rose up from his seat and along with the members of his family, he prostrated himself before them.

36. He brought for those great-souled personages excellent seats. When they gladly occupied them, he washed their feet and sprinkled over his head as well as those of the members of the family present, that water which (as they say traditionally) purifies the world right from its creator, god Brahmā.

37. He worshipped them by offering extremely valuable cloths, ornaments, fragrant ointments, betel leaves, chauries

(waving around their faces) lamps, catering nectar-like sweet dishes and by submitting to their services his own self, his race and his wealth.

38. It is traditionally reported that Bali whose army equalled to that of Indra, the King of gods had his heart so much soaked with love for his God that he bore the Lord's feet on his head again and again. His eyes were bedimmed with tears of joy and his hair, standing on their ends. His voice being choked with emotions, he prayed in faltering accents.

Bali Prayed :

39. Salutations to you the Infinite (Lord Śeṣa) who are so vast (as to bear the universe on your hood). I bow to you Lord Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of eternal bliss, the creator of the world, the expounder of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga *darśanas* (or the Paths of knowledge and *Bhakti*), the Supreme Soul, nay the very *Brahman* himself.

40. Even your sight is very difficult to obtain to all beings (even to the masters of yoga). It is through your Grace that (to some) it is not so very difficult, (just as now) you of your own accord have luckily blessed us with your visit even though we are dominated by *rajas* and *tamas* by nature.

41-42. We, Daityas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas Yakṣas Ogres (Rākṣasas), goblins (Piśācas), the leaders of evil spirits like *bhūtas* and *Pramathas* and others of our ilk, bear continuous hostility to you who are the receptacle of pure *Sattva* (unsullied by *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and the very embodiment of scriptures (*Śāstras*).

42-A *VR's Text adds* :

That some people have attained to the different types of Liberation (from *Saṁsāra* known as *Sālokya* (residence in the Deity's abode), *Sāmīpya* (vicinity to the Deity), *Sārūpya* similarity in form to the Deity) and *Sātmatā* (Coalescence with the Deity) is due to the disposition of their mind, O Lotus-eyed Lord.

43. Just as by virtue of unflinching devotion to you or by inveterate enmity to you (as in regard to Śiśupāla) or by deep passion of Love for you (as in the case of Gopīs), persons

have attained so much close union with you as could not be achieved by gods who possess *Sāttvika* nature.

44. O Lord of the masters of Yoga ! Even Masters of Yoga cannot comprehend the nature and the extent or the inscrutable functions of your Yoga-Māyā. What to speak of Daityas like us ?

45. Therefore, pray be propitious unto us—Graciously help me to get out of the dark well of house-holder's life which is different from the Shelter of your lotus-feet which are sought after by persons who are free from desires. Subsisting on whatever (fruit, etc. dropped automatically from the trees) I get at the foot of trees which afford shelter to all, I shall move about alone with a serene mind or (if association with others is necessary) in the company of pious people who are friendly to all.

46. O Ruler of all *jivas* ! Be pleased to impart your command to us and absolve us of all our sins. O Lord ! For a person who abides by your command faithfully is not subject to the injunctions and interdictions of the scriptures.

The glorious Lord said :

47. "In the first Manvantara, sage Marīci had six sons by his wife Ūrṇā. They were the gods (in that Aeon). They laughed at god Brahmā when they saw that he was ready to cohabit with his daughter.

48. On account of that 'misdemeanour' (as god Brahmā interpreted their laughter and cursed them), they were born in the race of Asuras as the sons of Hiraṇyakaśipu and were taken away by Yogamāyā.

49. They were born as sons to Devakī and were (immediately) murdered by Kaṁsa. Even now mother Devakī is lamenting for those children and they are now here with you.

50. For soothing the grief of our mother, we shall take them from this place to her. There they will be liberated from the curse (of Brahmā) and thus freed from the fever of affliction they will return to their celestial region.

51. Smara, Udgītha, Pariṣvaṅga, Patańga, Kṣudrabhṛt and Ghṛṇin—all these six (sons of Marīci) shall attain to their happy state again through my grace."

52. Having explained his mission to Bali, he took charge of those sons. Worshipped by Bali, both of them returned to Dvārakā and presented her (dead but now restored) children to the mother.

53. Seeking her children (so brought back to her), Devakī had her breasts filled with milk. Hugging them and placing them on her lap, she smelt their crowns repeatedly.

54. Overwhelmed with motherly affection at the touch of her children, and being over-joyed, she suckled them: she was too much deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā by which the whole cycle of creation continues.

55. Having sucked the nectar of her milk which was left over there after Lord Kṛṣṇa's sucking, and due to the contact of the person of Lord Nārāyaṇa, they regained their self-knowledge.

56. Bowing to Kṛṣṇa, Devakī, their father Vasudeva and Balarāma, they ascended through the ethereal region to their places while all beings were witnessing it.

57. The divine Devakī was so much flabbergasted to see the arrival and departure of her dead children that she thought it to be the illusion created by Kṛṣṇa, O king.

58. O king Parīkṣit ! Innumerable are these and such other miraculous exploits of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme soul of Infinite powers, O descendant of Bharata.

Sūta said :

59. He who devoutly and constantly listens to and recites to others this account of Lord Kṛṣṇa of eternal fame and glory—the account extolled by the venerable son of the sage Vyāsa which absolves the world of all sins, and which fills the ears of Lord's devotees with delight or is like ornaments to the ears of Lord's votaries, gets his mind concentrated in the Lord and attains to his region of eternal bliss.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Elopement of Subhadrā : The Lord's Grace on Śrutadeva

The King (Parikṣit) said :

1. O Brāhmaṇa sage ! We would like to know how (my grand-father, the ever victorious) Arjuna married the sister of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, as she was my grand-mother.

Śrī Śuka narrated :

2. While the mighty Arjuna was travelling over the earth for pilgrimage to sacred places, he arrived at Prabhāsa where he happened to hear about his maternal uncle's daughter (Subhadrā).

3. He further heard (the report) that Balarāma would like to give her in marriage to Duryodhana, while others opposed it. As he was desirous of securing her (as his wife), he disguised himself as a recluse bearing a triple staff.[1] and went to Dvārakā.

4. With a view to accomplishing his object, he stayed the months of the rainy season, at that place. He was now and then worshipped by the citizens as also by Balarāma who did not recognise him (and was unaware that he was Arjuna).

5. It is reported that one day, he was invited as a guest and brought to the palace by Balarāma, where he partook of sweet dishes served to him with devotion.

6. He espied there that youthful girl who captivated the hearts of warriors. With his eyes blooming with love, he set his heart agitated by passions, on her.

7. As soon as she saw him who was fascinating to the hearts of women, she also fell in love with him. She fixed her heart and gazed on him with smiles and bashful glances.

1. The three staffs indicate his control of mind, speech, and action. The word *daṇḍa* stands for restraint. The *Smṛtis* of *Manu* 12.10 and *Dakṣa* 7.30 declare that a man is called *tri-daṇḍī* who has restraint over speech, mind and body.

8. Brooding over her constantly, he was eager to get an opportunity to elope with her. As his mind was distracted with over-powering passion for her, he could get no peace of mind.

9. With the consent of her parents and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that great warrior carried her away as she came out of the fort in a chariot to visit a shrine on the occasion of a great festival of gods.

10. Immediately after getting into the Chariot of Subhadrā, he took up his bow, routed all the soldiers who tried to obstruct him. Like a lion taking away his share, he carried her even as her Yādava relatives were screaming.

11. Hearing the report (of Subhadrā's elopement with Arjuna), Balarāma got enraged like an ocean on a full moon day. But he gradually calmed down when Kṛṣṇa and other well-wishers clasped his feet (and tried to pacify him).

12. Balarāma was pleased to send to the bride and bride-groom presents and marriage-gifts consisting of a big amount of money, articles of furniture, elephants, chariots, male and famale servants.

12A *VR's Text adds*:

Yādavas and Pāṇḍavas who were already relatives became very much delighted with mutual affection. Now listen to another anecdote of Kṛṣṇa's affection for two of his devotees.

Śrī Śuka resumed:

13. There was a great Brāhmaṇa, known by the name Śrutadeva. He felt to have accomplished all the goals in life by his unflinching single-minded devotion to Kṛṣṇa. He was serene, full of spiritual wisdom and un-attached to objects of pleasure.

14. He lived in the country of Videha, at Mithilā (its capital modern Janakpur). Though he was a householder, he carried out all his duties and responsibilities within whatever came to him without any effort.

15. Luckily, through the grace of God, he used to get just what was absolutely necessary for his bare maintenance

and nothing more. He was, however, quite contented with it and performed all his duties in the proper manner.

16. The protector (King) of that State, Bahulāśva by name, a descendant of Janaka was also free from egotism, dear Parīkṣit. Both Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva were beloved of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

17-18 Being pleased with both of them, the glorious Lord had his chariot brought by Dāruka. The almighty Lord rode the chariot and set out for the country of Videha (modern Tirhut or North Bihar) in the company of sages like Nārada, Vāmadeva, Atri, Kṛṣṇa (Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa), Paraśurāma Asita, Āruṇi, I myself (Śuka), Bṛhaspati, Kaṇva, Maitreya, Cyavana and others.

19. At every stage in that journey, citizens and villagers received him on his arrival, with articles of worship and offerings in their hands, O king, just as they would do unto the Sun rising in conjunction with planets.

20. Men and women from the countries of Ānarta, Dhanva, Kuru, Jāṅgala, Kaṅka, Matsya, Pāñcāla, Kunti, Madhu, Kekaya, Kosal and Arṇa as well as others drank with their eyes his lotus-face illumined with noble smile and affectionate looks.

21. (As he proceeded), Kṛṣṇa, the Preceptor of the three worlds, conferred insight into and knowledge of the Truth and the state of fearlessness (i.e. Liberation from Saṁsāra) on people, the blinding darkness of whose vision had been completely dispelled by his gracious glances. Hearing on the way his own glory celebrated in songs by gods and men — his world — wide spotless (pure) glory which destroys inauspiciousness and sins—He slowly and leisurely journeyed to Videha.

22. Hearing Lord Kṛṣṇa's arrival (in Videha), villagers and citizens thereof became delighted and they came forward to welcome him with presents and other offerings in their hands.

23. When they saw Lord Kṛṣṇa of hallowing renown, their countenance, and hearts (as if) bloomed with ecstasy. With their palms folded on their heads, they bowed to him

and the accompanying sages of whom they had only heard before.

24. Believing that Kṛṣṇa, the Preceptor of the world had come there to shower his grace on him personally, both the king of Mithilā as well as the Brāhmaṇa Śrutadeva prostrated themselves at the feet of the Lord.

25. With their palms folded to pay obeisance, both the king of Mithilā (Bahulāśva) and Śrutadeva simultaneously invited Kṛṣṇa along with the sages accompanying him, to accept their hospitality.

26. The Lord accepted the invitation of both of them. With the desire of pleasing them both, he (assumed two forms and) entered (severally) the houses of them both, without being perceived by the other.

27-29. When Lord Kṛṣṇa and sages, whose even names never reached the unrighteous ears, visited his house, the high-minded Bahulāśva, the descendant of the family of Janaka brought excellent seats (and offered them). When they were comfortably seated, he paid obeisance to their feet with intense devotion. His heart was transported with joy and eyes were bedimmed with tears of joy. He washed their feet and sprinkled his own head as well as those of the members of his family with that water which purified the world. He then worshipped the Lord and sages whose minds were devoted to God by means of sandal paste, flowers, cloths, ornaments, fragrant incense, lamps and offered them oblations of water, cows and bulls.

30. When they were fed with sumptuous meal to their heart's content, he joyfully placed on his lap the feet of Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa). Pressing them gently, he spoke in sweet words pleasing them all, as follows :

The King (Bahulāśva) said:

31. "O all-pervading Lord ! You are the in-dwelling soul (*antaryāmin*) of all beings, the witness to everything and self-illuminating. It is hence that you revealed yourselves to us who remembered your lotus-feet.

32. You have often declared that neither your brother Balarāma (the incarnation of Śeṣa), nor your consort goddess

Śrī, nor your son (God Brahmā) is as dear to you as a person who is exclusively devoted to you. It is to vindicate the veracity of your statement that your Lordship has revealed yourself to our view.

33. What person cognisant of the knowledge that you offer your own self to those serene sages who regard nothing (even their bodies) as their own (and contemplate on you) will abandon your Lotus-feet?

34. You have incarnated in the family of Yadus for putting an end to the Saṁsāra of persons who are whirling in that cycle of birth and death. And you have extended your glory which can completely wash out the sins of the three worlds.

35. I bow to you, O glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa of unlimited wisdom and intellect; you are the divine sage Nārāyaṇa who quietly perform penance (for the happiness of the world).

36. O perfect lord ! Be pleased to stay in our house along with the sages for some days and purify this family of King Nimi by the dust of your feet."

37. Thus entreatingly invited by the king, the Lord, protector of the universe stayed for some days at Mithilā, bestowing happiness and well-being on men and women of Mithilā.

38. Like Janaka (the king of Mithilā), Śrutadeva was overjoyed to find that Kṛṣṇa had arrived and stayed in his house. It is traditionally reported that he was so much transported with joy that he waved his cloth and danced.

39. Bringing mats and seats of Kuśa grass, he seated them comfortably. He warmly greeted them with words of welcome. With great joy, he and his wife washed their feet.

40. With that water, that highly blessed Brāhmaṇa sprinkled himself and all the members of his family and relations. Feeling that he had accomplished all his ambitions in life, he was transported with ecstasy.

41. He propitiated them by worshipping them with whatever articles of worship he could procure, such as fruit and other articles (e. g. sandal-paste, flowers), cool water scented with the plant *Andropogon Muricatus* (called Vāḷā in Marathi), fragrant earth (musk?), Tulasī leaves, Kuśa grass and lotus

flowers and with food conducive to the promotion of *Sāttvika* qualities.

42. He tried to reason with himself, "O ! How wonderful ! How did this association of mine who am fallen in the dark well of household life, take place with Lord Kṛṣṇa and the gods on the earth (Brāhmaṇas) who have enshrined Lord Kṛṣṇa in their hearts and the dust on whose feet has the sanctity of holy waters."

43. When the guests were offered warm hospitality and were comfortably seated, Śrutadeva, along with his wife, children and relatives waited upon them and touching the feet of Kṛṣṇa, submitted to him as follows:—

Śrutadeva said:

44-45. "It is not only to-day that the Supreme Person has revealed himself to our vision but (long ago) when, having created the universe with his potencies, he had his presence therein by virtue of his personal power. But he has actually revealed to our vision to-day. Just as a man in the state of sleep mentally creates another dream world, world of his own through the influence of *Avidyā* on his mind (or by the force of your Māyā) and entering into that dream-world appears as objective reality.

46. You always shine in the hearts of those pure-minded persons who constantly listen to and speak about your glories: who always adore you and pay obeisance to you and converse with each other about you. (But it is my great fortune that you have manifested yourself within the range of my sight).

47. Even though you abide in the hearts of those whose minds are distracted by their Karmas, you are very far away from them and you cannot be comprehended by their mental powers such as Egotism (*Ahaṅkāra*). But you are quite nearest to those who have developed spiritual qualities by listening to and singing of your glories, contemplating on you, etc.

48*. Salutation to you who reveal yourself as the Supreme Soul (and confer liberation from Saṁsāra) to those who

48* (1) VR : Salutation to you who dispense both bondage and liberation from Saṁsāra. Those who know the Supreme Soul as he is, attain to

know the (real nature of the) Soul as different from the body (and thus do not identify their body with their Soul) and who have allotted Saṁsāra (the cycle of births and deaths) to those who wrongly identify the body with the soul (and are thus separated from you). You control both the principles like *Mahat*, etc. which are the evolutes of *Prakṛti* and are thus 'caused' or products and the *Prakṛti* itself which is uncaused, but to both of these the *jīva* is subject (and hence he whirls in the *Saṁsāra*). By the force of your Māyā potency the vision of others is screened but yours is ever unobstructed.

49. As you are the Almighty Lord, be pleased to command us, your servants, what services we should render to you Your very revelation to the view of men instantaneously puts an end to all their sufferings."

Śrī Śuka said:

50. They say that when the Lord heard Śrutadeva's appeal (as presented by him), the glorious Lord who annihilates all the agonies of those who bow and thus submit themselves to him humbly, took him by the hand and similingly spoke to Śrutadeva:

him. According to your will you ordain death to those who have not given their mind to you. You assume an incarnation for conferring grace on *Jīvas* and not do so due to the force of Karmas. You are not partial in not bestowing Liberation from Saṁsāra on those whose vision is clouded by your Māyā and do not realize you properly.

(ii) VJ : It is beyond my capacity to propitiate you except by offering salutation to you who bestow all *Puruṣārthas* (desired objectives in human life) on those who comprehend the Paramātman correctly. You are all-pervading. You take up various forms according to your will. You pervade the gross universe which is the product (or evolute of Prakṛti) and also the subtle causeless i.e. eternal *Prakṛti*. It is due to your infinite Potency that your vision i.e. knowledge is always unobstructed.

(iii) VT : It is due to your grace that we came together and I could see you. For those who realize you, it is your *Śrī-Vigraha* (original form of God) which removes the fear of death. You control this transient world (which is a product) and your own region which is eternal. By the force of your Māyā the vision of those interested in this world is clouded but not of those who are related to your region.

The Lord said:

51. O Brāhmaṇa Śrutadeva ! Please note that these sages who move with me purifying the people with the dust on their feet, have come here with the intention of conferring their grace on you.

52. Gods, sacred places and holy waters gradually purify people by their sight, contact and worship after a long period of time. But that is instantaneously accomplished just by the sight of these most exalted souls (the Brāhmaṇas—).

53. A Brāhmaṇa, by his very birth, is superior to all other beings. What needs be said of a Brāhmaṇa who is endowed with penance, learning, contentedness and devotion to me?

54. Even this Personality of mind endowed with four arms is not dearer to me than a Brāhmaṇa. A learned Brāhmaṇa is the very embodiment of Vedas while I, of gods. A proof (*Pramāṇa*) is Superior to what is to be proved (*Prameya*) as it depends on *Pramāṇa*. As Vedas are *Pramāṇa* and gods, the *Prameya*, the Superiority of the Vedas (and consequently of Brāhmaṇas) is automatically obvious.

55. Persons of evil mentality do not understand this truth. Out of jealousy they disregard their preceptor, me, Brāhmaṇas who are my ownself and entertain reverential attitudes to idols (and symbols, etc.) as adorable objects.

56. Perceiving me as the All-pervading Ātman everywhere, a Brāhmaṇa cherishes the idea that this universe consisting of mobile and immobile creation and the principles such as *Mahat* and others which constitute the universe, are nothing but my forms.

57. Therefore, O Brāhmaṇa Śrutadeva, worship these Brāhmaṇa sages with the same devotion and faith as you have in me. If this is done, I am directly worshipped but not by any other means even if it involves considerable expenditure of wealth and show of grandeur.

Śri Śuka said:

58. Thus commanded by the Lord, he worshipped Kṛṣṇa and those excellent Brāhmaṇa sages as being the same (as one Ātman) with the same devotion and attained the goal of saints

(*Mokṣa*). Even king Bahulāsva of Mithilā also attained the same state.

59. O king Parīkṣit ! The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who is devoted to his votaries stayed with his two devotees. Having enlightened them in the true path to *Mokṣa* as enunciated in the Vedas, he returned to Dvārakā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Śruti Gitā

(Hyman of Praise by The Vedas)

Parikṣit requested:[1]

1. O Brāhmaṇa sage ! How is it possible for the Vedas, conditioned as they are with *guṇas*[2] and their products, to carry out their function directly with reference to the Supreme Brahman which is beyond specific indication and hence indefinable, devoid of *guṇas* and (beyond the range of perceptibility) is transcendental to the causal (cause-effect) relation.

1. Referring to the concluding verse of the last chapter—86.59—Parīkṣit doubted the competence and capability of the Vedas to declare or describe the Supreme Brahman.

2. ŚR explains : The Śruti texts are expressed in and consist of words. Words are characterised by their 'powers' technically known as *Mukhyā*, *Lakṣaṇā* and *Gauṇī*, or by their power by which it expresses, indicates or suggests the implication either by means of (i) *abhidhā* (denotation, the meaning belonging to the word by social consensus or convention (*Saṅketa*) which primarily made the word at all), (ii) *Lakṣaṇā* (the secondary signification. The standard SK. example is *Gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ*—'The cowherd colony is in or on the Gaṅgā'. Here *in* or *on* means not on the water-current of the river but on the bank of the river (technically called *Jahallakṣaṇā*). Or *Kuntāḥ Praviśanti* "spears enter" i.e. 'persons bearing the spears enter'. Something additional to the thing mentioned viz. spear-bearers is implied. *This is called a-Jahal-Lakṣaṇā*. The 3rd power of the word is *Vyañjanā*—'suggested or insinuated sense.' Thus if a cool breeze is implied by saying 'the cowherd colony is on the Gaṅgā', it will be *Vyañjanā*.

KD has explained in details ŚR's commentary adding his illustrations to elucidate it. Thus he gives the sub-division of *abhidhā* viz. *rūḍhi*, *yoga* and

Śri Śuka explains:

2. The Almighty who is above limiting conditions and ever-liberated evolved the intellect, the senses, the mind and the vital breaths of all embodied beings (*Jīvas*) for the enjoyment of various objects, for bringing about their birth, for their transmigration to various other-worldly regions, for experiencing pleasures, etc. thereof and for their Final Liberation (where all speculation or ideation ceases to function). He created these for helping *Jīvas* attain their four objectives of life, viz. *artha, dharma, Kāma and Mokṣa.*

yoga-rūḍhi. Thus names of persons Rāma, John, etc. are by social convention (*rūḍhi*) but *nṛpati*. 'The protector of the people' 'a king' is etymological (*Yoga* or *Yaugika*). But *Pāṅka-ja* (born out of mud) may mean a lotus or a frog but is by *convention and etymology* used for a lotus flower. This is *Yoga-rūḍha*.

The thrust of Parīkṣit's submission is "How can Brahman which is transcendental to *Padārtha* can come with the range of words of Śruti.

As ŚR. succinctly states it : *evam padārthatvāyogād apadārthasya ca vākyārthatvāyogān na śruti-gocaratvam Brahmanaḥ |*

The position taken by other important annotators may be briefly summarised as follows :—

VR : The Supreme Brahman is indefinable either as a *cit* (conscious) or *acit* (unconscious, material) entity. It is beyond three *guṇas*. It is absolutely different and distinct from other intelligent or unintelligent existence. How could the *Śrutis* being verbal in nature, denote or describe *Brahman* directly.

VJ : The Supreme Brahman is indefinable, void of *guṇaś*, distinct from *Sat* and *asat* (The causal matter and its product). While Śrutis are words and as such can connote qualities or denote things having qualities. This being the case how could Śrutis speak of the Supreme Brahman? Did they directly describe it or indicate its properties ?

By Suka's epithet—*Brahman*—VJ takes 'a sage whose all desires are accomplished.'

KD : Śuka concedes that when after the withdrawal of the universe, the *Prakṛti* ceases to be and there exists only formless, attribute less Brahman, this Brahman is beyond the power of Śrutis to decribe. But when the universe is created and the individual souls (*Jīvas*) which lay dormant or dissolved in the *Prakṛti* are granted their subtle-bodies (*liṅga Śarīra*) and are given scope to achieve their purpose in life, be it *dharma, artha, kāma*, or *mokṣa*, God is the Controller of Māyā and is hence called the Almighty Lord (*Prabhu*). To such *Jīvas, Śrutis* describe *That* (*Brahman*) *thou* (*art*) etc. But when the power of words ceases to be and the Śrutis find it beyond

3. This is the secret essence about the Brahman which is enshrined in the *Upaniṣads* and which is treasured up in their mind by the ancestors of our ancestors[1] (like Sanaka, Sanandana, etc.). He who faithfully and with devotion preserves it in the mind becomes rid of the limitation of the body[2] etc. and attains the *Summum bonum*.[3]

their capacity to speak about Brahman, they assume silence which is an eloquent guidanec (87.60-112).

VR: The controller of the universe invested the *Jīvas* (individual souls) with their bodies for favouring them with the opportunity of propitiating him as well as attaining their prosperity here and attainment of *Mokṣa* or *niḥśreyas* hereafter, and for gaining the knowledge of the self which leads to *mukti* (Final Emancipation), and removing the notion of difference about their essential nature. VR : alternately explains *Kalpanāya* as "for the sake of the sportive activities regarding the creation, etc. of the univeise."

VJ : The Lord has created the intellect, the senses, the mind and the vital breath for *Jīvas* so that words (*mātrās*) indicate him directly that he is distinct from *Sat* and *asat* (or subtle and gross *Prakṛtis*) and in order that they should take to meritorious activities (*bhavārtham*) such as *svādhyāya* and *Pravacana*. The 'words' do not indicate attainment of heaven but obtaining merits for realization of the Supreme Self. VJ interpreres *Kalpanāya* as "for knowledge of the Supreme Self's (*Paramārtha jñānāya*).

VT : The Lord has created the intellect, the sense-organs, the minds and the vital breaths of various categories of *jīvas* like the human beings who were lying dormant or in a dissolved state along with the *Prakṛti* after the great *Pralaya* (dissolution of the universe) for the sake of understanding the Vedas and thereby to make them realize their Self (the principle of *jīva*) and for visualizing the Supreme Self (the *bhāgavat-tattva*) called here as *akalpana* (that which is devoid of *māyā*).

VB : The logically established view (*Siddhānta*) is that Brahman should be regarded of that nature as it is described in *Upaniṣads* (*Vedānta*). In the evolution of the world, the Lord created (1) Intelligence, (2) Sense-organs, (3) the mind and (4) vital breaths (*Prāṇas*) in this serial order and their respective function is (1) *mātrā* (2) another transmigration of the soul (3) for *ātman* and (4) *akalpana*. He insists that this order of the objects of Intelligence, etc. should be observed.

Sa kramo'trāpi grāhya evaṁ sarvopayogārtham, yato Bhagavāṁścatuṣṭayam utpāditavān, anenaiva sarvānupapattiḥ parihartavyā—iti Śukahṛdayam |

1. *Pūrveṣām purvajaiḥ* : (1) By Vāmadeva, Prahlāda and others—VR (ii) By God and others—VJ.

2. *akiñcana*—A person who regards nothing as worth praying for or worth attaining—VR.

3. *Kṣemaṁ gacchet*—Getting all his doubts resolved by pondering over the *Upaniṣads* should attain to the Lord.

4. Here, on this topic, I shall narrate to you in details an ancient legend concerning the great sage Nārāyaṇa and containing a dialogue between Nārada and the sage Nārāyaṇa.

5. On one occasion, during the course of his tour of the world, Nārada, the beloved of the Lord, went to the hermitage of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Badarikāśrama), to visit that ancient sage.

6. It is reported that in this Bhārata varṣa, from the beginning of the Kalpa, the sage Nārāyaṇa has been engaged in performing penance coupled with righteousness, spiritual knowledge, self-control and mental tranquility for the prosperity of the people here and their spiritual good hereafter.

7. Nārada paid obeisance to Nārāyaṇa who was seated in his hermitage surrounded by sages, residents of the village called Kalāpa, and put him this very question, O scion of the Kuru family.

8. In reply to him, the glorious sage Nārāyaṇa, in the midst of the sages who were listening, told Nārada, the gist of the discussion on the *para Brahman*, which took place between the residents of Janaloka.[1]

The Venerable Lord (Nārāyaṇa) said:

9. O son of the Self-born god Brahmā, in the days of yore in Jana-loka, there was held a seminar on the *para Brahman* (i. e. it was a discussion in which participants both listened and spoke and thus shared their views and experiences about the nature of the *para Brahman* with others) among the mind-born sons of Brahmā who were sages observing life-long celibacy.

10. When you had been away to Śveta-dvīpa to see the the Aniruddha form of mine, a thorough and well-rounded discussion on the *para Brahman* took place—a discussion in which all the Śrutis were discussed, co-ordinated and synthesized. In that seminar this was definitely the very question you put to me.

1. This is fifth of the seven divisions of the universe and is situated above *Maharloka*.

11. Although they (The mind-born sons of Brahmā) were all equal in status from the point of learning, austere penance, virtuousness and so much unparalleled in abounding grace that to them friends, enemies and the indifferent ones were equal. They made one of them, viz. Sanandana as the expounder[1] while others became eager listeners.

11A *VR adds*:

I shall explain to you all your queries, O sinless one. Now listen to me.

Sanandana said:

12-13. After swollowing up (at the time of the *Pralaya*) all the universe created by him, the Supreme person along with all his (creative and protective) potencies (such as *prakṛti puruṣa, kāla*) was as if lying asleep (in his yogic trance). At the end of the period of Pralaya, Śrutis (i. e. the deities presiding over them which were created by his first exhalations at the beginning of the creation of the universe), awakened that Supreme person singing the hymns which appropriately described his true nature, just as bards and attendants of an emperor approach to wait upon him early in the morning while he is still asleep, and awaken him by singing sweet songs eulogising his famous heroic exploits.

Śrutis said :

14*. Be gracious to manifest your glorious exalted nature O invincible Lord. Be pleased to exterminate the beginningless

1. KD : This was a *Brahma-Makha* "sacrifice in the form of spiritual discussion." Just as in sacrifices. though the sacrificial priests know the whole of the Veda, the priests recite only that much portion of the Veda appropriate for the rite and that too pertaining to the part of the duty (*Kṣaṇa*) assigned to them, similarly, in this *Brahma-makha* although all of them were equal in all respects, they gave the *Kṣaṇa* of 'speakership' to Sanandana.

14* The gist of VR's lengthy explanation :

O invincible Lord, be pleased to free all beings from *Avidyā*, as you, being merciful by nature, take cognisance of only the good qualities ignoring the defects or evil qualities in beings (*Sā'parādha-janeṣvapi Kaścid guṇa-leśo'sti cet tam apekṣyā' nugrahaśīlas tvam /*). Avidyā, by the three *guṇas* causes the *jīvas* to whirl in *Saṁsāra* investing them with evil. You are all powerful and are endowed with six excellences (as enumerated in the *Viṣṇu P.*) implied in

Avidyā (Nescience) of all those beings which are vested with mobile and immobile bodies, as the *guṇas* (like *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) possessed by Avidyā are exhibited with the evil object (of obscuring the ever-blissful nature of the Soul). You are, by your very nature, endowed with all the powers, blissfulness and authority (and hence you have kept *Māyā* or *Avidyā* under control.) O Lord ! who as their indwelling controller evoke all the powers in all beings ! It is only the Veda which can describe you to some extent as (some times—such as at the beginning of creation) you (appeared to) work by way of sport in conjunction with Māyā but as a matter of fact you always abide in your ever blissful state of infinite knowledge and delight.

your epithet *Bhagavān*. You invest all powers in mobile and immobile corporeal beings. At the time of gross creation, when you work in association with *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, Vedas can describe you.

VR : Concludes his Commentary stating his *Viśiṣṭādvaita* stance, as follows :—

anena Prakṛti - sambandha-mocakatva - niyata - tatsambandhāpādakatva - jñāpanāya sarva - kāraṇatvaṁ tasya nirvikāre' 'nupa-pannatvāttasmin cid - acid - vaiśiṣṭyaṁ viśiṣṭa - kāraṇatvādeva viśiṣṭa - kāryāṇām viśiṣṭa -kāraṇānyatvāt śarīrātmabhāvācca kārya-sarīra. bhūta - cid-acid-vāci-śabdānāṁ viśesyātma - paryantābhidhāyakatvāc co'ktam

14-1. ŚR quotes the following Śruti (i.e. *Upaniṣadic*) texts attributing creation to the Supreme Person

(1) *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante / yena jātāni jīvanti / yat prayantyabhisaṁviśanti / tad vijijñāsasva—Taitt. Up.* 3.1.

Here creation, subsistence and dissolutions of all *bhūtas* is attributed to Brahman.

(2) *Yo Brahmāṇaṁ vidadhāti pūrvaṁ yo vai vedāṁśca prahiṇoti tasmai / taṁ ha devātma-buddhi-prakāśam mumukṣur vai śaraṇam ahaṁ prapadye—Śvetāśvatara Up.* 6.18).

Here god Brahmā's creation and his trustee-ship of the Vedas by the Supreme Man is mentioned.

(3) *Satyaṁ jñānam anantam Brahma /*
Yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sa sarva-vit / Taittirīya Up. 2,1r

The infinite knowledge and omniscience of the Reality is stated.

(4) *Ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmānam niyamayati /*

God's being the inner controller is described.

VJ : (*The gist only*) :

Be pleased to manifest your glory by being compassionate to your votaries. O invincible Lord ! Remove the screen to your will-power and do away with the cover of *Prakṛti* which obscures Jiva's qualities under the

15* The sages recognize that the universe that is perceived is the perfect *Brahman* (yourself) as it is the Reality (*Brahman*) that remains in the end (at the time of *Pralaya*). The *Brahman* is not

sufferings in *Saṁsāra*. Due to *Prakṛti* the inner qualities like infinite power, of Jīva which is your reflection, do not shine. You invest all beings such as Śrī, Brahmā, and others in this universe when you are associated with *Prakṛti* (which according to *Smṛtis* is one-eighth of the time of the dissolved state). The Vedas can follow you i.e. your commands and interdictions while during the stage of *Pralaya*, the Śrutis remain as mere hymns of your praise. VJ ends his com. with a quotation from Madhva Ācārya which affirms the equivalence of the Bh. P. with Śrutis.

15* (1) As *Pūrvapakṣa* ŚR quotes ṚV 8.44.16a. (which is repeated in all the Vedas e.g. *Tait. Saṃ.* 1.55.1a, *Vāj. Sam.* 3.12*a*) and states that the Śrutis refer to Agni and Indra and not to me (*Para Brahman*). The *uttara pakṣa* (the reply) is given in this verse.

(2) *KD closely follows SS.*

(3) *Sudarśana Sūri and VR* :

When all the things evolved out of *Brahman* at the time of creation are withdrawn at the time of *Pralaya* and only *Brahman* (the cause of all things) remains. Just as earthen wares are created out of and ultimately reduced to the earth (their material cause), the gross perceptible universe is said to be *Brahman* from which the universe and all things included in it are created and of which they are constituted and within which they are withdrawn. Hence, the knowers (the seers of the Vedas) have devoted their mind and speech to you (who are the firm support). The foot-steps resting on bed-steads are as good as placed on the ground as the bedsteads have the earth (floor) as their support.

15*A. *VJ's Text reads the 1st half differently* :

You are beyond the eternal darkness called *Mūlaprakṛti*. It is through Vedas that your real nature is known. You are not subject to modifications. Hence, sages i.e. learned persons like Brahmā and others resigned their thoughts, words and actions to you. Just as the feet of men resting on the firm earth get full support and do not fall, the thoughts, words and actions of these sages do not prove untrue as you, to whom they have dedicated them, are the Supreme-most.

15* *VB* (*Summary*) :

The universe itself is *Brahman*—Śrutis and experience support this. When all modifications cease to be, *Brahman* remains. VB quotes *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, etc.* (*Tait. Up.* 3.1.1). Just as earthen wares are made out of and ultimately reduced to earth, so it is *Brahman* out of which everything is evolved, and the reality that remains is *Brahman*. Hence, the seers of the Vedas have made you the centre of their thought, word and deed. Even misapprehensions are also intrinsically *Brahman* (*Bhramād api svī-kṛto Viṣayaḥ paramārthataḥ bhagavān eva bhavati* /) Just as foot-step placed anywhere rests in the ultimate analysis, on the earth.

subject to modifications. It is from the *Brahman* that the rising and setting i. e. evolution and dissolution of the universe of modifications take place, just as the clay (the material cause) remains constant though its modifications (the earthen-ware like pot, pitchers, etc.) are made and unmade. Hence, sages have concentrated their mind and speech on you and not on the modifications (things in the world). How can the feet placed by men (on stones, bricks etc.) not be regarded ultimately as rested on the *terra firma* itself. (Similarly, if *Śrutis* describe some modifications of yours, they ultimately describe you who form the basis, the substratum of them all).

16*. It is, hence, O Lord of Māyā (constituted of the three *guṇas* viz. (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) that spiritually wise and thoughtful people immerse themselves into the nectarian sea of your stories which completely wash off the dirt (sins or impurities) of the entire world and have rid themselves of sins and (all types of) afflictions.[1] Need it be said, O Supreme Lord, that those who, by virtue of their self-realization, have cleansed all passions and evil propensities from their heart and have warded off the effects of Time (such as old age) will enjoy your state of eternal, infinite bliss ?

17*. Persons are alive (lit. bearers of life) in the real sense of the term only if they are your devoted followers, otherwise they are merely respiring bellows. It is due to your grace (i.e.

16* VJ : O Lord of three worlds ! Persons deeply learned in philosophy (*darśanas*) take a plunge in the sea of nectar of your stories which wash off the impurities of all people, have rid themselves of all the miseries of the world. Need it be said, O Supreme Lord, that the Liberated Souls whose afflictions from their hearts and the effects like birth, old age etc. caused by Time are wiped out by God himself and who resort to and worship you will enjoy the state of eternal, infinite bliss, have not to undergo any sufferings.

1. *ŚR quotes as an authority .*

Yathā puṣkara-palāśa āpo na śliṣyanta evam evaṁ-vidi pāpaṁ karma śliṣyate

Chāndogya Up. 4.14.3.

17* VJ : It is by your entry into Brahmā, Rudra and other presiding deities of *Mahat*, *Ahaṅkāra* and other principles that they could create this Egg of the universe. Those who bore ill feeling towards you (*asuhṛdaḥ*) believe that everything is unreal. And their life is nothing but respiring like bellows and their exhalations are sighs expressive of their suffering in hell. The three

presence or interpenetration) that (insentient) Principles like *Mahat* (cosmic intelligence), Ahaṁkāra (cosmic 'I'-ness') and others could create this egg of the universe or body (macrocosm as well as microcosm). You are that Supreme Being that enter into and animate the five vestures of the body enshrining the soul (the virtues consisting of food, vital breath, mind *Vijñāna* and bliss) and assuming their form, he knows them all. But factually you are not connected with them and abide in the last (called *Brahma-puccha*[1] in *Tait. Up.* (2. 1. 5). You are distinct from the gross and the subtle—the ultimate eternal Reality which alone remains after the destruction of all others.

18*. Out of those paths (of Brahma-realization explored and laid down) by (ancient) sages[2], those whose eyes are blinded by gravel or *rajas* i. e. have gross outlook, contemplate Brahman as being at the abdomen (as presiding over the plexus called *Maṇipūra*, located at the navel). Followers of Āruṇi who have subtler vision contemplate Brahman in the cavity of the heart (at the plexus or nerve centre known as *Anāhata Cakra*). O infinite Lord, the meditator thence proceeds upward (by the channel or path called *Suṣumṇā*) upto the crown of the head (to the plexus called sahasrāra the exalted position of the lustre of Brahman[3]. He who reaches this position does not recede to fall again into the jaws of death.

categories the lowest i.e. human beings, middle i.e. sages and Gandharvas, the highest i.e. Indra and other gods and their leader god Brahmā knows and disseminates by his teaching the knowledge of your eternal, infinite, unparalleled blissful nature and your being transcendental to *Sat* and *Asat* (*sad-asataḥ Paraṃ*). He is eligible to attain to a form similar to the Lord.

1. VR : has stoutly opposed the idea of *Brahmapuccha*. According to VR. : this verse emphasizes that the human life is useless if not devoted to the Lord. Persons who, though endowed with sound sense organs, indulge in enjoying objects of senses instead of engaging themselves in propitiating the Lord merely live and breathe like bellows.

2 VR : 1. *ṛṣi - vartamasu*—The paths of worship as prescribed in the Vedānta—VR.

3. *Paramaṁ dhāma*—The highest position is the centre between the eyebrows.

VR : classifies these worshippers as follows :—

(i) *Vaiśvānara-vidyā-niṣṭha* : Those who look upon gastral fire as a form of *Brahman*.

19*. You enter the various living species evolved by you, though as their (material) cause, you were already existing there. Of your own accord, you assume those forms like fire (lying dormant in the fuel and appearing similar to the size and shape of the fire-wood though as Fire it is undifferentiated one) and appear smaller or greater, higher or lower. Hence, persons whose judgment is clear and who do not expect any return (either here or hereafter) for their acts realize your true nature as being the only Reality, Pure, undifferentiated immutable in all these unreal forms.[1]

20. (The scriptures say) that the individual soul abiding in the body created and shaped by his former acts, is not limited by anything that may be termed as cause and effect. It is a part or ray of yourself who are endowed with all potencies. Having come to this conclusion regarding the nature of the individual Soul, wise men in this world, with unflinching faith and devotion, contemplate on your feet to which all righteous acts prescribed in the Vedas are dedicated and in consequence of which they attain to liberation from *Saṁsāra* (lit. State of getting no rebirth again).

(2) *Dahara—vidyā-niṣṭha*—Followers of Aruṇi who look upon God as being in the cavity of the heart (*hṛdaya-puṇḍarīkāntargatā'kāśarūpaṁ tvām upāsate*)

(3) Those who follow the *parisara paddhati* i.e. the path of *suṣumṇā*.

(ii) 18* VJ : also classifies the contemplatists on Brahman as follows:—

(1) Possessors of subtle insight (*Kūrpadṛśaḥ Sūkṣma dṛṣṭayaḥ*) into Brahman and his attributes contemplate Brahman as *Udara* (*udarapūrṇam Brahman*) or Perfect, full, infinite, Brahman.

(2) Followers of Aruṇi meditate upon *Brahman* as *hṛdaya* (one abiding in the heart).

(3) The followers of the sage Maṇḍūka contemplate *Brahman* as *dahara* i.e. subtler than the sky and our vital breath lead to It. But those who follow the *Parisara* method and contemplate Brahman as passing from the heart through *Brahmanāḍī* to the crown of the head such meditators do not fall a victim to kṛtānta—God of death.

19* VJ (Only the difference is noted) quotes *Tantra Bhāgavata* as his authority. In the innumerable living species you are like *jīva* in them and assimilate yourself with those beings like fire in fire-wood. The Vital breath knows you. Great persons mentally go near you who are the eternal principle in the decaying forms and contemplate on you.

1. *Śvet Up.* 6.11.

21*. O controller of the universe ! You have assumed a corporeal form for shedding light on the true nature of the self which is difficult to comprehend. Those persons who have recouped from their exhaustion (caused by whirling in the cycle of *Saṁsāra*) by immersing themselves in the ocean of the nectarine stories of your glorious deeds and have renounced their homes (relatives, property, etc.) through their association with your swan-like votaries who take shelter in your lotus-feet, do not covet even for liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

22*. When the nest[1] (in the form of the body in which the soul dwells) follows the path that leads to you, it is useful as one's own self, well-wisher and a beloved person. Though you are always ready to help and are thus favourably disposed and the real well-wisher and loving, it is unfortunate that people of suicidal mentality do not take any delight or interest in you and do not worship you with some form of devotion. They wrong-

21* *KD* : gives a gist of this and states that the quality between God and the votary is synthesized into one-ness by intense devotion and exhorts to renounce the *Karmas*-religious rites prescribed by the Veda and engage oneself completely in the devotion to God.

(ii) *VJ* : O Lord whose essential nature is extremely incomprehensible those who have deeply studied the Vedas who have exhausted themselves in churning the extensively vast ocean of your glorious deeds and have been thereby released from *Saṁsāra*, have come to realize that you are the source of the Vedas and the "fruit" to be conveyed by them, and worship you by performance of sacrifices and meditation.

22* (1) *VR. construes differently* :

(i) If this nest i.e. the physical body is placed in your way (by devoting to your worship, etc.) you are just like the very soul, a well-wisher and a beloved person always ready to help.

(ii) KD : Poetically illustrates how a person forgets the Lord and engages himself into *Saṁsāra* and finally comes to grief. Hence, one should be absorbed in the devotion and worship of Ātman.

1. *Kulāya*—that which dissolves into the earth i.e. this physical body.

(iii) *VJ reads differently.*

Through the association of and for worshipping *sannyāsins* or Swan-like ascetics who are attached to your lotus-feet, some have renounced their houses, kith & kin and do not aspire to attain *Mokṣa* (liberation from *Saṁsāra*) which is the fruit of propitiating you, O Lord. They are devoted to you who are the most beloved one. They look upon this transient nest (This physical body) as good and dear and a selfless relative who guides by the path leading to you.

ly entertain attachment, etc. to the physical body which is so wretched and wander in this *Saṁsāra* which is extremely fearful.

23*. That state of yours which sages, the practitioners of rigorous Yogic path, contemplated in their hearts by restraining their vital breath, the mind and senses thoroughly, is also attained by your adversaries by constantly thinking of you, and also by the women (Gopīs of Vraja) whose hearts were enamoured of and attached to your mighty arms which were like the body of Śeṣa. The Lord of serpents, as well as we (the presiding deities of Śrutis) who realise you as equal to all and omnipresent and cling to your lotus-like feet, are the same (i.e. equal) in your eyes.

24*. Alas ! O Lord, how can one who has come into existence and passed away, at a later stage after you, can possibly presume to know you who existed anterior to all creation. It is from you that the sage (god Brahmā) was born. After Brahmā came into existence both the classes of deities (viz. (1)

23* VJ's Text combines the last two lines in verse 22 and the first two lines in verse 23 of ŚR's text. (The gist only) : Persons with wrong beliefs and course of meditation do not realise the Supreme Soul. Their minds being rooted in wrong notions suffer eternally in Hell and are invested with a condemned body from hell to hell. The enemies of sages who directed by *Mukhya Prāṇa* (Chief vital breath) know the way to *Mokṣa* and worship you as (present in) the *hṛdaya* (heart).

24* *KD* : You, being the author of the creation and dissolution of the universe, are anterior to all. Hence, you are beyond the comprehension of all. If we submit to your feet and follow the nine-fold path of devotion, you impart spiritual knowledge out of Grace. Hence, the path of devotion is the best of all. (HV Hari-Varadā) 87.488-510

(1) *VR* (*Summary*) :

devagaṇā ubhaye :—Two groups of sages : (i) Sanaka and others leading ascetic life and (ii) Marici and others engaged in propagating species and world activity. When you withdraw even the *Śāstra* (Vedic Lore) within you and go to sleep, there is neither *Sat* (phenomenal intelligent being) nor *Asat* (phenomenal intelligent creation (the rest similar to ŚR).

(II) *VJ's Text* is a combination of the latter half of verse 23 and the first half of the present (No. 24) verse (only the gist of different interpretation is given.) You alone know your essential nature. The eternal Vedas seek the nectar of your lotus-feet but cannot properly comprehend you who are characterised by existence, consciousness and bliss. You are very kind to *Jīvas* who devoutly remember you.

ādhyātmika—deities presiding over sense-organs, mind and (ii) *ādhidaivika*—those presiding over the celestial world). When, withdrawing every thing within you, you go to sleep, at that time, there exists neither *Sat* (the gross phenomena) nor *Asat* (their subtle causes like *Mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra*, etc.) nor the product of these two viz. this psycho-physical organism called body, nor the velocity of Time, nor any *Śāstras* (*Śruti* texts) from which your nature can be known.[1]

25*. Those who postulate the evolution of the universe or being from non-being or the non-existent (as the Vaiśeṣika school does) or who believe in the cessation of the existent (twenty one types of miseries as *Mokṣa* or Liberation (as the *Nyāya school* does) or who posit the distinctness and plurality of Souls (as the Sāṅkhyas and Naiyāyikas, etc. do) and those who affirm that the fruit of (sacrificial and other) Karmas are real (as the followers of the Mīmāṁsā school hold)—all these propagate their misconceptions. It is due to ignorance about you (which leads persons to believe in the misconcept of diversity that the *Puruṣa* is comprised of the three *guṇas* or modifications of *Prakṛti*. It cannot exist in you as you are the embodiment of pure knowledge and absolute consciousness.[2]

1. *ko addhā veda ka iha pravocat /*
kuta ājātā, kuta iyaṁ visṛṣṭiḥ //
arvāg-devā asya visarjanenā
thā ko veda yata ābabhūva //—*RV* 10.129.6.

Also : *yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha /*—Tait. Up. 2.4.1

25* *KD* : elucidates ŚR's refutation of the view of Patañjali that the Brahman evolves out of *Asat* i.e. the *Jīva* attains Brahmahood though originally he did not possess it. He has incorporated the translation of the quotations from *Upaniṣads* (that are given below) into his lucid commentary.

VR : Only the difference from ŚR is noted as VR is a long Com. (second half) : Those who think that *Prakṛtis* of three *guṇas* and the *jīvas* (intelligent beings) are distinct and are not controlled by Supreme *Brahman* are under the influence of *Avidyā* (nescience). But you transcend *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* and yourself are Perfect, Infinite consciousness.

2. In refuting the other schools of thought the author of the Bh. P. based this verse on *Śruti* Texts like the following :—

(i) *Sad-eva somyedam agra āsīt / Chāndogya Up.* 6.2.1

(ii) *Brahmaiva san Brahmāpnoti/ - Bṛhad. Up.* 4.4.6.

26*. All the universe including the Jīva, comprised of the three *guṇas* (modifications of Prakṛti) is a projection of the mind. It appears to have a real existence as it is superimposed on you. Those who have realized the *Ātman* (the soul) regard all this (subjective and objective) universe as *Sat*, i.e. really existent as it is the projection of the Ātman Himself. Just as persons seeking gold do not discard (ornaments which are) the modifications (of gold) as they are essentially gold, the knowers of the Self come to the conclusion that this Universe (both subjective and objective) is their very self as he (the *Ātman*) made it and then entered into it.

27**. Only those persons who devotedly serve (i.e. worship) you as abiding in all beings as their Indwelling soul, disregard-

(*iii*) *avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ /*
svayaṁ dhīrāḥ paṇḍitam manyamānāḥ //
Jaghanyamānāḥ pariyanti mūḍhāḥ /
andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ // Muṇḍaka 1.2.8.

ŚR was a follower of the *advaita* school of Śaṅkara. But like Śaṅkara, he was an ardent devotee at heart. After every verse of the *Śruti gītā* he composes one verse conveying the gist of that verse. At the end of his rendering in a verse the gist of this 25th verse, he expresses his ardent desire for Liberation by repeating the names of God who is both Śiva and Viṣṇu. He prays :

Śrīman Mādhava Vāmana Trinayana Śri Śaṅkara Śrīpate /
Govindeti mudā' vadaṁ Madhupate muktaḥ kadā syām aham //

26* (i) *VR* : The mind of all beings including that of a human being, constituted as it is of three *guṇas* which apparently shows to produce some effects cannot do so in your case (It cannot realize you). But your devotees who worship you and meditate upon you, purify their heart and realize that the Universe is *Sat*—a Reality as it is not different from *Paramātman* or *Brahman* —the universe, which is the effect or a synthesized whole of the subtle principles of sentient and non-sentient beings is *Brahman*.

(ii) *VJ's* : Text combines the last two lines of Verse 25 with the 1st two lines of the present verse :—To regard that the *jīva* is bound by three *guṇas* like Sattva and others is ignorance. Only the unrighteous postulate that your mind is constituted of three *guṇas*. Supra-human beings like gods with better insight, know that you transcend these *guṇas* and are an embodiment of supreme bliss and it is the *Jīvas* that suffer from miseries.

27** (I) KD : extends this devotion to the spiritual preceptors as well.

(II) VR : Out of mercy for those averse to you you control them like cattle and bring to the right path by teaching them the path of righteousness. Those who are not averse to you and are your votaries purify other ignorant persons.

ed Death and planting their foot on the head of Death attain Liberation (from the cycle of births and deaths). •But to those who turn away their face from you, howsoever, learned they be, you bind them down like beasts by your commandments (of injunctions and interdictions ordained in the *Śrutis*). Only those who cherish devoted love to you purify themselves as well as others but not those who are averse to you !

28*. Being self-illuminating as the embodiment of knowledge as you are, you control the power of the sense-organs of all beings, though you yourself are devoid of senses[1] (in your formless aspect). Hence gods who are bound by Nescience (*Avidyā*) and who partake of the offerings oblated to them by men (under their dominance) offer worship and homage to you (just as tributary princes collect revenue from their subjects and pay tribute to their overlord, the emperor). The progenitors of the world execute the duties of their offices to which they are appointed through your fear[2] just as tributary kings do unto their emperor in this world.

(III) VJ : the text is a combination of the last two lines of verse 26 and the first half of verse 27 of ŚR.

As gold is the material cause of an ornament of gold which is its modification and as such it is not discarded as separate from gold, the Lord who interpenetrated and illumined the universe after its creation has his own essential nature unchanged. The permeator of the universe is the same absolute God. Those who serve you as abiding in every principle of reality set their foot on the head of death and become Liberated.

1. (i) *a-pāṇi-pādo javano grahītā |*
Paśyatyacakṣuḥ sa śṛṇotyakarṇaḥ ||
sa vetti vedyaṁ na ca tasya vettā |
tam āhur agryam puruṣam purāṇam ||

—*Śvet. Up.* 3.19

28*. VR : It is by your will-power that you bring about creation, etc. of the universe. You have all the powers of the sense-organs concentrated in your hands as you are the absolute.

2. *bhīṣa'smād vātaḥ pavate, bhīṣodeti sūryaḥ | bhīṣāśmād Agnīś' cendraś ca mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamaḥ |*

—*Tait. Up.* 2.7.1.

yathā'gneḥ kṣudrā viṣphuliṅgā vyuccarantyevam evā'smād ātmanaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ, sarve lokāḥ, sarve devāḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni vyuccaranti |

Bṛhad. Up. 2.1.20.

29*. O Lord! You are eternally free and far beyond the reach of Māyā. But when you are pleased to sport with that beginningless Māyā or Avidyā by your mere glance (without coming into contact with her), all the mobile and immobile beings invested with their subtle bodies come into being.[1] But their bodies depend on the causal (latent) *karmas* of those beings which have come into existence by your (above-mentioned) glance. You are beyond the ken of sense-organs and the mind. Like the sky, you are impartial—equal to all. None kindred to you, none stranger.

[From the point of subtleness and impartiality] you are comparable to the Void[2] (*śūnya* in its positive aspect), incomprehensible to speech and mind.

30.** O Eternal Lord! If (it is postulated as Sāṅkhyas and schoolmen of similar views do, that) individual souls be infinite in number, each eternally existent and all-pervading, their being under control (of another i.e. you) is not possible.

29* (I) KD refutes 'voidness' conveyed by the term *śūnya*. *Śūnya* means 'un-manifest' 'beyond the range of word'. He discusses fundamental problems about the nature and size (whether atomic or co-terminus with the body) of the soul. He discusses the concepts of 'bondage and 'liberation', 'plurality' and 'oneness' of the soul. (The discussion is too lengthy to be compressed in a foot-note].

asad vā idam agra āsīt | tato vai sad ajāyata |

—*Tait. up.* 2.7.1

(II) VR: (Summary only).

All beings mobile and immobile are invested with a body through which they are made to suffer agonies caused by *Prakṛti*. Emancipation from these sufferings is possible only by the gracious glance of the Lord. All sentient (and non-sentient) beings constitute your body. As nobody can be separate and distinct from you, you are their Protector. None is equal to you. Nothing pre-existed you. You are all-pervading like the sky and are not tainted by any contact.

(III) VJ.'s text combines verse 28 c, d and 29 a, b of ŚR's text. The gist of 29 a, b : VJ. quotes with approval Śāṇḍilya's opinion. If one were to hold that Liberation (from *saṁsāra*) is secured through the gracious glance of Viṣṇu, then it must be admitted that all beings whirl into *saṁsāra* due to the will of God.

30*. VR : (only the difference from ŚR is noted).

The view that that which permeates the universe is both the ruler and the ruled, is not correct and the holders of the view have failed to see the truth.

(It is illogical to hold that equals are sub-ordinate to equals.) And, hence, (the statement) that you control them or they are controlled by you is not possible. Their being controlled is possible only if the contrary is true (i.e. if the *jīvas* be limited or conditioned, finite and non-eternal). That (i.e. you or *Brahman*) which originates or produces as an evolute anything (viz. the *jīva* in this case) and thus forms its part (as the material cause) and is thus immanent in it, can control that evolute (the *jīva*). And this controlling power is not known to them who pose to know it[1], for it, being beyond the range of words and thoughts, what they come to know is defective.

31*. To postulate the creation of the *jīva* either from the beginningless *Prakṛti* (i.e. to regard the *jīva* as a product or transformation of *Prakṛti*) or from the eternal (birthless) *Puruṣa* or from a combination of both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is not tenable (for *Prakṛti* is *jaḍa*—inert—while the *jīva* is the intelligent, animating principle of life and as such it cannot be created by the inert *Prakṛti*. The second and the third alternative subjects *Puruṣa* to modifications). Just as bubbles are apparently formed out of interaction of water and air, *jīvas* apparently seem to come into existence through the *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (as the material and instrumental causes. But the *Brahman* is the only reality and) the so-called creation of *jīvas* being unreal, they, with all their several names and forms, merge in you as the rivers merge into the sea (and lose their identity) or all juices (from various flowers collected by bees) get dissolved into (what is ultimately called) honey.[1]

1. *yasyāmataṁ mataṁ tasya, mataṁ yasya na veda saḥ /*
avijñātam avijānatām, vijñātam avijānatām //

—*Kena Up.* 2.3

(I) VR : Just as bubbles (temporary by nature) are created by the inter-action of water and wind (which are as compared with bubbles—permanent in nature), *jīvas* are formed from the combination of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* both of which are birthless (eternal). It is due to your support that they bear different names and forms as a god, a man, etc. At the time of *Pralaya* (dissolution of the world) they merge in you leaving their names and forms as rivers do, etc.

(II) VJ : *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are eternal, unborn and inseparable. Jīvas come into existence conditioned with a body (like that of bubbles on water).

32*. Comprehending thoroughly that misapprehension (viz. the identification of the body with the Soul) has been implanted by your Māyā (leading to repeated births in Saṁsāra) intelligent and discerning persons cherish profound love and devotion to you who emancipate them from the cycle of births (and deaths). How can there be any fear of *Saṁsāra* to those who have resorted to you for refuge? For your brow of three 'tyres' (i.e. Time or a year consisting of three seasons, viz. the summer, the rains and the winter) strikes terror constantly in the heart of those who do not seek asylum with you.

33. Persons who, neglecting the feet of one's spiritual preceptor, try to control the extremely restless, unbroken horse in the form of their mind, by trying to subdue the senses and controlling the breath, undergo great troubles for the means of controlling the mind, and are beset with hundreds of miseries in the *Saṁsāra*. Such persons are like merchants embarking on a voyage without securing the services of a helmsman (to pilot the boat.)

34. What (happiness) can men derive from one's kith and kin, sons, wives, wealth, houses, landed property, chariots and other vehicles—nay the very life-breath itself—when you, the very embodiment of every kind of blessing, are easily available by his side in the form of Ātman, ready to confer blessings on him who seeks asylum with you? What thing in this *Saṁsāra* which is by its nature transient and essentially devoid of any substance, can give pleasure to a person who is ignorant of the above-mentioned truth (about your blissful nature) and endeavours to get sexual pleasure.

35**. Sages who have enthroned you on the lotus of their heart and hence the water with which their feet are washed, is

32. *VJ : How will your brows inspire fear of *Saṁsāra* in the hearts of those who completely submit themselves for your grace ?

VJ. **: Sages, gods and others who through holy scriptures realize that you alone are *Sat*, the Real, independent existence, and concentrate their heart on your lotus-feet which annihilate all sins, O Supreme Man, such persons do not even once approach the abode of Hara i.e. are not at all affected by *Ahaṁkāra* (Egotism).

It is noteworthy that VJ. specifically uses "Hara" and "Rudra" for *Ahaṁkāra*.

capable of destroying all sins, are completely free from lust and pride and they go on pilgrimage to various sacred places and holy waters on the earth. Those who have but once set their heart on you, the *Ātman*, the receptacle of everlasting bliss never again turn their mind to (the enjoyment of) the household life which robs man of his excellent virtues (like fortitude, serenity of mind, etc.)

36*. (The following is a refutation of the view of the Mīmāṁsakas regarding the reality of the world).

If you agree that as this (world) is evolved out of the Reality (*Brahman*), it must be real, (we say that) that is not the case. This (your) argument is fallacious. In some instances, no invariable concomitance is observed. (The effect does not necessarily follow the nature of the cause. e. g. A son is found different from the father.) In some cases, the so-called evolute is false (e. g. the "mis-perception" of a rope (a reality) as a serpent (which is unreal). Hence the world is not real like the (*Brahman*). If (you argue that the "mis-perception" of a serpent is caused by the presence of the rope and ignorance about the reality, similarly) the world is the product of both (*Brahman* and *Avidyā*), we reply that still the world is not real. It is superimposed on the Reality called *Brahman*. We appreciate the usefulness of this theory. The illusion theory is admitted as it explains the transactions of the phenomenal world, and such transactions are carried on by blindly following traditions. Your speech (Vedic texts promising reward for ritualistic acts such as performance of sacrifice, etc.) deludes through the manifold powers of words (such as *lakṣaṇā*, *vyañjanā*, etc.) persons who have become dullwitted by blind faith in Vedic rituals.[1]

36*. VR differs : If as you say, whatever is born of *Sat*—real existence —may not be real, you must show where this view fails and where it is totally disproved. The dull-witted followers of the path of Karma, are deluded through blind tradition.

1. : *tad yatheha karma-cito loko kṣīyate evam evā'mutra puṇya-cito lokaḥ kṣīyate |*

—*Chāndogya* Up. 8.1.6

Thus many Vedic texts do not subscribe to Mīmāṁsaka's contention that the Vedas advocate the path of Karma only.

37*. This phenomenal world was not in existence at the beginning before its creation. After the dissolution, the world shall cease to exist. In the intervening period, being superimposed on you, the Absolute Existence, it appears to be real. Hence, the world is compared with various modifications of material substances (e. g. bangles, armlets, crowns of gold, a pitcher or a dish of earth). It is like a figment of imagination with no basis in reality. But ignorant people regard it as the Reality.

38**. When the individual soul (*Jiva*) embraces Māyā under the influence of Nescience (Avidyā), he assumes her *guṇas* and wrongly identifies himself with the body, sense-organs etc. Thus losing (forgetting) his pristine glory and blissful nature, he succumbs to death (and is involved in the cycle of birth and death i. e., *Saṁsāra*). On the contrary, even as a serpent casts off his slough, you discard Māyā. Hence, you have preserved within you divine nature, infinite power and eight supra-human mystical powers. Thus you shine with your infinite power and glory.

39***. If the *Yogins* who try to control their senses do not exterminate the roots of passions from their heart, you, even though abiding in the hearts of these hypocrites, are not accessible to them, are like a diamond (necklace) worn round the neck but forgotten by the wearer. These *yogins*, after gratifying their own senses are flanked with miseries on both the sides, O Lord—One from Death i. e., *Saṁsāra* that has not been over-

* VR differs :

It is only the ignorant who believe that this universe did not exist before creation and it will be non-existent in future and, therefore, it is not existing at present also and that it is unreal like a figment of fiction.

** VR : (The gist only).

The *Jiva*, being deluded by Māyā is invested with a body (which is product of *Prakṛti*). Through the body he enjoys objects of senses and identifies himself with it and is subjected to death. He is thus robbed of his inherent knowledge and other qualities.

*** As usual VJ's text is a combination of verse 38.c.d and 32. a,b. : *Yogins* who are desireless and firm in the path of renunciation are blessed by the Lord with a life-free death and he grants them blissful *Mokṣa*.

come and on the other hand, from you who still remain unrealized.

40*. O glorious Lord (endowed with six excellences) ; he who has realized you, does not feel the effect of pleasure or pain as a consequence of meritorious or sinful acts as determined by you. Hence, he is not aware of the Vedic injunctions and interdictions which are binding on other embodied beings. (They are not binding on him as he has realized that the soul is distinct from the body.) You are every day ushered through the ears into the heart and are enshrined there in the hearts of men with sage advice and precepts transmitted from generation to generation. And you are ultimately attained by them as you are the final goal called *Mokṣa*.

41. Even lords of celestial regions (like god Indra, Brahmā) have not been able to fathom you or know your limit as you are Infinite. Even you have not done so, due to your infiniteness, as within you abide heaps of innumerable Eggs of Universes each along with its seven protective sheaths, which propelled by Time float about like particles of dust (driven by the wind) in the sky. Due to the infinite greatness of yours, Śrutis, finding that they end in you (as their goal), convey you indirectly by negating everything else than you.

The glorious Lord (Nārāyaṇa) said :

42. Having thus heard the exposition of the Śrutis regarding the Soul—Sanaka and other (mind-born) sons of Brahmā who had already accomplished their spiritual perfection, now worshipped Sanandana (who was their guide or resource person at the spiritual seminar).

43. The essence of all the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas* and *Upaniṣads* was in this manner churned out and extracted by those noble-souled Sanaka and other brothers who were the earliest creation of god Brahmā and who traversed through the sky.

44. O son of god Brahmā (Nārada) ! You bear in mind with faith this exposition about the (nature of the) soul which

40*. *eṣa nityo mahimā Brāhmaṇasya ṇa karmaṇā vardhate no kanīyān*, etc. —*Bṛhad Up.* 4.4.23

is capable of reducing to ashes all the desires of men and then you may move about, at will, anywhere in the world.

Śrī Śuka said :

45. Having received with faith and reverence what was thus expounded to him by the Sage Nārāyaṇa, Nārada, the self-controlled observer of life-long celibacy who could retain in memory what he had heard but once, and had already accomplished his purpose (in life), humbly submitted as follows :

Nārada submitted :

46. "Obeisance to that celebrated Lord Kṛṣṇa (Nārāyaṇa) of spotless hallowing glory, who assumes charming forms for the non-recurrence of birth (i. e. emancipation from *Saṁsāra*) of all beings.

47. Having thus respectfully bowed that first Sage Nārāyaṇa and his other high-souled disciples, Nārada straight-way arrived at the hermitage of my father, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana.

48. He was warmly received by the worshipful sage Vyāsa. Seating himself comfortably, he described to him (Vyāsa) in details what he heard from the lips of the sage Nārāyaṇa.

49. O king Parīkṣit ! I have in this way replied to you in details the question that you put to me (by reporting to you the hymn sung by Śrutis) with a view to bringing out how far the *Brahman* which is attributeless and undefinable, can be reached by the mind.

50. One should constantly contemplate Lord Hari who keeps the Māyā at a distance from him due to his absolute state ; Who is the architect of the universe, planning its beginning, middle and end. He is the Controller of the unmanifest *Prakṛti* and of *Jīvas*. After creating the universe, He entered into it along with Jīvas and controls them. Having taken asylum with him, the Jīva protects himself against the Māyā. Having attained to him, the *Jīva* sheds his ignorance, just as a man who falls deep asleep loses the consciousness of his person (body).

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

God Rudra Saved

The King (Parīkṣit) enquired :

1. Out of gods, Asuras or human beings, whoever worship (and propitiate) god Śiva who himself has renounced all worldly pleasures are blessed with wealth and enjoyment of pleasures, but not so in the case of those who are the votaries of Viṣṇu though he is the consort of the goddess of wealth.

2. We entertain a grave doubt and we desire to know (its solution) as to why the goal (i. e. the fruit achieved) of those who worship these two deities of different dispositions, is quite contrary to their expectation ? Why do the Devotees of the Lord of Lakṣmī do not get wealth and while those of Śiva become rich ?

Śri Śuka said :

3. God Śiva is ever associated with his Śakti. He is invested with three *guṇas* viz. *Sattva, rajas* and *tamas* and is the presiding deity of the three types of (Cosmic) ego characterised by the *guṇas*, viz. *sattva* (or *vaikārika* ego, *rajas* (*taijasa* type of Ego) and *tamas* (or tāmasa type of ego).

4. Out of these three types of ego were evolved sixteen modifications or products (viz. mind from the *sāttvika* ego, ten sense-organs from *rājasic* type of *ahaṁkāra* and five *bhūtas* or elements from the *tāmasic* type of ego). He who adores one of these potencies is blessed with all types of earthly prosperity.

5. Lord Hari, on the other hand, is unaffected by and hence devoid of the attributes (of *Prakṛti*). He is the Supreme Person far beyond the range of *Prakṛti*. He is omniscient and is a witness to everything. A person who worships him becomes bereft of *guṇas*.

6. After the conclusion of the Horse-sacrifice, while listening to the exposition of the righteous duties, your grandfather, King Yudhiṣṭhira asked this very question to Kṛṣṇa.

7. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who descended into the race of Yadu for blessing people with the *Summum bonum* (by

showing the way to *Mokṣa*) was very much pleased with that question and explained to him who was very desirous and eager to listen to him.

The Lord explained :

8. I gradually relieve a person of his wealth on whom I wish to bestow my grace. Then his own relatives, finding him penniless and hard-pressed with adversity and sorrow-stricken, forsake him (of their own accord).

9. When (he finds that) all his efforts with the desire of acquiring wealth have been futile, he becomes despondent and forms friendship with persons who are devoted to me. Then only I shower my grace on him.

10. My grace is the revelation of myself i. e. of Brahman. It is too subtle (to be comprehensible), Pure consciousness and infinite Reality (existence).

10A*. The intelligent person who realizes it as his own-self is liberated from *Saṁsāra*. Hence, people avoid me as one too difficult to be propitiated and turn to other gods (to worship).

11. Thereupon, having obtained sovereignty and prosperity from gods who are easily and quickly propitiated, they become arrogant, puffed up with pride and maddened. They forget the very gods who have bestowed boons on them and despise them.

Śrī Śuka said :

12. Gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others are competent to pronounce a curse or grant boons. But dear Parīkṣit, God Śiva and Brahmā accord grace or curse instantaneously. (The moment they are pleased or displeased), but not so god Viṣṇu.

13. As an illustration of this, those versed in ancient lore cite the ancient legend how god Śiva after giving a boon to Vṛkāsura, found himself in danger.

10A* Additional half verse from the vṛndāban edition (Quoted from Bh. P. in Bengali script).

14. There was an Asura called Vṛka, the son of Śakuni. That wicked-minded fellow saw Nārada on the way and asked him which god out of the trinity (of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) was easily and quickly propitiated.

15. Nārada advised him, "Do propitiate god Śiva and you will quickly accomplish your purpose. He gets pleased with slight merit and is enraged at the slightest offence.

16. When the ten-faced demon Rāvaṇa and Bāṇa eulogised him like bards, he bestowed on them unparalleled prosperity and sovereignty in consequence of which he found himself involved in serious troubles (Rāvaṇa uprooted mount Kailāsa, the residence of god Śiva and Bāṇa made him the protector of his capital city).

17. Being thus advised, that Asura began to propitiate god Śiva by offering to him the oblation of his own flesh chopped from his body, through the mouth of the fire-god, at the place called Kedāra in the Himālayas.

18. Out of desparation for not being able to visualize god Śiva (in spite of the sacrifice of his flesh), the Asura, on the seventh day, (took a bath in the holy waters of that place) and began to cut with sharp weapon his head with wet matted hair.

19. At that time the highly merciful god (with matted hair) who was brilliant like the fire-god, came out of the sacrificial fire. Just as we would do (to prevent our friends from suicide), he held both of his arms with his own and prevented him from that act. By the blessed touch of Śiva, his body became healed of wounds and perfect as before.

20. He spoke to him, "Dear Asura ! It is enough (desist from offering your head to me). Seek of me any boon you desire and I shall confer it on you. I am pleased even if water is reverentially offered to me by people devoted to me. You have unnecessarily tortured your body so cruelly.

21. That extremely sinful demon sought the god a boon that spelt terror to all living beings. (He requested as a boon:) "May every body die on whose head I shall lay my palm."

22. Hearing that prayer, Lord Śiva got depressed at heart (for a moment), O Parīkṣit. But laughingly he said,

"Yes. Be it so." and gave the boon which was like giving nectar to a serpent.

23. The Asura who was thus granted boon, was really desirous of laying his hand upon Gaurī (Pārvatī, the spouse of god Śiva). And they say that with a view to testing the efficacy of that boon, he advanced to place his hand upon the head of god Śiva himself. And god Śiva was seized with terror at his own act (of granting the boon.)

24. Agitated with terrific fear and trembling, he began to run fast to the northern direction with the demon pursuing (close on his heels). He ran traversing the whole of the earth, the heaven and the end of cardinal points.

25. Lords of gods did not know how to counteract or intervene and they kept quiet. At last Lord Śiva went to Śvetadvīpa the ever-refulgent region of Viṣṇu lying beyond the sphere of darkness.

26. There abides Lord Nārāyaṇa in person, the ultimate resort of those who have renounced everything for the Lord, and hence have attained serenity of mind (by getting rid of passions like love, hatred, etc.) and have refrained from all forms of violence, an abode having attained which a person never returns to *Saṁsāra*.

27. Perceiving the predicament of god Śiva, the Lord who destroys all afflictions, assumed the form of a small boy by his Yoga-māyā and manifested himself at a distance.

28. Shining like fire by his refulgence and adorned with his girdle of *muñja* grass, deer-skin, staff and a rosary of Rudrākṣa beads and with *darbha* grass in his hand, he paid obeisance to the demon as if in deep humility.

The Lord said :

29. O son of Śakuni, evidently your honour is much exhausted. Have you come from a long distance ? Have rest for a short while (for a minute) (If proper care is taken of this body,) it fulfills all the cherished desires like the heavenly wish-yielding cow.

30. If the matter is fit for our ears, (i.e. if there be no objection in hearing of your intention) O mighty one, let me know on what you have set your mind. Generally a man desires

to accomplish his purpose with the help of his chosen assistants.

Śrī Śuka said :

31. When he was thus accosted in such nectar-showering words, the demon felt refreshed and confided to him (Viṣṇu) all that he had done before.

The glorious Lord (disguised as a Brahmacārin) remarked :

32. If this be the case, we do not believe in his (Śiva's) words; for he has been reduced to the State of a goblin (*Piśāca*) by the curse of Dakṣa, and is now the king of *Pretas* and *Piśācas* (evil spirits).

33. If you regard Śiva as the preceptor of the world and still have faith in him, O king of Dānavas, you may easily test the truth of his words this very moment, O dear Asura, by placing your palm on your head.

34. If the words of Śiva are found to be false, you straightway kill that liar so that he may not live to utter a falsehood again."

35. In this way his mind was changed by the wonderful and extremely soft, winning words of the Lord. And the wicked-minded fellow in utter forgetfulness placed his palm on his own head.

36. That very moment the Asura fell down with his head split up as if he was struck down with vajra (thunder-bolt). And there were applauding shouts like "Victory" "Salutations" and "Well-done" in the heavens.

37. When the wicked demon Vṛkāsura was killed, gods, sages, manes (ancestors) and Gandharvas let down showers of flowers and god Śiva was rescued from a dangerous situation.

38-39. To god Śiva who was thus saved, spoke the glorious Lord Viṣṇu: God Mahādeva ! This sinful fellow has been killed by his own sins. O Īśa (Controller of the world) ! What creature who has committed sin (or offence) against the great can possibly be safe and happy ? What need be said when the offence is committed against the controller of the universe and the father of the world like you ?

40. Whoever hears or relates this account of Liberation of god Śiva (from mortal danger) by Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Soul, who is the veritable sea of incomprehensible powers, becomes emancipated from *Saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths) and becomes free from the danger of enemies as well.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Supremacy of Viṣṇu Vindicated :

Restoration to Life of Brāhmaṇa's Sons

Śrī Śuka said :

1. On one occasion, sages were engaged in performing a sacrificial session (of a long duration). O king, in that session a question was raised for discussion as to who of the trinity of the ruling gods (i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva) was the greatest.

2. In order to satisfy their curiosity, they deputed the sage Bhṛgu, the son of god Brahmā, to ascertain the truth. And he went to the assembly of god Brahmā.

3. In order to test the worth of that god, Bhṛgu, did not pay him homage or chant any hymn in his praise. The worshipful god Brahmā (took it as an affront and) was enraged with him, and was as if aglow with his burning wrath.

4. Considering that the insulting person was his own son, the self-born god Brahmā quenched the fiery wrath provoked in his mind, by restraining himself, just as fire is extinguished by water (which is its own product.)

5. From the assembly of god Brahmā, he repaired to mount Kailāsa (the abode of god Śiva). God Mahādeva was delighted (at his brother's surprise visit) and arising from his seat, he proceeded to embrace him.

6. But Bhṛgu showed no desire for it (avoiding him) with the remark, "you tread evil path, (flouting the authority of the Vedas" you have adopted the heretic way of life

and apply ashes of dead bodies from burning grounds). The tradition goes that the god flew in rage and with fiery eyes, he snatched up his trident and rushed forth to strike him.

7. His consort Pārvatī, however, fell at his feet and pacified him with sweet words. Thereupon Bhṛgu proceeded to Vaikuṇṭha where Lord Viṣṇu abides.

8-9. God Viṣṇu was then lying on the lap of the goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī). Bhṛgu kicked Him with his foot on his chest. The glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the resort of all saints, got up (in reverence) along with the goddess Lakṣmī. He alighted from the bed-stead and bowing down reverentially to the sage addressed him, "Welcome O Brāhmaṇa sage; please have some comfortable rest on the seat for a while. O mighty sage, it behoves you to forgive us, as we were not aware of your arrival.

10. "O great sage! Your feet are so very soft and delicate, my dear!" With these words he began to massage soothingly the feet of the Brāhmaṇa with his own hands.

11. "Be pleased to purify me along with my realm and the protectors of the world that are within me, with the water washing the feet of your worship—water which sanctifies even the holy waters of sacred places.

12. Worshipful sire! From to-day I have been the sole abode of goddess Lakṣmī. With my sins completely washed off by the touch of your feet (which symbolise knowledge) the goddess of prosperity (Lakṣmī in the form of *Śrī Vatsa* mark) shall ever reside on my bosom."

12A. *Vj's Text.*

And let the mark (of your foot-print on my bosom) be known by the name *Śrī Vatsa* from to-day."

Śrī Śuka said :

13. When Lord Viṣṇu addressed him thus, Bhṛgu felt deeply satisfied and happy with his melodious words in a deep low tone. He remained silent as his voice was choked with over-whelming feeling of devotion, his eyes, over-flowing with tears.

14. Returning to the place of that sacrificial session, Bhṛgu fully recounted to those sages who were well-versed in the Vedas, what he experienced (in the realm of the three gods).

15. Listening to that report the sages were wonder-struck and had their doubt (about the supremacy of the three gods) dispelled. They came to believe god Viṣṇu to be the Supreme-most god, who bestows tranquility and fearless State (*Mokṣa*).

16. For god Viṣṇu is directly the fountain head of righteousness, spiritual knowledge, renunciation (of four kinds) in association with eight kinds of mystical powers (*Siddhis*) and glory, which cleanly washes off the dirt (sins) of the soul.

17. He is called the highest goal of sages and of pious people who have completely renounced violence, are serene, endowed with equanimity of mind (or out-look of equality towards all) and non-attachment.

18. His beloved personality is constituted of pure *Sattva-guṇa*; Brāhmaṇas, his beloved deities. Persons of keen and subtle intellect who are of serene mind and who covet for no blessings, resort to him.

19. He has three forms which are invested of Māyā consisting of three *guṇaṣ* : The Rākṣasa, the *Tāmasic* form, Asura, the *Rājasic* and gods, the *Sāttvic* form. (He is unattached to all these *guṇas* but) *Sattva* is the means of attaining the lore of Bhakti[1] and he is thus associated with *Sattva*.

Śrī Śuka said :

20. In this way, the Brāhmaṇas who were performing the sacrifice, came to this conclusion for dispelling the doubts of the people. By worshipping the lotus-feet of the Supreme Person, they attained to his blissful state.

Sūta said :

21. This story is the very nectar scented with the frag-rance of the Lotus-mouth of Śuka, the son of the sage Vyāsa. It celebrates the glory of the Supreme Person of hallowing renown. It dispels the fear of the cycle of births and deaths (*saṁsāra*). The wanderer in this cycle of transmigration, who constantly drinks this nectar with the goblets of his ears, gives up fatigue of wandering through the paths of *Saṁsāra*.

Śrī Śuka began to narrate :

22. It is traditionally reported that on one occasion, at Dvārakā, the newly born son of a Brāhmaṇa woman died

immediately as he touched the ground (i.e. the moment she delivered the child, it expired), O descendant of Bharata !

23. The Brāhmaṇa took the dead body of the child and placed it at the gates of the royal palace and over-whelmed with grief and depressed in mind he wept bitterly and said.[1]

1. *VJ's Test supplied the back-ground with the following additional verses.*

23.1. On one occasion Śrī Kṛṣṇa embarked on performing a horse-sacrifice and he sent out a horse consecrated for the sacrifice, to go round the world.

23-2-3. Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yādavas, sent Hārdikya, Kṛtavarmā, Yuyudhāna, Sātyaki, Cārudeṣṇa, sudeṣṇa, Pradyumna, Sāmba, Aṁśumant, Subhānu and a big army of Yādavas for the protection of the horse.

23.4. In a short period of time, they went round the earth and brought back the consecrated horse, O prominent Bharata.

23.5. Hearing the report that Lord Kṛṣṇa was desirous of performing a Horse-sacrifice, O Parikṣit, sages who performed penance for a long time and observed their religious vows rigorously, came to attend it.

23.6-7. Having appointed sacrificial priests like *Hotṛ* (to recite the hymns and *mantras* from the *Ṛgveda*), *Adhvaryu* (the officiating priest expert in the *Yajurveda*), *Udgātṛ* (to chant the hymns from the *Sāmaveda*) and other priests to officiate over the sacrifice as per prescribed procedure, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa performed the ceremony of declaration of that day (of commencing the sacrifice) as the most auspicious (*Puṇyāha-maṅgala*) by sages and prominent Brāhmaṇas who were experts in the sacrificial lore and got himself consecrated for the sacrifice.

23.8. Kings and rulers of various countries who, with their refulgent crowns and diadems, looked brilliant like gods, came to attend upon him (at the sacrifice).

23.9. Pāṇḍavas and other kings who were eager to see the sacrifice and were invited by Kṛṣṇa came to Dvārakā, O King Parikṣit.

23.10. While the glorious celebration of the horse-sacrifice was going on, Brāhmaṇas got thoroughly satisfied with the feasts and gifts of cloth, cows, land and gold.

23.11. Being initiated as a sacrificer, Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw to it that the prominent Brāhmaṇas got to their satisfaction all their desired objects as well as fed with whatever they wished to eat.

23.12-13. While kings occupied their respective seats all round and the cane-bearers, making a sound of the canes, were declaring "Silence please," a certain Brāhmaṇa with roots of grass (or a cane) in his hand, rushed in and standing at the gate of the sacrificial hall, raised-up his hands and cried out loudly in affliction. His throat was parched with hunger, face dried up, tears were flowing from his eyes and with distressed heart, he cried out thus:

24. "I have lost my child, because of the sin of a base kṣattriya (ruler) who is a hater of Brāhmaṇas, wicked-minded, greedy and voluptuous.

25. Subjects who serve a king who takes pleasure in violence, is of a bad character and has no control over his senses, perish by being subjected to perpetual impoverishment and unending miseries."[1]

26. In this manner, the Brāhmaṇa sage screamed out the same condemning appeal the second and the third time and left the dead body of the child at the royal gate.

27. Hearing that cry while he was near Śrī Kṛṣṇa Arjuna enquired with the Brāhmaṇa when his nineth child was lost.

28. "Is there no Kṣattriya in your house (i.e. in this city) who can wield a bow ? These Kṣattriyas (Yādavas who cannot protect their subjects) are not better than Brāhmaṇas engaged in this sacrifice.[2]

29. The Kṣattriya (rulers) of that Kingdom where Brāhmaṇas being robbed of their wealth and being bereaved of their wives and children, have to grieve helplessly, are verily no better than actors on the stage who fill their belly by playing the role of Kṣattriyas.

30. O worshipful Sir, as both of you are so helpless here, I hereby undertake to protect the child that will be born of you. If I fail to fulfil my pledge, I shall enter fire (and burn myself down to death) and expiate myself of that sin."

1. *Here VJ's Text adds :*

25.1. Repeating this (above blame) again, the Brāhmaṇa screamed out again, out of extreme anguish.

25.2. Hearing that, self-respecting Arjuna rose from his high seat near Kṛṣṇa and approaching the Brāhmaṇa enquired.

25.3. "How many children have you O Brāhmaṇa ? What is the trouble with you ? You tell me everything unreservedly. I shall try to make you happy."

25.4. When (sympathetically) enquired thus, the Brāhmaṇa reported: "As soon as my child is born it is immediately taken away that very moment from the lying-in-chamber by some unknown agency, dear Sir."

2. These Brāhmaṇas are performing this sacrifice for these wretched Kṣattriyas who cannot protect their subjects—VJ.

The Brāhmaṇa remarked :

31. Saṅkarṣaṇa (Balarāma), Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Pradyumna the foremost archer and Aniruddha, an unparalleled hero have not been able to protect my child.

32. Even the Lords of the world found the achievement of this feat impossible. It is childish on your part to boast like this. We simply don't believe in it.

Arjuna said :

33. O Brāhmaṇa, I am neither Balarāma, nor Kṛṣṇa nor Kṛṣṇa's descendant. I am verily that Arjuna, the wielder of the bow famous by the name Gāṇḍīva.

34. Please don't underestimate my prowess, O Brāhmaṇa; even the three-eyed god (Śiva) was delighted with it. I shall defeat the god of death in battle and restore your progeny, Sire.[1]

1. *Here VJ's Text adds* :

34.1. Having inspired confidence in the Brāhmaṇa with this assurance O king, Arjuna requested Kṛṣṇa, "O Lord, please give me permission to go for (protecting the child of) the Brāhmaṇa.

34.2. You may continue your Horse sacrifice with these great men." To Arjuna who was requesting permission to go and who had equipped himself with his quivers and Gāṇḍiva bow, Kṛṣṇa spoke with a smile.

Lord Kṛṣṇa said :

34.3 "I shall have to come personally. It won't be possible (for you to protect the child), O Arjuna. The spirit that killed the child, appears to be extra-ordinary."

Arjuna replied :

34.4. Indra despite his alliance with the rulers of the spheres, was defeated by me at Khāṇḍava. The three-eyed god Śiva in the guise of a *Kirāta*, was pleased by me with my valour in a battle (with him).

34.5. The demons Nivāta-Kavacas, the residents of Hiraṇyapura, who could not be conquered even by Indra, were killed by me in a fight.

34.6. Can there be any evil spirit more powerful than that, O slayer of demons ? Why do you frighten me ? Please give me permission to go just now."

Śrī Śuka said :

34.7. Kṛṣṇa who was thus persuaded, gave permission to Arjuna to go. Arjuna, equipped with his (Gāṇḍiva) bow, went out of the sacrificial hall.

34.8. He ascended his spacious chariot with the banner of the monkey emblem hoisted over it. He placed the Brāhmaṇa in front of him and rode round the village.

35. The Brāhmaṇa, so confidently assured by Arjuna, went home pleased at heart, as he had heard the exploits of Arjuna.

36. When the time of delivery of his wife approached, that eminent Brāhmaṇa entreated Arjuna anxiously, "Pray protect my child from death."[1]

37. Arjuna sipped water (as *Ācamana*) and bowing to the great god Śiva, he invoked all his divine missiles and kept his bow Gāṇḍīva ready.

38. Arjuna as it were encaged the lying-in-chamber by creating a fence of arrows charged with *mantras* of various missiles on all side, above and below that chamber.

39. Then the wife of that Brāhmaṇa gave birth to a son who cried well (repeatedly), but in an instant, he bodily vanished through the sky.

40. Then the Brāhmaṇa censured Arjuna in the presence of Kṛṣṇa blaming himself, "Look at my folly, in placing faith in the empty bragging of an impotent person.

41. Who else can be capable enough to protect my child whom neither Pradyumna, nor Aniruddha, nor Balarāma nor Śrī Kṛṣṇa were able to protect.

42. Fie npon Arjuna, the boastful liar ! Fie upon the bow of his who indulges in self-advertisement (self-flattery). The wicked fellow, out of his stupidity, brags to restore back what has been snatched away by Fate."

34.9 Arriving at the village of that Brāhmaṇa, he helped him get down from the chariot. When he heard that the Brāhmaṇa's wife had retired into the lying-in-chamber, Arjuna told him, O king.

Arjuna said :

34.10. "Go to your house, O Brāhmaṇa. I have given complete protection to you on all sides. Please go and comfort your wife who must be afraid."

1. *VJ's Text adds* :

36.1. When Arjuna was thus requested, he ascended his chariot and mounting the string on the Gāṇḍīva bow hastened to the proximity of the room of confinement.

36.2. The Brāhmaṇa also entered that lying-in-chamber and in a short while cried for Arjuna's help.

43. While the Brāhmaṇa sage was reproaching him, Arjuna used his mystical lore and quickly went to Saṁyamanī, the capital of the god of death (Yama).

44. Not being able to trace the child of that Brāhmaṇa he visited (and explored) the capital cities of the great gods like Indra, Agni, Nairṛta, Soma, Vāyu and Varuṇa and with his weapon ready, he went to the subterranean regions and to regions higher than the celestial region and many other regions.

45. As he could not trace the child and had failed to fulfill his pledge, he prepared himself to enter fire but was prohibited by Kṛṣṇa from doing so.

46. (Kṛṣṇa said) "I shall show you the sons of that Brāhmaṇa. Please do not disrespect yourself in this way. Those (who are censuring you now) will permanently establish (and sing of) our pure spotless glory.

47. Having comforted him with these words, the glorious Almighty Lord ascended his divine chariot along with Arjuna and sped towards the west.

48. Then passing over the seven island-continents and the seven oceans dividing those continents, the seven mountain-ranges and the *Lokāloka* mountain[1] (which divides the visible world from the region of darkness), he entered the region of darkness.

49. O prominent Bharata ! In that pitch-black darkness, his horses, Śaibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka lost their way and could not proceed.

50. Noticing their plight, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Master of all experts in Yoga, discharged ahead his discus Sudarśana which was effulgent like one thousand suns shining simultaneously.

51. Piercing through that extremely horrendous, palpably thick all-pervading darkness, the effect of *Prakṛti* or created by the Lord himself with its exceedingly enormous lustre, the Sudarśana discus with the speed of the mind (quick like a thought or imagination) cut its way like the arrow of Rāma

1. A mythical mountain that encircles the earth and is beyond the seven continents and the encircling sea of fresh water. The sun's rays do not reach beyond that mountain.

discharged from the bow-string penetrated through hostile army.

52. Following the path cut by the discus, (the chariot reached the end of darkness), Arjuna saw that Supreme, Infinite, dazzling lustre beyond that dark-region (of *Prakṛti*). But his eyes became dazed and he closed the eyes.

53. Thereafter he entered water (the ocean) adorned with huge billows lashed up by powerful tempestuous gales. Verily he saw then a wonderful mansion highly resplendent with thousands of columns of brilliant jewels.

54. And in that mansion, he beheld the presence of the Serpent Śeṣa (Ananta) who was the most formidable yet wonderful to look at. He was radiant with brilliant jewels on each of his thousand hoods, with two fierce eyes. His body was white like the Himālayas but was black at the neck and in the tongue.

55. He beheld the all-pervading Lord of infinite powers resting on the soft and comfortable coils of serpent Śeṣa. The complexion of that most exalted Super-human being was dark like a cloud surcharged with water. He wore a yellow garment. He had a cheerful countenance and beautiful longish eyes.

56. The effulgence of the numerous precious jewels in his crown and the refulgence of his ear-rings enveloped (like a halo) and lit up his profuse curly locks of hair. He had eight long beautiful arms. He wore the brilliant Kaustubha gem round his neck and had the *Śrī Vatsa* mark (on his chest), and he was decorated with Vanamālā (a garland of five coloured forest flowers reaching upto the knees).

57. He was the Lord of Supreme gods who was attended upon by Sunanda and Nanda, the chief of his guards, by the discus Sudarśana and other weapons in a corporal form and by his four potencies, viz. *Puṣṭi* (grace), *Śrī* (splendour, beauty and affluence), *Kirti* (Fame) and the Invincible potency (Māyā) and eight miraculous powers (*Siddhis*).

58. Śrī Kṛṣṇa bowed to the Infinite Lord who was himself in another form, Arjuna filled with awe at his sight, paid him obeisance. Both of them stood with folded palms. The Perfect Person, the controller of Brahmā and other lords (presi-

ding deities) of the spheres, smilingly addressed in a deep and sonorous voice to them.

59. "The sons of the Brāhmaṇa were brought by me desirous of seeing you both. Both of you have incarnated on the earth by your part-manifestations for the protection of righteousness. Having killed the demons who have become a burden to the earth as soon as possible, return to our presence.

60. Both of you are famous sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa who have already accomplished all blessings. But for the maintenance of the world-order, you both have set a model of righteousness for others to follow.

61-62. Thus commanded by the glorious Supreme Deity, those two dark-complexioned heroes (Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna) accepted the mandate, respectfully bowed to the Perfect Being, and taking with them the sons of the Brāhmaṇa returned with delighted hearts to their home by the same route they came. They restored to the Brāhmaṇa his sons grown up according to their age but similar in appearance as their father saw them (at the time of their birth).

63. Having visualized the shining region (known as Mahākālapura of Viṣṇu (or the glorious power of Viṣṇu, Arjuna was exceedingly astonished. He realized whatever prowess and manliness is possessed by a man is due to the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.[1]

64. Displaying in this way many feats and exploits, Śri Kṛṣṇa, enjoyed worldly pleasures as well as worshipped the

1. *Here VJ's Text adds*:

63.1. Śri Kṛṣṇa re-entered the sacrificial hall which was filled to its capacity with family priests, Brāhmaṇas and sacrificial priests, and eminent Kṣattriyas.

63.2. With the approval of the Brāhmaṇas, he went through the expiatory rites prescribed for moving out of the sacrificial precincts during the consecration period.

63.3 O excellent Kuru ! After completing the sacrifice according to *Śāstric* procedure, he satisfied the Brāhmaṇas granting all their desired objects. He worshipped the sacrificial priests and other sages.

63.4. Having performed the concluding bath (*avabhṛtha majjana*) in the great river Yamunā, the excellent member of the Yadu race passed his time happily in the company of great sages.

(Here ends the hundredth chapter in VJ's text)

Supreme Deity by performing great sacrifices on an exceedingly superior scale.

65. The glorious Lord was himself endowed with overflowing affluence, power, etc. just as god Indra showers down water profusely in the proper (i.e. the rainy) season, he also in due time incessantly bestowed all the desired-objects on his subjects, Brāhmaṇas and others.

66. He personally slew a number of unrighteous Kings and eliminated the remaining irreligious ones through Arjuna and others. He easily enforced abidance by the righteous path (and thus re-established *dharma*) all over the world through Yudhiṣṭhira and other virtuous Kings.

CHAPTER NINETY

The Song of Queens : Resume of Kṛṣṇa's Sports.

1-2. The Lord of the goddess Śrī (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa) lived in great comfort and happiness in his capital city of Dvārakā. It was richly endowed with all types of affluence and prosperity. It was peopled with leaders of the Vṛṣṇi clan and by their women who were always dressed in immaculate, gorgeous garments. They were sparkling with the radiance of blooming youth. While they played with balls, etc. in their mansions, they appeared like flashes of lightning.

3. On the roads and streets, there was a heavy traffic—the highways being crowded with young elephants exuding ichor, well-adorned soldiers, richly caparisoned horses, chariots resplendent with burnished gold plates.

4. It was richly surrounded with parks and pleasure gardens beautified with rows of blossoming trees which were resounded with the musical notes and warblings of birds and humming bees.

5. Lord Kṛṣṇa who was the sole beloved consort of sixteen thousand queens, assumed as many various attractive

forms as he had queens and severally sported with them in their separate resplendent palaces of surpassing affluence.

6. The swimming pool in each of these mansions was full of crystal clear water scented with the pollen of full blown lotuses of various kinds such as *Kalhāra*, *Kumuda* and was loud with the warbling of birds.

7. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of prosperity, entered the waters of those (swimming) tanks and sported freely. His bosom (*lit.* body) was smeared with the saffron paste applied on the breasts of his queens as they embraced him (during the water-sports).

8. His glory was then sung by Gandharvas and Sūtas; Māgadhas and Bandins were gleefully playing upon musical instruments like *mṛdaṅga*, kettle-drums, tom-toms and lutes.

9. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was being drenched with jets of waters discharged through syringes by his consorts who were laughing all the while. He, in return, profusely sprinkled water on them and thus he sported with his spouses like Kubera, King of Yakṣas, playing with Yakṣa women.

10. Their thighs and breasts became prominent to view through their wet *Saris* (garments). While they were sprinkling water on Kṛṣṇa, they advanced to him on the pretext of snatching away the syringe from him and embraced him. Due to a thrill of passionate desire (at the touch of Kṛṣṇa's person) their countenances beamed with great pleasure and they appeared brilliant and beautiful.

11. Śrī Kṛṣṇa got his garland (*Vanamālā*) tinged with saffron from the breasts of his consorts (while they embraced him). The knot of his locks of hair was loosened (during that amorous sport). Sprinkling and being sprinkled with water by his youthful wives, he sported with them like a king-elephant surrounded by she-elephants (spouting jets of water on him).

12. (At the end of the water-sport) Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his spouses gave (as gifts) their clothes and ornaments to the male and female dancers and those who lived by the profession of vocal and instrumental music.

13. While Śrī Kṛṣṇa was sporting thus, his (graceful) gait, (sweet) talk, (amorous) glances and (winning) smiles as well as his jokes, dalliances and embraces enchanted (and carried away) the hearts (of his queens).

14. So sang the queens of Kṛṣṇa as they being absorbed in him, remained speechless. While they were intensely thinking of the lotus-eyed Lord, they, sometimes, behaved like dullard and sometimes like a lunatic, uttered the following verses. Please listen.

The queens said :

15. "O she-osprey ! Lord Kṛṣṇa has covered his ever wakeful consciousness and has gone to sleep at night. Why don't you sleep ? Why have you lost your sleep and are wailing ? O friend, has your heart too been pierced deeply by the noble sportive glances of the Lotus-eyed Lord, like us ?

16. O *Cakravākī* (Red goose), at night you close your eyes but alas ! you continuously lament so piteously ! Is it because you cannot see your mate ? Or are you a female slave like us of the Lord and desire to wear on your braids of hair the garland that rolls on (and is touched by) the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

17. O ocean, why is it that you roar and thunder incessantly and do not get any sleep at all ? Is it because you have been deprived of your beautifying ornaments like the gem Kaustubha and others ! you have been reduced to our irrecoverable stage (who are deprived of our beautiful painting on our breasts, etc. by contact with Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the time of amorous sports).

18. O moon, you have grown emaciated as you are a victim to the incurable disease of consumption. Hence, you are incapable of dispelling darkness with your rays. Is it due to your loss of memory, like us about the sweet secret talks indulged in by Lord Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa) that you have lost your power of expression ? At least you look like that to us. (We think it that way).

19. O Southern wind from mountain Malaya, what act unpleasant to you has been committed by us that you provoke the passion of love in our heart which is already torn and tattered by the side-glances of Śrī Kṛṣṇa ?

20. O beautiful cloud, (due to your similarity to Kṛṣṇa in complexion and his quality of removing the sufferings of the miserable—by showering your grace in the form of water)

you are really a beloved friend of the Lord of Yādavas (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) who is adorned with Śrīvatsa. Hence you, being attached to him with bonds of love like us, are lost in his meditation. Your heart too must be agitated with keen anxiety and is excessively anguished for him. You are, therefore, constantly remembering him and shedding profuse tears like us. Contact with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is really very painful.

21. O Cuckoo, blest with sweet notes ! Your melodious cooing is so sweet like nectar that it will infuse life into the dead. You imitate the sweet voice and utterances of our beloved Lord. Please tell me what pleasant services, I may do to you to-day.

22. O generous-hearted mountain, you are the supporter of the earth. You neither move nor speak anything. It appears that you are deeply absorbed in thinking about some great object (or project). Do you long to place the lotus-feet of the delight of Vasudeva (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) on your breasts (Breast-like peaks) as we pine to do ?

23. O rivers ! O ye wives of the sea ! (This being the summer) at present, your deep beds and pools are dried up; you have grown emaciated. Lotuses no longer beautify you. Just as we, being deprived of the amorous glances of our beloved consort, the Lord of Mathura, are robbed of our hearts and have become extremely lean and thin, you are denied the love-laden glances of your Lord in the form of rain showers (and are reduced to this plight).

24. (By chance there arrived a swan. Regarding it to be an emissary of Kṛṣṇa, one of the queens addressed it). Welcome, O dear Swan ! Be seated. Have some milk to drink. Tell us some news about Śrī Kṛṣṇa the descendant of Śūra. We look upon you as a messenger (between us and Śrī Kṛṣṇa). Is the invincible Lord hale and hearty ? Does he of fickle friendship remember what he confided and professed to us in our privacy? (If you say that he has deputed you as he remembers us) O insignificant emissary (who come from a faithless lover) why should we resort to him ? (If he invites us to make friends as you say) convey our message when Śrī (the goddess Lakṣmī) who cheating us all, monopolised his company is not with him. If he says, "How is it possible that she who

is exclusively devoted to him can be avoided", ask him "Among all women is Śrī the only woman who is devoted to him ? Are we not so ?"

25. It is by virtue of such deep constancy and devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the masters of Yoga that the consorts of Kṛṣṇa attained to the Supreme State of *Mokṣa*.

26. Kṛṣṇa's great glory is widely sung in exquisite poetry and songs. Even if (Kṛṣṇa's sports celebrated in songs are) heard, they irresistibly attract the minds of women. What need be said of those who had the privilege of seeing him directly ?

27. How is it possible to evaluate the greatness of the penance of those women who had the privilege to regard the Preceptor of the world as their husband and render him loving service by shampooing (pressing) his feet (and such other personal attention).

28. The Lord who was the asylum of the righteous and saintly people, himself followed the religious injunctions prescribed in the Veda and demonstrated (to the world) again and again that the objectives of human life, viz. religion (righteousness), wealth, enjoyment of worldly pleasures can be secured even in the householder's stage of life.[1]

1. *VJ's Text Adds* :

28.1-2. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of the Sudarśana discus was ruling over the world, the city of Dvārakā, the abode of the Vṛṣṇis, which was twelve *yojanas* in length, was densely peopled by Sages, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas, bards and was all the while (permanently) decorated (due to the festivals carried on there all the year round).

28.3-6. (In order to see Lord Kṛṣṇa) Sages of tranquil minds and always engaged in observing religious vows, used to come from sacred places like Piṇḍāraka[2], Kurukṣetra, Śālagrāma, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasi, Prayāga, Veṅkaṭa (Tirupati), Śri-Parvata[3], from far off places like Gokarṇa and beautiful Candra-tīrtha (the source of the Kāverī from Brahmagiri in

2. Near Golagar in Gujarat, sixteen miles to the east of Dvārakā. It was at this place that sages cursed Sāmba that he would give birth to a Pestle (*Musala*) which will destroy the Yādavas—Vide infra 11.1.

3. Śrī śaila in Karnul district of Andhra Pradesh. It has a temple of Mallikārjuna, one of the twelve *jyotir-liṅgas* of god Śiva. Nāgārjuna, the famous Buddhist philosopher, founder of Mādhyamika School, lived here.

29. Śrīkṛṣṇa who practised supremely ideal righteous way of life of a house-holder, had sixteen thousand and one hundred queens.

30. Of those jewels of women, eight queens of whom Rukmiṇī was the foremost and (the names of) their sons have been already detailed to you in order of seniority, O king !

31. Each of the (Sixteen thousand and one hundred) queens had ten sons from Kṛṣṇa. It means he had ten sons born from each queen. For the Lord's course was never futile (VT. clarifies that no sexual contact of Kṛṣṇa was unfruitful).

Coorg.) from Sahyādri, Bhṛgukṣetra (Broach), Kumāra-hill[1], from the banks of the holy Godāvarī, from the Narmadā, from Śūrpāraka (Sopara, Thana Dist. Maharashtra), Prabhāsa, the holy Badarikāśrama from the holy Naimiṣāraṇya and the inaccessible Brahmadurga[2].

28.7. The sages were of different categories (observing different types of vows) : Some subsisted on water, some on mere air; some abstained from food altogether but all of them were firm in the observance of vows, some were clad in bark garments and deer-skin, some grew matted hair, while others had clean-shaven heads.

28.8. Some bathed thrice a day, some strictly observed the vow of silence, some were engaged in the study of the Vedas, while others in reciting praises and hymns to gods.

28.9. Some devoted their minds to contemplation, some determined on meditative trance. Some had only skin and bones in their persons, a bundle of veins and arteries.

28.10. O king Parīkṣit ! These serene-minded sages came from all directions. These meditators on Reality always waited upon Lord Kṛṣṇa, O emperor.

28.11-12. The city of Dvārakā was resounded with the sounds of Kṣattriyas of mighty prowess and of Brāhmaṇas whom penance was the wealth, of Sūtas and Māgadhas who were devoted to singing the glories (of the Lord) and by the auspicious sounding (playing) of musical instruments and by the loud recitation of the Vedas (by Brāhmaṇas).

28.13. By virtue of the presence of the God of gods, Dvārakā became the most prominent of all sacred places and foremost among all holy places of (sacred waters) which wash off sins.

1. Probably Kraṇcagiri, a hill at a distance of one mile from Tiruttani station of the Southern Railway. There is a temple of Kumāra or Kārttika-svāmin on the hill, GAMI, P. 107.

2. Probably the Brahmagiri hill near Tryambakeshwar Nasik District Maharashtra. The other claimant for this name is the hill in Coorg, the Source of the Kāverī. VJ is silent about the identification.

32. Although all those sons were of mighty Prowess, eighteen out of them were great "chariot-warriors" who achieved noble renown. Listen to their names :

33-34. (They are as follows) "Pradyumna, Aniruddha, (Cārudeṣṇa) Dīptimān, Bhānu, Sāmba, Madhu, Bṛhad-bhānu Citra-bhānu, Vṛka, Aruṇa, Puṣkara, Vedabāhu, Śrutadeva Sunandana, Citra-bāhu, Virūpa, Kavi and Nyagrodha.

VR's Text adds:

34.1. Trivakra's son Upakrośa was exclusively devoted to Kṛṣṇa. He was a direct disciple of Nārada. He adopted the vow of life-long celibacy.

34.2. The *Sāttvata Tantra* was composed by him. It has laid down Vaiṣṇavite purificatory rites for women, Śūdras and slaves (after which they are admitted to Vaiṣṇavism). By studying the *Tantra*, one attains Liberation from Saṁsāra.

35. Out of these sons of Kṛṣṇa (the enemy of Madhu), O Indra among kings, Pradyumna, the son of Rukmiṇī was the first and he was just like his father in all respects.

36. That great (chariot) warrior married the daughter of Rukmī. He begat by her (a son named) Aniruddha who possessed the might of ten thousand elephants.

37. Aniruddha, himself a grandson of Rukmī through his daughter, married the grand-daughter of Rukmī (through his son). Vajra was born of her and only he survived the destruction from the pestle (in the civil war among the Yādavas).

38. The name of Vajra's son was Pratibāhu whose son was Subāhu. From Subāhu was born Śāntasena and he begat a son called Śatasena.

39. No king born in this family (of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) was destitute of wealth or less prolific in progeny or short-lived or weak or inimical to Brāhmaṇas.

40. Even within the period of tens of thousand of years it is not possible to enumerate all those born in Yadu's family who became famous for their great deeds.

41. It is heard (by tradition) that there were three crores eighty eight hundred teachers for the children of Yadu's family.

42. Who can enumerate the number of the noble-souled Yādavas? King Ugrasena was attended upon by billions of warriors (lit. ten thousand times ten thousand lakhs) of sons.

43. Those very wicked demons who were killed in the wars between gods and demons, were born again as human beings. They became arrogant and troubled the people.

44. For their chastisement and control, gods were commanded by Hari and they descended in the race of Yadu. There were one hundred and one families of Yādavas.

45. The glorious Lord Hari was the guide and controller of all the Yādavas. All the Yādavas who obeyed his command and followed him prospered in every respect.

46*. The Vṛṣṇis dedicated their minds to Śrī Kṛṣṇa so completely that they were not conscious of their own self while doing bodily actions like sleeping, sitting, wandering, speaking, playing, bathing and other (acts of daily routine).

Additional verses in VJ's text.

46A. With the sacrificial material produced by his Yogamāyā, he performed sacrifices for twelve years at Kurukṣetra and thereby worshipped the Supreme Soul (which was identical with his self), the main substance or gist of all the Vedas.

46B. He was consecrated for sacrifice by Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana (Vyāsa), Viśvāmitra, Asita, Sāndīpani and Paraśurāma as the preceptors. The Lord of meritorious renown, his elder brother of pious reputation were worshipped by Uddhava.

47. (That Śrī Kṛṣṇa's renown is the holiest of all the holy places and Lord Kṛṣṇa is the best and most prominent of all gods is not wonderful). O King Parīkṣit, when the holy Lord (the holiest of the holy) incarnated in the family of Yadus, it made the holy water of the heavenly Gaṅgā that issues from the water (used for) washing his feet, inferior in holiness to his hallowing renown. (He is so great that) both who hated him or were affectionate to him attained to the

46* VR : VJ : Though they associated with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in activities such as sleeping, sitting, etc. with him, they did not realize that he was Lord Viṣṇu himself but thought him to be a prominent Yādava.

same state of being similar to him. Goddess Lakṣmī for whose favour gods and others are striving, has devoutly dedicated herself to him exclusively. His name whether heard or uttered (even once) dispels everything inauspicious. By him were taught the duties to every *gotra*. He wields in his hand the discus (Sudarśana) which symbolises the Time-spirit (which destroys all). Hence, it is not wonderful that he lightens the burden of the earth.

48. Victorious is Lord Kṛṣṇa who is the sole refuge of all people (and abides in each of them as their indewelling soul). (As a matter of fact, he is eternal and birthless). That he incarnated himself from Devakī is a matter of (ignorant) talk only. Though he is attended upon by prominent Yādava warriors it is with (the might of) his arms that he annihilated all unrighteousness.[1] He completely destroys the sins of all—the mobile and immobile (e.g. grass, creepers, trees and other beings. With his resplendently beautiful countenance and winning smiles, he enhances love in the women of Vraja and the cities (and makes them attain to *Mokṣa* by subduing carnal love.

48.A *VJ's Text adds* :

A man should continuously meditate upon Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul, who is the creator, sustainer and the destroyer of the universe; who after creating the universe entered into it (as the *Antaryāmin*-indwelling soul), who assumed the form of a sage (Vyāsa) and composed this compilation of Purāṇas; having attained to him Śiva gets rid of the bonds of *Prakṛti* and like a bird in sleep, becomes free from the attachment to his body and property and remains in a state of blissful conscious existence, with no fear of returning to birth or *Saṁsāra*.

49. He who is desirous of developing devotion to the (lotus) feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa should listen to the stories of the sportive deeds of the Supreme Lord—the Lord who is trans-

1. *VJ's Text reads differently from this onwards*:
With his arms and lotus-feet set on the earth for lightening the burden of the earth. His personality is the abode of Lakṣmī. By his charming looks and smiling glances, he appeared like the God of Love to them.

cendental to *Prakṛti* and who for the vindication of the path of righteousness ordained by himself, has assumed different sportive forms (such as the Fish, the Tortoise and others) and performed (miraculous) sportful arts suitable to that form and capable of destroying all *Karmas*.

50. By attentively listening to, reciting and constantly meditating on the glorious stories of Lord Mukunda, a man attains to his region which is beyond the jurisdiction of the god of Death (or the Time-spirit) of irresistible force and for the sake of attaining which even the rulers of the earth renounced their (comfortable) house-holder's life (and their kingdoms) and betook themselves to the forest (and performed penance).

VJ's Text adds :

50A. He who devoutly and with faith listens to or narrates to others, the life and deeds of Lord Kṛṣṇa (as glorified by Śuka, the son of Vyāsa) of immortal and blissful glory which completely destroy the sin of the world and are a beautiful ornament to the ears of His devotees, can concentrate his mind on the glorious Lord and ultimately attain to his blissful region where there is no fear from any quarter.

X SKANDHA — APPENDIX

(Additional Chapters in VJ's Text
Ch. No. 50 in VJ's Text)

CHAPTER FIFTY—I.5

Jarāsandha's Second Expedition

Śrī Śuka said .

1-4. The mighty king Jarāsandha, the son of Bṛhadratha, who was day and night remembering and smarting under the previous discomfiture (by Lord Kṛṣṇa), invited all the allied princes in the third month (after the defeat) and inspired them to make preparations of war — with the allied forces of the kings of Matsya (mod. Alwar and parts of former states of Jaipur and Bharatpur) *, Mālava, of Cedi (Bundelkhand and adjacent part of Madhya Pradesh), Kuru, Pāñcāla (Rohilkhand but formerly the country from the foothills of the Himālayas upto the Chambal), Kerala, Kulinda (Garhwal and a part of Saharanpur district), Kuntala (Southern Maharashtra), Avanti (country round Ujjain), Kāśī, Gandhāra (former districts of Peshawar and Rawalpindi and Eusofzai country — now in Pakistan), Sṛñjaya, Kaliṅga (Major part of Orissa esp. the South of it). Kekaya (country between the Bias and the Sutlej), Andhra, Daśārṇa (Eastern Malva and Bhopal District), Vang (Western Bengal), Sindhu (lower part of Sindh), Madra (country between the Ravi and the Chinab), Trigartta (Jalandhar and a part of Lahore district), Sauvīra (upper Sindh and southern Punjab) and the warriors from the mountaīns — all making up an army of twenty-three Akṣauhaṇīs.

5. Accompanied by this army, he crossed the country of Magadha and proceeded towards the West (to Mathura). He, as it were, was dragging with him all the kings with their divisions of the elephants, cavalry, chariots and infantry.

* The identifications of the territories with their modern counterparts is as per N.L. De's GDAMI.

6. Having come to besiege Mathurā, he camped on the bank of the Yamunā, surrounded with the tents of a number of kings and camp followers.

7-8. He entertained himself listening to the eulogies sung by the bards such as *Sūtas*, *Māgadhas* and *bards* and rested. Hearing of the great preparations of war by the mighty king of Magadhas, Kṛṣṇa convened a conference and planned with Balarāma, Vasudeva, Uddhava, Akrūra, Śaineya, Āhuka and Sāraṇa.

9. Having properly planned the strategy at night in consultation with these, he summoned the best of his warriors at dawn before the sunrise.

10. The Lord of incomprehensible nature, divided his army consisting of the four divisions—elephants, horsemen, charioteers and foot-soldiers — in three detachments. Kṛṣṇa deployed these against the army of Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas as follows :

11. Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of demon Madhu sent Balarāma, Hārdikya, Gada and Sāraṇa by the left side.

12. He sent by the right side Sātyaki, Vipṛthu, Pṛthu and Uddhava along with the army.

13. The Lotus-eyed Lord accompanied by some charioteers, himself entered the vast army of the king of Magadha directly from the front.

14. The army (of Jarāsandha) mixed up of numerous elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers at random was unsuspectingly asleep on the bank of the Yamunā and was enjoying itself happily.

15-16. While the sun was rising on the eastern mountain and the darkness (of night) was being dispelled, and birds were warbling in their nests everywhere, and lotuses were blooming and swarms of bees were sweetly humming, Kṛṣṇa entered the terrible, invincible army of the king of Magadhas.

17. At that time, the horses (of the enemies) were unsaddled and tethered in a line here and there ; and at that time the elephants had no armour on their backs, O King!

18. The soldiers had not taken up their arms and even their hair were not tied. They had not put on their usual coats of mail, and were not riding their horses or vehicles.

19. The chariots were not yoked with horses and the flags were not raised (showing their unpreparedness). At this time, Kṛṣṇa wearing a yellow garment made his way into the army of the Magadhan king.

20. Seeing an army attacking them on three sides, all the kings became confused and were not able to know what to do.

21. Some warriors rallied together, while others fled away out of fear. Some soldiers took up their arms and counter-attacked the enemies (Yādavas) in the battle.

22. Some soldiers had their armours shattered while others had their legs, thighs and arms cut off. Some with their eyes grown red with anger attacked the enemies (the Yādavas).

23. Some soldiers of great valour rode the unsaddled horses and crushing the enemies in the battle, earned a bright, unblemished glory for themselves.

24. Kings suddenly roused from their sleep found the destruction of their army. Some of them put up a fight even without weapons essential for fighting.

25. Some deserted their camps and entered into deep forest. Some approached Jarāsandha, King of Magadhas and hailed, "Be successful in the battle."

26. Govinda entering the inimical forces single-handed in his chariot, killed a number of warriors who put up a fight with their weapons.

27. The mighty Balarāma also surrounded by a big detachment entered the Magadha army by the left side and routed the Magadhan forces.

28. The mighty armed Śaineya also attacked with his big army consisting of elephants, cavalry, chariots and infantry, by the right side and gave the enemy sound drubbing.

29. In this way, the army under the leadership and protection of the king of Magadhas was beaten on all sides, and being terrified, took to their heels in all the directions in a moment.

30. Sātyaki of the Vṛṣṇi clan pursued the army upto five *yojanas* and destroying the Magadhan force, he returned from the battle a victor.

31. Kṛṣṇa forcibly caught a number of elephants big like hills along with their accoutrement, *tomaras*, goads, etc. He collected as spoil chariots along with the weapons, flags and horses yoked to them and carried them to Mathura.

32. In that battle, Kṛṣṇa got as spoils innumerable umbrellas inlaid with gold jewels, numberless *chowries*, crowns, belts, gold armlets, earings and valuable clothes.

33. As per instructions of Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Kaṁsa, Balarāma, the wielder of the plough as a weapon, brought a vast amount of spoil such as Jarāsandha's treasury, the vehicles, subjects, women of Jarasandha's harem, weapons and ornaments. He presented the wealth collected in the battle to Ugrasena, the king of Yadus.

CHAPTER FIFTY—II

Ch: 50 in Vj's Text

The Third Siege of Mathura: Jarāsandha's defeat

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Jarāsandha who boasted himself as a leader in battle was defeated by Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of Madhu. He then proceeded to Śoṇitapura[1] to see Bāṇa, the son of Bali (for help).

2-5. Hearing that his friend defeated in the battle by Kṛṣṇa was coming with his circle of allied kings, Bāṇa of one thousand arms, the ruler of Dānavas went forward to meet and receive him with well-adorned elephants, caparisoned horses, chariots of various shapes, warriors, bevies of courtesans, bands of bards like *Sūta, Magadhas* and *bards* with flags and banners, umbrellas, auspicious trumpets and drums beating, with gold buntings or festoons, multicoloured lamps, pitchers

1. Assamese claim Tejapur as ancient Śoṇitapura, but from Harivaṁśa (ch. 174) it seems that the ancient Śoṇitapura is situated in Kumaun on the bank of the Kedār-Gaṅgā at a short distance from Gupta Kāśi—GDAMI p. 189.

and mirrors. They were extremely close friends and mutual sympathisers.

6. Both of them, solicitous as they were of mutual interests, paid respects to each other. Addressing Bāṇa, in the royal assembly, Jarāsandha spoke :

7. "Be pleased to note this, O king of Dānavas ! I was taken in (in a dastardly surprise attack) at night by the wicked-minded cowherd (Kṛṣṇa) of unrighteous behaviour and robber-like bravado-ness.

8. Many mighty rut-exuding (youthful) elephants and horses, and a number of chariots along with all the equipments and arms there-in were plundered by him.

9. These princely allies of mine did not tolerate (the idea of) my engaging him in a single-handed duel. I was prevented from doing so by these kings who participate in my joys and sorrows, victory and defeat).

10. I have now come here for your majesty's audience. O Lord (of Dānavas) ! Be pleased to render (some military) assistance (to us)." When addressed thus (and being acquainted with Jarāsandha's plight) Bāṇa, the son of Bali, took him (and his allies) to his own capital (Śoṇitapura).

11. He immediately arranged for the reception of the assembly of princely allies with a high feast, bath, beds, perfumes, and leaves of piper-betel (together with areca-nuts, catechu) for chewing after meals.

12-13. He honoured all the royal personages with presents. When Jarāsandha, the foster-son of Jarā, had enjoyed the reception, taken rest and seen the curiosities worth-seeing (in Bāṇa's Capital and comfortably occupied a golden seat after duly decorating himself (with princely ornaments), the king of Dānavas respectfully addressed the assembly of kings.

Bāṇa said :

14. O Jarāsandha ! Please do understand it. No empty promise is uttered by me. These elephants, these horses, this kingdom, all these subjects and whatever else is in my possession is absolutely at your disposal.

Śri Śuka said :

15. Having promised thus, Bāṇa, the son of Bali, gave to the king of Magadha sixty thousand elephants, hundred thousands of chariots and one million horses swift in speed like the wind and the mind.

16. Bāṇa, the son of Bali, further gave him a contingent of three hundred Dānavas wellknown for their expertise in use of black magic in warfare, equal (in competence and military skill) to himself.

17. He also supplied him with innumerable palanquins of various types, umbrellas, *chowries*, ornaments, dress (clothes) as well as treasures (or utensils), beds, seats and such other requisites, O King.

18. Bāṇa ordered his ministers Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa, the best ones among the Daityas, to help Jarāsandha, O scion of the Kuru race.

19. What a great difference is between Lord Hari who is strong enough to annihilate the combined forces of all gods and Asuras in the world and the poor two ministers of Bāṇa, Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa ? (There cannot be any comparison at all).

20. Not comprehending the (Supreme) power of Viṣṇu, the kings being destined to meet death and encouraged (and instigated) by the king of Magadha, again made war-preparations against Yadus.

21. Taking leave of Bāṇa, the king of Magadha set out of Śoṇitapura. Accompanied with many kings and with four wings (viz. elephant-corps, cavalry, chariot-division and infantry) under his command, he reached Mathura in the course of some days.

22. He besieged that city of high towers, balconies, ornamental arches, wells, gardens and parks and massive fortification and blockaded its gates.

23. He tried to demolish the walls of the city with innumerable spearlike (pointed) rods, axes, pickaxes, clubs and stones hurled with catapults.

24. As the fortification of the city was being knocked down, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, enraged at the report of the return of Jarāsandha, the king of Magadhas, caused the beat-

ing of the war-drums (to alert all people summoning them to fight).

25-26. With Sātyaki, Kṛta-varman, Ugrasena, Gada, Āhuka and Vasudeva at the vanguard and accompanied by well-armed and fully provided armies of chariots, cavalry, elephant-corps and foot-soldiers, the two heroes of immense might and with perfectly undisturbed minds, rushed out like two ferocious lions.

27. Getting out of Mathura, the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa loudly blew out his big conch Pāñcajanya terrorising the enemies at heart (by its blast).

28-29. Thereupon broke out the fight between Yadus and Kṣatriyas. The Dānava ministers of Bāṇa, Kumbhāṇḍaka and Kūpakarṇa who were expert in the military use of black magic and possessed of great prowess, and accompanied with their Daitya army, fought with Vṛṣṇis with illusory tactics of warfare.

30. Perceiving that his army was suffering through the illusory magical method of fighting, he dispelled all the illusion within a wink of the eye by "Knowledge-missile" He then directed Sātyaki and Kṛtavarman, both of whom were eagerly desirous of fighting, and said :

31. "As both of you have an ardent desire for fighting, you give an extremely terrible fight with those two Daityas who are haughty and extremely desirous for fighting. Thus ordered, those two extremely powerful warriors immediately engaged in the bitterest fight, O King.

32. It is not at all a miracle how Lord Kṛṣṇa with one bow in the hand, single-handedly engaged a hundred Kṣattriyas in a battle, for Hari is verily the (Indwelling) Soul of all, O king.

33. Some elephants fell down dead with their trunks lopped off, and a large number of horses with their necks cut off lay down dead, O King.

34. The earth was scattered over with disjointed chariots shattered to pieces.

35. Soldiers with their bodies besmeared with blood and with their feet (legs), thighs and arms hacked down, fell like

Kiṁśuka trees full of blossoms (red flowers) lying uprooted with its main roots cut.

36-37. Volleys of arrows with feathers of kites and peacocks at the butts, polished with oil and well-knit by knots, with golden feathers and pointed arrow-heads were seen discharged from the Śārṅga bow, ten on each soldier, a hundred on every horse, a thousand at every chariot and ten thousand on each of the elephants of the hostile army. That was a tremendously aweful miracle to see.

38. Finding his army of fourfold divisions (infantry, cavalry, the chariot-corps and elephants) being soundly drubbed that way, Jarāsandha, the king of Magadha, driving in his chariot with the ensign bearing the emblem of a horse, attacked Balarāma,

39. Recollecting his previous enmity (due to his defeat by Balarāma), Jarāsandha was enraged at the sight of Balārma's great chariot with gold-plated yoke and palmyra ensign and dashed at him with a mace (*gadā*) in his hand and spoke (challenging him) as follows :

40. "Quickly take up your pestle (-like club) with which you desire to vanquish and conquer the enemies in the battle. Hurry up and demonstrate to me the power of your arms, before I strike you down with my mace.

41. Challenged in this way by the king of Magadhas, Balarāma, with his eyes fired with rage, grasped his terrible pestle brilliant like lightning, just as Yama, the son of the Sun-god, takes up his rod at the end of the world.

42. Brandishing in a circle the pestle for one thousand times, Balarāma, the wielder of the plough as his weapon, quickly discharged that pestle exuding fumes of fire and capable of subduing the pride of the enemies, and roared like a lion, O King !

43. Jarāsandha along with the horses, charioteer and chariot, became agitated by the pestle hurled by Balarāma's arm and found himself cheated in underestimating (Balarāma's strength).

44. Thereupon wielding his mace hard as iron and big like a hill-top, Jarāsandha, making the earth quake under his pace, rushed at Balarāma.

45. Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, perceived him rushing at him without a chariot. He too left his chariot on the battle-field and dashed at him on foot.

46. As all beings were witnessing it, Māgadha (Jarāsandha) overwhelmed with wrath, brandished his heavy mace made of hard iron, and attacking Balarāma, struck him down with the mace and roared.

47. Perceiving the on-coming mace hard as a rock striking against his chest, Balarāma caught hold of it by his left hand, O scion of the Kuru race !

48. Hurling aside the mace, he hit a blow with his fist Jarāsandha on his chest. The mighty son of Rohiṇī caught the powerful Jarāsandha in his arms.

49. Entwining between his legs the stomach of Jarāsandha, he held his neck under his arm-pit, whereupon both of them rolled on the ground.

50. While they were falling, Balarāma was on Jarāsandha O King. But within a moment, Jarāsandha of immense power brought him under him.

51. Both of the heroes, with their eyes red with anger, stood up and again caught hold of each other like two terrific elephants maddened with excuding ichor.

52. Those extremely enraged ferocious warriors intent on killing each other, dashed their chests against each other, and tried to drag (each other on the battle field).

53. Thus dragging each other in an area of ten thousand bows, they reduced to powder the trees and rocks that were in the vicinity, O King!

54. Jarāsandha the highly proud hero, disengaged himself and picked up his mace. Even the most powerful Balarāma of incomprehensible nature, stood up and taking his pestle in a moment began to strike him with it.

55. In that combat Balarāma struck Jarāsandha with his pestle, on his head, in between his chest and shoulders, on the shoulders, arms, navel thighs, knees, stomach and chest, many times.

56. The proud Magadha king hit hard Balarāma on the chest, neck, mouth, forehead, chin, shoulder, navel, hips as well as his sides simultaneously.

57. While Balarāma and Jarāsandha were striking down each other in the combat, the kings became nervous about fighting and were extremely troubled.

58. Thinking that the king of Magadhas was approaching death, they gradually lost their heart and became less inclined to fight.

59. Extremely powerful Sātyaki who was fighting Kumbhāṇḍa was pierced with three arrows by the minister of Bāṇa, in the battle.

60. The mighty-armed Sātyaki, being extremely hurt, heaved heavy breaths like an angry serpent. In order to kill Kumbhāṇḍa in the fight, he took five iron arrows.

61. Then a great uproar arose in the army of the Daitya minister, when Sātyaki of powerful arms, pulled the string to his ears and hit Kumbhāṇḍa, the minister of Bāṇa, in his navel, throat, forehead, chest and crown, O tiger in the Kuru race.

62-63. Thus pierced with the arrows, Kumbhāṇḍa fell down unconscious on his seat in the chariot. Seeing that he had lost his consciousness, the charioteer, grieved at heart, immediately carried him away from the battle in his chariot, O prominent Bharata !

64. Perceiving that Kumbhāṇḍa had left and was in the peril of life, Kūpakarṇa, the demon whom Kṛtavarmā engaged, left Kṛtavarmā and departed from the battle-field.

65. Both the demons left the battle-field without taking leave of the king of Magadhas, even though they were not relieved by him. Accompanied by their remaining army, both the daityas returned to Śoṇitapura by the same way they came.

CHAPTER FIFTY-III

(*Ch.* 52 *in VJ's text*) ; *Conquest of Karvirapura*)

Śrī Śuka said:

1. Finding that the army of Bāṇa had deserted them and they themselves were extremely troubled by the volleys of

weapons (from the Yādavas), the princes became dispirited, O excellent king !

2. Seeing that the dānava army had already departed, and the hostile princes were exhausted, and Kṛṣṇa was fighting on, Balarāma felt that his strength had increased.

3. In that combat, he caught hold of the lock of hair on Jarāsandha's head by his left hand and wanted to strike him on his head with his pestle.

4. At that moment, Balarāma heard a clear distinct incorporeal voice, loud like thundering clouds in the sky: "O Balarāma, Jarāsandha is not to be killed by you. Happily return from the battle."

5. Hearing that voice from the heaven, the mighty Balarāma left him and riding his chariot returned from the battle-field, praised highly by multitudes of Brāhmaṇa sages, Siddhas, bards and songsters.

6. Now Jarāsandha, the foster son of Jarā, hanging down his head and accompanied by kings who were defeated in the battle and surrounded with a small force that was left after being killed in the battle, retired from the fight and proceeded to his capital.

Śri Śuka said :

7. Lord Kṛṣṇa of great splendour, covered the inimical forces with volleys of arrows and put to flight those kings, killing a majority of them in the battle.

8. He was followed by songsters and bards like Sūta, Māgadha and Bandins who were highly pleased with him, and were singing of his glory and by highly learned Brāhmaṇas who were loudly singing his panegyric.

9-12. Followed by these, the glorious Lord entered the city of Mathurā which was populated with citizens who were delighted and happy—a city with high walls of fortifications and lofty arched gates, decorated with flowing banners and with lighted lamps. As he entered by the royal road, he shone beautiful, showered over with flowers and with fried grains with folded palms by ladies occupying the tops of mansions. The citizens of Mathura who were eager to please them, presented to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the descendants of Madhu,

highly precious presents, excellent garlands, of flowers and ointments. Kṛṣṇa the prominent one among Yāḍavas, in this way passed by the royal road.

13-15. Entering the spacious assembly hall and occupying the excellent seat, the hero Kṛṣṇa, along with Balarāma and intelligent Sātyaki, was honoured by Yadus and Brāhmaṇas like Indra by gods in the heaven. Holding consultations with the intelligent statesmen and noble-souled old Yadus such as Ugrasena, Uddhava, Akrūra (to mention the prominent ones) who were present there, Lord Kṛṣṇa was allowed to go with Balarāma as his companion and helpmate.

16. Being desirous of seeing Gomanta, the best of mountains, and the great fortress at its top, both of them set out in the morning from Mathura and proceeded to the South.

17. The glorious Lord Hari accompanied by Balarāma crossed the Yamunā and passed through many countries, mountains, rivers and hills.

18-20. While passing by the way, they saw on a raised part of a forest an extra-ordinarily distinguished sage sitting at the root of a tree. The sage had a mass of matted hair on his head. He was clad in bark garments and the hide of a deer and had a *Kamaṇḍalu* (a water pot of a gourd) by his side. He was glorious like the Sun in lustre. He subsisted on spiritual knowledge and bliss and was surrounded with hundreds of disciples. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the protectors of the world, were extremely glad to see him.

21. Both the heroes with due formality and alertness paid their respects to him. The glorious lord Kṛṣṇa spoke to the prominent sage as follows :

22. "I bow to you O Paraśurāma of the Bhārgava clan ! O glorious son of Jamadagni who regard penance as wealth ! We are known as Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Has our name ever reached your ears ?"

23. Bhārgava who was thus addressed by Vāsudeva gazed at the two descendants of Madhu (just to probe their spiritual nature). The noble Paraśurāma with his eyes blooming with affection spoke as follows :

24. "Welcome to you the best one among the Yadus

and to your noble-souled elder brother ! I know that you are the supra-sensuous Lord who are born in the Yadu clan.

25. You are the primary cause of all the effects (created things). You are the ancient-most person in this Universe. Salutations to you, O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, the sole cause of all the worlds.

26. For what purpose are both of you whom the universe pays respects, have arrived here ?" When thus inquired by Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa spoke out.

27. "We desire to see Gomanta for the inaccessible fortress on its top, O powerful lord !" Hearing that, Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni, spoke to Kṛṣṇa.

28. "May it be so, O mighty-armed one ! You may go with your elder brother to Gomanta. At the foot of that hill, there is the city of Karavīra protected by Śṛgāla Vāsudeva, but he will not tolerate you (encroaching). After killing him in a battle, you can occupy the mount called Gomanta".

30. Thus instructed by Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the descendants of Madhu, took leave of the omniscient sage and proceeded to the southern direction. Both of them saw the mount Gomanta covered over with sky-scraping, big trees.

32. They also saw at its foot the city of Karavīra with high portals, ramparts varied in construction and wonderful mensions, palaces and towers.

33. Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of conch, discus and a mace loudly blew his conch. Hearing that blast of Kṛṣṇa's conch, Śṛgāla Vāsudeva became overwhelmed with rage and taking with him his massive army of the infantry, the cavalry, the chariots and the elephant corps, he attacked Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yadus.

35. He as if completely covered those Mādhava brothers with a flood of (discharged) arrows. Seeing that formidable army, the two most prominent Yādava heroes fought with them on foot, in the battle, and made that army extremely agitated and troubled by volleys of arrows and threw it into confusion.

37. On seeing that, king Śṛgāla, full of rage, rushed against them both. Observing him approaching in his chariot with a bow in his hand, Lord Vāsudeva checked his progress just as the coast-line does to the flow-tide of the sea.

38. Both the mighty Vāsudevas who were extremely enraged fought with each other with the intention of finishing with the enemy.

39. As the fight proceeded that way, Lord Govinda in a moment cut off the head of Śṛgāla Vāsudeva along with its refulgent crown.

40. Seeing that their master was killed, the soldiers of his army who were still left alive, ran in all directions.

41. Thereupon, both Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa entered the big city of Karavīra.[1] Both of them were worshipped as their dear lords by Brāhmaṇas and merchants.

42. Under the guard of his soldiers, Kṛṣṇa arranged to send Śṛgāla Vāsudeva's elephants, horses, chariots, soldiers, treasures and wealth.[2]

CHAPTER FIFTY-IV

Kṛṣṇa Crowned : Jarāsandha's Defeat

Śrī Śuka said :

1-4. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa ascended the prominent mountain Gomanta which was covered with lofty trees and creepers. It was thickly overgrown with Sāla, Tāla (palmyra), and Tamāla trees and was beautified with Priyāla and Aśoka trees. It was enriched with Kadamba, Nimba (Neema), Hintāla, Pūga, Punnāga trees. It appeared beautiful with groves of plantain trees and was resonant with cooing of joy-

1. Most probably Kolhapur in the Bombay State. But if Gomanta is Goa, the distance between the two renders the suggestions doubtful, unless the fort of Panhāla is identified with the Gomanta hill.

2. Here ends C. 52 of VJ.'s Text.

ful cuckoos. The trees thereof were shaken a bit by the swarms of humming bees and jumping monkeys. It appeared beautiful with palm trees the branches of which were binding down with the burden of their fruits. It was watered with a number of cataracts. It abounded in crystal water and cool dense shadows. They saw and enjoyed that beautiful landscape.

5. On the mountain, they went up the peak called Pravarṣaṇa where clouds always sent forth their showers without break.

6. Ascending that peak, those two great Yadus surveyed all directions. Enjoying themselves they lived on the best of the mountain, to their hearts' content.

7-8* In the meanwhile, in the milky ocean the best among oceans which is the abode of the God of gods, Viṣṇu, the wielder of conch, discus and a mace, the glorious mighty-armed Bali, the son of Virocana who visited it, took away the crown of the God of gods which was studded with costly jewels.

9. The crown was wonderfully wrought in a thousand rich sapphires (*Indranīla* stones) and was studded with hundred of precious *Gomeda* stones. It was shining with rubies, big blue precious stones and pearls.

10. It was richly set with *Puṣparāga* (a kind of precious stone) and corals. It was made of celestial gold. Having come to know that the diadem was taken away by the Dānava hero, Garuḍa, the king of birds, and the incharge protector of the city, instantly pursued him.

11. Overtaking the irresistible king of Dānavas on the way and putting up a terrible fight with him, he vanquished the prominent demon.

12. Taking away from him the crown, a veritable heap of jewels, which was brilliant like the Sun, he (Garuḍa) on his way back saw lord Hari, the son of Devakī.

8*. It is hard to believe that the great king Bali who donated his kingdom of three worlds to Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarf (Vāmana) could be tempted to steal the crown of Lord Viṣṇu whose greatest devotee he was.

13. He was sitting along with his elder brother on the beautiful and the best of mountains known as Gomanta. He immediately placed on his head that heavenly ornament — Viṣṇu's crown. Bowing down to his feet with his own head, he began to sing his praise.

Garuḍa said :

14. "I salute again and again lord Nārāyaṇa who has assumed a human form for some special mission, and who is extremely dear to all. My salutations to Nārāyaṇa who is the cause of the destruction of the enemies of gods and (as Inner Controller) is witness to the actions of everyone.

15. Being yourself the same Nārāyaṇa, you assume the form of god Brahmā and create all the Universe. As Nārāyaṇa, you protect it and ultimately assuming the form of Śiva (as his *ātman*) you destroy it, O glorious Lord.

16. I know that you are that god Viṣṇu, the Lord of all gods—who have incarnated on the earth as the scion of the Yadu race. I am Garuḍa, the son of Vinatā, your humble servant. O Lord ! Be pleased to command me what I should do."

Śrī Śuka said :

17. Addressing the God of gods thus, Garuḍa, the king of birds, knelt before him on the ground, bowed him and stood before him with folded palms.

18. Seeing Garuḍa the prominent one among birds, Kṛṣṇa the greatest of Yādavas, with his countenance blooming with affection, touched his head (the best part of the body) with hands.

19. "You may go wherever you like, O blessed one. Come in time when you will be remembered by me." Commanding him thus, he discharged him. Balarāma and Keśava, the lords of the world, who subsisted on the fruits and roots and drank of waters from flowing streams, descended from the top of that mountain and arrived at Karavīrapura.

21. Having stayed there for four months both of them returned to the city of Mathurā taking with them a big army, O prominent one among Bharatas.

22. Hearing that king Śṛgāla was killed, Jarāsandha became overwhelmed with anger and surrounded with a vast army, he also came there, O great Kuru !

23. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa battled with him for seven days. In that seven-day-war the king of Magadha with his enormous army was completely defeated.

24. He returned to the country of Magadha along with a number of Kṣatriyas. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa who were expert in *Dharma*, entered the city of Mathurā along with their followers, while they were being praised by songsters and bards like Sūta and Māgadha.

(After this see Verse No. 42 in Ch. 50)

CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO—I

(After 56 in V.J.'s Text)

Kṛtavarmā Deputed to Hastināpura

Śri Śuka said :

1-2. On one occasion Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, in company of Balarāma and Sātyaki was being waited upon by kings of various countries in the royal assembly. He heard there from Brāhmaṇas, participants in a sacrificial session that Drupada, the king of Pāñcālas was taken captive by young sons of Kuntī in the battle, O scion of Kuru race.

3. On hearing that, the Imperishable Lord became glad at heart and deputed Kṛtavarmā to the city of Hastināpura to know the details.

4. On going to Hastināpura, Kṛtavarmā sought the audience of Bhīṣma, the aged grand-father of Kauravas accompanied by Droṇa, Vidura, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Kṛpa.

5. He paid respects to king Yudhiṣṭhira along with his four brothers. Kṛtavarmā, the son of Hṛdika, paid special respects to Kuntī.

6-7. Yudhiṣṭhira on his part inquired about Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Kaṁsa, as well as about his companions, about the

killing of Kālayavana and victory over Jarāsandha, and the slaying of Vāsudeva, the uler of Karavīrapura as well as the building up of the city of Dvārakā in the sea.

8-10. On knowing the facts (about the above events) and the slaying of Haṁsa and Ḍibhaka and Brahmadatta the invincible, Yudhiṣṭ ira regarded that the sovereignty of the three worlds had permanently been secured in his hands. Kṛtavarmā was honoured by providing comforts, engagement in conversations and other ways of receiving the guest, by the sons of Pāṇḍu and by Kuntī whose eyes were overflowing with tears of affection. Kṛtavarmā took leave of his relatives and also of Kuntī.

11-12. He duly paid respects to the sons of his maternal aunt who were knowers of *Dharma*. He was permitted to leave by Bhīṣma, the son of Gaṅgā and by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, O sinless king ! He was also given leave by Vidura, Karṇa, the king of Aṅga, Droṇa, Kṛpa, by the intelligent Aśvatthāman as well as by Duryodhana.

13. Taking leave of them all, Kṛtavarmā departed from the city called Hastināpura and at the time of sunset, he arrived at Dvārakā, the head-quarters of Vṛṣṇis.

14. Entering the celestial assembly-hall which was attended by a number of kings he saw there Kṛṣṇa who was occupying a high seat of gold.

15. To Kṛṣṇa who was wearing a Vanamālā and who was being fanned with *chowries* by many servants, he reported in details everything as he saw or heard it.

16. Hearing the detailed report of what happened in the capital city Hastināpura of the Kauravas, Lord Hari, the Ruler of the world, learning of the valorous deed of the sons of Pāṇḍus became overwhelmed with joy.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO-II

*Balarāma marries Revatī**

King Parikṣit said :

1. O great sage ! I wish to hear from you in details who was the king named Revata and how he was instructed by god Brahmā (to give his daughter in marriage to Balarāma).

Śrī Śuka replied :

2. Formerly (in the *Kṛta* Age), there was a king called Revata. He was expert in the essentials of *dharma* and *artha*. A glorious daughter was born to him whom he named Revatī.

3. He went to god Brahmā to consult him to whom he should give his daughter, as she was sought after by kings of various countries even though he did not propose her to anybody.

4. At that time in the assembly-hall of god Brahmā, two Gandharvas, Hāhā and Hūhū, were singing. They were experts in all the subtle excellent points in evolving music (such as presentation of the gamut in proper pitch and according to measured beats.

5. The king waited outside for some time expecting some interval in the musical concert. When it was concluded, he paid his respects to god Brahmā and sought his advice.

6. "O glorious Lord ! This is my daughter. To whom I should give her in marriage ?" To him the lotus-born god Brahmā asked, "What prince you like most ?

7. Name to me all other rulers of the earth as well, O scion of the Kuru race !" Thereupon Revata enumerated to him the names of kings who were ruling over various countries.

8. Hearing the names of those kings, Brahmā laughed aloud and spoke to Revata, "O king ; Many *yugas* have elapsed since you came here,

9. While you were listening to the musical performance of these Gandharvas (which you are not eligible to hear) for a

* To be read after verse 15 of ch. 52 (original).
It appears to be an elaboration of *supra* 9.27-36.

moment. Where are those kings whom you regard suitable for your daughter, O king?

10. By this time, O tiger among kings, there are born two lords of the world in the house of Vasudeva. Those two descendants of the Yadu race are called Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

11. O king ! Give your daughter in marriage to Balarāma out of them." When he was thus advised, the king paid obeisance to him and returned to his city.

12. He gave his beautiful daughter to Balarāma of mighty arms. But being born in the first (*Kṛta*) Age, she was of a big stature. Balarāma of powerful arms laid his plough on her shoulder and pulling her down made her of his equal stature.

CHAPTER FIFTY-FIVE

(VJ's Text — Chapter-68)

The Story of Pradyumna's Birth

The following are the additional introductory verses in VJ.'s Text :

Śrī Śuka said :

1-2. Having propitiated Śiva, the God of gods, the bestower of blessings on the world and having pleased the god residing on mount Kailāsa, with his penance, Lord Hari got a son from Rukmiṇī called Pradyumna. The hero was endowed with excellent beauty, generosity and other virtues. He was the god of Love (Kāma) re-incarnated after being burnt (by god Śiva).

The King Parikṣit said :

3. Be pleased to narrate to me what sort of son and of what name, Hari got after visualising god Śiva with the object of getting a son, and after securing the requisite boon.

CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE—I

(VJ.'s Text—Ch. 65)

The Pārijāta Tree Taken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Having slain the extremely formidable demon Narakāsura, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the exterminator of *dānavas*, mounted Garuḍa and set out of Prāgjyotiṣapura, O King.

2. While flying through the sky with his consort Satyabhāmā, Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) went to the capital of heaven to pay respects to Aditi, the mother of gods.

3. Arriving at the gates of heaven, god Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) blew his highly resounding conch of great sound. Hearing that blast, the denizens of heaven approached to receive him with respectful offerings (e. g. water for washing feet and other articles of worship).

4. Worshipped by gods with devotion and humility and with their minds free from mental distress and fear, He entered the beautiful celestial palace of the Lord of gods.

5. There, Indra with his queen Śacī worshipped him presenting him jewels, celestial ornaments and clothes, perfumes and beautiful garlands.

6. Thereupon he proceeded with his spouse to the city of his mother Aditi. Noticing that her son Acyuta was coming, she received him.

7. Hari paid respects to her. With deep affection, she received with blessings the best of Yadus whom she had not seen for a long time.

8. Instructed by Kṛṣṇa, Satyabhāmā also, placed the earrings (of Aditi) at the feet of her mother-in-law and bowed down to her, O descendant of Kurus.

9. Having recovered her ear-rings she was deeply satisfied and hugged her daughter-in-law. With her eyes overflowing with tears of joy, Aditi, the beloved spouse of sage Kāśyapa, exclaimed :

10. There shall never be old age, deformity or discord with your beloved in your case through my gracious blessings. Positively rest assured, O auspicious lady !

11. Having taken their leave of the goddess Aditi and also of celestials, Keśava (Kṛṣṇa) accompanied with Satyabhāmā mounted Garuḍa and proceeded onwards.

12. While the god (Kṛṣṇa) and the goddess (Satyabhāmā) were being borne by the high-souled mighty Garuḍa, they beheld a wonderful garden sending forth excellently sweet scent. It was the Nandana garden so beloved to Indra, the husband of Śacī and hence well-guarded.

13. Noticing that garden full of divine fragrance and rich in blossoms, Satyabhāmā took Kṛṣṇa by hand and said, "O Keśava, I wish to enter into this wonderful garden and to indulge in sports for a while.

14. To respect her words (of request), Keśava got down from Garuḍa and entered the garden that was guarded by servants of Indra.

15. She saw there the heavenly trees resonant with the humming of intoxicated bees, bent down with the weight of fruits and thickly over-strewn with pollen dust of flowers.

16-17. The tender foliage of the trees was moving in gentle breeze and was rendered beautiful and attractive with sweet warbling birds. While sauntering therein, she happened to see the great Pārijāta tree. With her eyes full of wonder and curiosity, she asked Lord Kṛṣṇa, "What is the name of this tree ? It is really wonderful in all the three worlds."

18-20 The enjoyers of the fruits of this tree must be really lucky as they have all their desires fulfilled thereby. The space at its foot (roots) is paved with corals, its huge trunk is all gold ; it is covered with tender leaves of sapphires and platform round it is built of shining *Vaidūryas* (Lapis Lazuli). It blossoms forth in ruby-flowers and is laden with ripe fruits in the form of gomeda stones. It is shining with the flower-filaments of diamonds. It is beautified with hundreds of big branches of lustrous emeralds.

21. This tree has fascinated my heart thoroughly. If I am really loved by you, the tree should be taken away to our city (Dvārakā), O Lord of the world !

22. Seeing me sitting (resting) under the shade of this tree, your other queens would look upon me as your beloved-must spouse of all, O sinless Lord !"

23. When urged thus by his beloved consort Satyabhāmā, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, explained : "This tree is not to be removed from the Nandana garden, O gracious lady.

24. Formerly when this tree emerged while the milky ocean was being churned by gods and Asuras, this was given to Indra by all who participated all the fruits (or "jewels" evolved out of the churning of the ocean).

25. It is not proper for me to take this jewel of a tree away, setting at nought my friend Indra, the performer of hundred *Kratus*, O lotus-eyed lady, as I always follow the path of righteousness.

26. If an attempt for taking away this Pārijāta is made, a terrible fight with gods ambitious to gain victory is inevitable, O smiling beauty (lit. lady beaming with smiles) !"

27. When Satyabhāmā was thus addressed by the God of gods, Satyabhāmā retorted to Lord Hari, "Why do you frighten me with such deceptive arguments, O slayer of Kaṁsa ?

28. That unmannerly Śacī did not courteously receive me and honour me when I visited her. She is proud of her husband's prowess.

29. O Acyuta ! If I am really your beloved, this Pārijāta tree must be taken away at any cost. If I be not so (beloved), desist (from the attempt) immediately."

30. Thus importuned by Satyabhāmā, Kṛṣṇa ignored contemptuously the guards, uprooted the tree and placed it on Garuḍa.

31. The forest-guards then resisted Kṛṣṇa while some sped hastily to report to Indra the incident.

32. (They insistently protested) : "O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, this tree is worshipped by celestials. This must not be taken away. If you (just try to) take it away, you will instantly reap the fruit of that act.

33. You will never reach your capital with this tree, O Kṛṣṇa. You will find Indra (pursuing you) close at your back with his weapon (Vajra) raised (to strike you)."

34. Some forest guards quickly approached Indra who was sitting with his queen Śacī. Seeing him they reported, O King !

35. "Disregarding all gods including (Her majesty) Indrāṇī as well as your majesty, Kṛṣṇa's spouse has taken away the great tree Pārijāta.

36. While resisting her we prohibited her in clear terms. But that beloved spouse of Hari is so elated with the pride of her husband's prowess that she reproached us and carried away the tree."

Śrī Śuka continued :

37. Hearing this offensive report, god Indra looked at Śacī who was sitting by his side and like a serpent hit with a stick, did not tolerate that insult.

38. Proclaiming immediate preparation for fighting and mobilising all his soldiers and summoning the guardians of various spheres for the battle, the Lord of gods marched out.

39. The army of gods followed Indra equipped with thunder-bolt and riding the excellent elephant Airāvata of four tusks.

40. The fire-god, securely accoutred in his panoply and riding his horse, armed himself with a terrific Śataghnī and a tail-like ladle, rode to the battle.

41. The valorous Yama (god of death) armed himself with his rod and riding his he-buffalo and accompanied with mahā-Kāla and others followed Indra with a view to fight.

42. Nirṛti of great splendour rode in his man-borne vehicle. The mighty-armed god, armed with a sword, set out for the battle, O King.

43. Varuṇa hastily mounted his alligator of terrible forms and with his noose raised in his hand started after Indra to fight.

44. The wind-god clad in coat of mail and armed with a *Tomara* (Javelin) rode his (swift) black-antelope and followed the Lord of gods to fight with Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of (Sudarśana) discus.

45. Kubera, in his palanquin carried by four men and armed with a *Mudgara* (a club) rushed out hastily with a desire to fight with Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa).

46. God Śiva, mounting his big bull and bearing a

sharp pointed trident and accompanied with an army of ten million goblins went with Indra for fighting.

47. Drums, conchs, *Mṛdaṅgas*, *Paṇavas*, Kettle-drums and *gomukhas* (a musical instrument), heavenly gold wind-instruments and innumerable cymbals were sounded.

48. With the thumping of iron tyres of chariot, harsh neighing of the horses, roaring like lions and loud striking of their arms, loud shouts of challenges for fighting.

49. And with hundreds and thousands of gods shouting, "Halt, stop : Where do you go ? Don't go."

50. Brandishing and waving their mass of arms and urging on their vehicles (for speed), hundreds and thousands of the gods were competing to be in advance.

51. With terrific twanging of the bow-strings and innumerable lusty shouts like lions, the impatient gods rushed forward to attack (Kṛṣṇa) as (a pack of) jackals rushing against a lion.

CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE

(*VI. 's Text Ch.* 66)

Satyabhāmā defeats Gods.

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. Perceiving that gods are rushing forward to attack them, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the world, remarked to Satyabhāmā, "Here have arrived your guests, these gods".

2. While the Lord of gods was speaking thus, the warrior-gods despatched (against Kṛṣṇa) roared and discharged a volley of arrows on Kṛṣṇa, O descendant of Kurus.

3. Then, confused at the sudden calamity, Satyabhāmā took up the Śārṅga bow and with a volley of arrows cut off the shafts discharged by the warriors from heaven.

4. Thereafter advanced Kubera the Lord of wealth, surrounded by a number of Yakṣas and twanging the string of his palm-tree high bow plated with gold at both ends.

5. Discharging arrows with feathers of gold and now and then roaring like a lion, he rushed forward in the battle and shouted, "Stop, Stop."

6. Satyā (Satyabhāmā) hit forcibly his big belly with five sharp arrows that cut him to the quick, O King.

7. Being deeply wounded by her arrows in the battle, the god of wealth discharged three *bhalla* arrows at the beloved of Lord Hari and gave out a lusty shout.

8-9. Even before those shafts could reach her, she cut them with three arrows with crescent-shaped head. And the queen (Satyā) struck the forehead of Kubera, the Lord of Guhyakas, with eight *Vatsa-danta* (type of) arrows swift like the mind, O prominent Kuru. Extremely pained with those arrows, Kubera, the son of Pulastya, was over-whelmed with rage.

10-13. In that combat, he discharged twenty-one sharp arrows but Satyabhāmā, with her seven shafts, cut each of them into three pieces within half a second (wink of the eye). While they were in the air, Satyabhāmā, the beloved of Hari, flew into rage and cut into two the big bow of Kubera at its hold (in the middle) with an arrow with crescent-shaped head. Kubera, the Lord of riches picked up another bow and stringing it, discharged a volley of arrows, wrathfully breathing like a serpent. But queen Satyabhāmā with ease (as in a sport) cut down all those arrows with her *Sannataparva* shafts (of hard knots). It was a miracle as it were to see. Kubera, thereupon, wrathfully glared at Satyabhāmā.

15-16. "Look at my prowess I shall kill you outright today", growled he. With a desire to wipe out his defeat and humiliation and while all gods were gazing, he fixed an excellent arrow with a crescent-head on his bow tall as a palmyra tree, to kill queen Satyabhāmā.

17. Anticipating his plan (in mind), the consort of Hari cut his bow just in the middle (at its hold), with an arrow with a horse-shoe shaped sharp head, O best of Kurus.

18. Then Kubera, the protector of wealth took up his

formidable *Mudgara* (club) that terrified demons and brandishing it hundred times, hurled it at the queen (Satyā).

19. Kṛṣṇa with his left hand (easily) caught hold of that extremely terrible club as it was rushing towards her and seeing at him laughed loudly.

20. Thereupon, Kubera, the Lord of wealth retired from the battle and fled away. Kṛṣṇa spoke highly of his queen, embraced her with great regard.

21. When Kubera took to his heels in the battle with Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Kaṁsa, Varuṇa raising his noose attacked Kṛṣṇa in a combat.

22. Perceiving the advance of Varuṇa who rode a crocodile, Garuḍa of formidable strength pounced upon him like a tiger springing on an ox.

23. Terrific was the fight between Garuḍa and Varuṇa, like the combat between Bali and Indra in the war between gods and demons.

24. Varuṇa, the Lord of waters, threw the noose about the neck of Garuḍa and angrily dragged him like one lion dragging another.

25. Lifting up Varuṇa, the Lord of waters with the ends of his wings and catching hold of the crocodile in his claws Garuḍa hurled them into the sea.

26. Having lost his mount and catching hold of his noose with great difficulty, Varuṇa ran away on foot from the battle-field to his abode whence he came.

27. When Varuṇa retired from the battle-field, the Wind-god and the Fire-god jointly attacked Kṛṣṇa, O the best of Kurus !

28. The Fire-god discharged five arrows, while the Wind-god fired three shafts. Their fight with Kṛṣṇa was wonderful to look at.

29. Thereupon, Govinda, exterminator of enemies, laughed loudly and pierced the Fire-god with one arrow and the Wind-god with seven.

30. Deeply and forcibly struck on the chest with one shaft with horse-shoe-shaped head, the Fire-god realized that Kṛṣṇa was extraordinary and quickly fled from the battle-field.

31. Noticing that the Fire-god had run away from the battle and that his whole body was bristling with arrows, he (the Wind-god) was overwhelmed with pain.

32. He realized that it was lotus-eyed god Viṣṇu who had appeared on the battle-field. He retired from the battle as he wanted to save his own life.

33. Thereupon mounting his he-buffalo and raising up his refulgent rod, Yama, with his eyes reddened with rage, attacked Kṛṣṇa in the battle.

34. Noticing Yama with his big rod raised up (to strike at him,) the lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa hurled his mace at him and felled it from his hand.

35. The heavy blow of his mace on his rod made Yama's hand tremble. Turning his back, the god of death ran away with his buffalo, O scion of the Kuru race.

36. Beholding the discomfiture and retreat of Yama, Nirṛti was overwhelmed with fear and judging his power, did not come to fight.

37. But god Śiva of great heroic lustre, armed with a trident and mounting his bull, attacked Kṛṣṇa with his enormous army of goblins.

38. Those two mighty valorous heroes well-known in the world engaged in a terrible combat, each with an ambition to defeat the other.

39. Piercing Kṛṣṇa with ten arrows and Garuḍa with five, Śiva roared out in the battle, Stop, Stop.

40. Taking up his Śārṅga bow, Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of cities of enemies, hit Śiva, the rider of the bull with thirty arrows simultaneously.

41. In that combat, Garuḍa, the destroyer of serpents, harassed the bull with his pointed bill, both of his claws and wings.

42. Discharging again fifty Nārāca arrows at him, Kṛṣṇa engaged Śaṅkara, the benign god who blesses the world, in the fight, O ruler of the world.

43. Śiva, got enraged and brandishing his sharp-pointed formidable-looking trident hurled it at Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa), O King.

44. Noticing the trident rushing at him, Kṛṣṇa hurled his heavy demon-destroying mace Kaumodakī at it, to ward it off.

45. It is traditionally reported that both the weapons --- the Kaumodakī mace and the trident — buffeted each other in the sky and giving out huge flames both of them simultaneously fell into the sea.

46. Felling down the trident into the sea, the mace Kaumodakī returned to Viṣṇu's (Kṛṣṇa's) hand and the trident also to that of Śiva.

47. The serpent decorated god Śiva raised up his sharp sword and spurring his bull with his heals, he attacked Kṛṣṇa in the combat.

48. Promptly seizing the bull by his two horns, Garuḍa hurled god Śiva along with the bull to a distance of hundred bows (four hundred cubits).

49. Thereupon god Śiva, the wielder of trident with the bull as his mount, left the battle and speedily went back to his pce, O best of Kurus !

CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE—III

(VI.'s Text — Chapter No. 67)

Pārijāta planted in Satyabhāmā's Palace

Śrī Śuka continued :

1-2. Thereupon Indra, the King of gods put on his royal diadem, equipped himself with a quiver of arrows, armed himself with a bow, mounted on his huge elephant Airāvata and remembering the words of Śacī regarding the Pārijāta tree, attacked Kṛṣṇa in the battle, like an elephant attacking a lion.

3. Beholding him advance, Lord Hari, the conqueror of inimical cities, blew his high sounding conch filling all the quarters with the blast.

4. Attacking Kṛṣṇa and twanging his big bow, he hit Kṛṣṇa with an extremely pointed arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head in the combat.

5. Wounded on the chest with that *Kṣurapra* arrow by the King of gods, Hari laughed loudly and applauded him, "Welldone Indra ! This is just like you (worthy of the King of gods.

6. Still again the King of gods set ten shafts on his bow (long and curved) like a great serpent and stretching the bow-string upto his ears, discharged them at Kṛṣṇa and his discus and roared like a lion.

7. In the meanwhile, Kṛṣṇa the noble-souled slayer of Kaṁsa cut into three all the arrows with one shaft in the mid-way (as they were coming), and hit Indra with ten excellently whetted shafts as if in a sport, O descendant of Bharata.

8. Those shafts pierced through Indra's body alongwith the armour and were seen coming out with great force smeared with blood.

9. Indra again set sixteen arrows on his bow and stretching (the bow string) discharged them, but Kṛṣṇa cut them with three shafts.

10. Still again with thirty shafts, Hari hit the King of gods in the battle and all those arrows struck deep in Indra's chest.

11. Indra then flew in rage like a serpent hit with a stick and with his goad he impelled his big elephant to attack Garuḍa.

12. Goaded on by Indra the elephant approached Garuḍa and dashed at his chest with his four tusks.

13. Thereupon, Garuḍa tormented the elephant called Airāvata with his bill, wings and claws, O descendant of Kauravas.

14. And while all beings were agazing, he raised his terrible Vajra which inspired awe among Dānavas and hurled it at Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa).

15. As that *Vajra*, the weapon of Indra, reached him, Viṣṇu, the slayer of Madhu caught it in his left hand and laughed loudly.

16. Being deprived of his weapon and his mount (elephant) tormented by Garuḍa, the King of gods retreated from the battle-field hanging down his head in shame.

17. Finding Indra frustrated in his object and intend-

ing to run, Satyabhāmā laughed loudly at the King of gods and said taunting.

Satyabhāmā said :

18. Come on Śakra. Don't retreat, O wielder of the thunderbolt. It is not proper for Śacī's dear lord to take to flight.

19. Your queen Śacī, the daughter of Pulomā, drunk with the pride of sovereignty and elated with the prowess of her husband as she is, will at once think low of you (and insult you) defeated as you are in the battle."

20. Hearing this taunting speech of queen Satyabhāmā, Indra looked her in the face and addressed to the slyly smiling queen.

Indra said :

21. Confronting on the battle-field the father and preceptor of the three worlds by whom are brought forth the gods, demons, the great serpents, Yakṣas, Siddhas, Gandharvas (the divine musicians), Kinnaras, goblins, ogres and others, who can avoid facing the humiliation of defeat ?

22. We who subsist on sacrificial oblations, expose our childishness by opposing the incomprehensible Lord, like the weakling of a calf appears to oppose its mother at the time of sucking her milk."

23. Having replied thus to Satyabhāmā, the daughter of Satrājit, Indra folded his palms, bowed to Lord Vāsudeva and prayed, O the best descendant of Bharata !

Indra prayed :

24. Hail to you O God of gods, the lotus-eyed Lord of Lakṣmī ! Be pleased to pardon me all my faults, O protector of the world.

25. You are kind and affectionate to those who seek resort to you. It does not behove you to abandon me of whom you are the sole asylum—me who am extremely foolish and uncontrolled.

26-27. The elephant Airāvata (my mount), the thunderbolt (my special weapon), this Pārijāta tree, sovereignty over gods and this Amarāvatī (my capital town)—in fact everything

(in this universe) is under your control. I am your obedient servant. Whatever you wish to take away from this place may be taken away by you at will.

28. O Govinda ! I shall explain to you the fundamental reason of opposing you. You are now wholeheartedly interested in the mortal world.

29. If this wish-yielding tree Pārijāta is taken by you there, the earth becomes indistinguishable from the heavan.

30. It is hence that I opposed you, O tiger among the Yadus—O god, I may, therefore, be forgiven by you who know what should and what should not be done.

Śri Śuka said :

31. Thus addressed by the king of gods, Janārdana, the the God of gods, with a smiling countenance, spoke to him, O the greatest Kuru.

The glorious Lord said :

32. "Absolutely no fault has been committed by you, O Indra. If any fault has been committed, it is mine, for there is no distinction between you and me.

33. Whatever is now done by you, irrespective of its being good or bad, has been committed by me, O thousand eyed god. Please do not brood over the matter at all.

34. This excellent-most Pārijāta tree will, as per my direction, come to the Nandana garden of its own accord, when I (departing from the earth) ascend to the heaven.

35. When the King of gods was thus addressed by Vāsudeva, O best of Kurus, the king of gods apologised to Kṛṣṇa, Satyabhāmā and Garuḍa.

36-37. May my son and your brother-in-law Arjuna, also known as Bībhatsu, be protected by you." Repeating this request again and again, Indra, getting leave to depart, got back his Vajra and returned to his capital with all protectors of different cardinal points. Kṛṣṇa, the delight of Yadus bade good-bye to Indra along with the protectors of all the cardinal points.

38-39. He ordered Garuḍa: Let us make a move to Dvārakā. Garuḍa, the enemy of serpents, easily bore Kṛṣṇa, Satyabhāmā and the Pārijāta tree and went to Dvārakā. He

entered the beautiful city of Dvārakā adorned with many gates and portals.

40-41. It was brilliant, decorated with flags, buntings and festoons. Its floors were cleansed and besprinkled. He was worshipped with the attending prominent Yadus by offering him presents, betel-leaves, garlands, perfumes, pigments and unbroken grains of rice. He was saluted and greeted with flourish of trumpets and other instruments sounded on auspicious occasions, as well as with loud chantings of Vedic hymns.

42-43. Kṛṣṇa entered the heavenly assembly-hall *Sudharmā* which was attended by (a council of) elders. He bowed down to Āhuka (Ugrasena), Vasudeva and his elder brother Balarāma in order of seniority. He was duly honoured by them (reciprocally). In that assembly, he occupied an exalted seat of gold.

44. Kṛṣṇa appeared resplendent like Indra attended upon by prominent persons like Bṛhaspati and other protectors of the world in heaven.

45. Kṛṣṇa got the great tree Pārijāta planted in the palace of Satyabhāmā. It was surrounded on all side with pavements of precious stones.

46. Learning that the son of Devakī was coming with a big host of ladies, all the women of Yādava clan came there to see them.

47. Vasudeva as well as all ladies headed by Rohiṇī came to see Lord Kṛṣṇa, returned safe, hale and hearty after conquering the enemy.

48. Beholding that his mother in company of Devakī had come, Kṛṣṇa bowed down to them. They in their turn honoured him with blessings.

49. Similarly, seven beloved queens of Kṛṣṇa such as Rukmiṇī and others who were supremely beautiful and richly adorned, approached their Lord and paid respects to him.

50-51. Revatī, the beloved spouse of Balarāma, the famous Trivakrā, Durgā, Subhadrā and Tārā and other ladies of Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi and Andhaka clans with their faces blooming with joy and affection came to see, out of curiosity, Lord Kṛṣṇa who had returned hale and hearty after vanquishing the

enemies and brought with him a bevy of ladies and Satyabhāmā as also the celestial Pārijāta tree brought from heaven.

53. All the ladies gathered there showered on Kṛṣṇa's head fried grains of rice, flowers and unbroken rice-grains and returned to their respective homes.

CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX—A

Slaying of Pauṇḍraka and others

(This corresponds to VJ.'s Text ch. 69. It gives the following additional verses in the Introduction)

Śri Śuka said :

1.1-1.3 : It is reported that at that time there was a king called Pauṇḍraka, O scion of the Kuru race. Getting information of Kṛṣṇa's absence from Dvārakā, he laid siege to that citadel of Vṛṣṇis with a big army and subjected it to attacks. Balarāma, Sātyaki, Vasudeva, Uddhava, Ugrasena and other prominent Yādava warriors treated him (with their military preparations) in a manner suitable for a guest who comes at such a time.

King Parikṣit enquired :

1.4 Who was that Pauṇḍraka ? What country did he rule over ? Whose son was he ? Be pleased to narrate all this to me, O sage.

Śri Śuka narrated :

1.5 The king of Kāśī had no male issue. He gave his daughter Sutanu to Vasudeva on condition of giving his kingdom as dowry.

1.6 A son with long arms and brilliant like the sun was born to them. He was called Pauṇḍraka. He was powerful, full of prowess and pride.

1.7-1.8 As he was the son of Vasudeva, he was called Vāsudeva. when he became a major the great glorious Vasudeva entrusted to him that kingdom (of Kāśi) along with the treasures, army, chariots and other vehicles. Then

Vasudeva married Kaṁsa's younger sister Devakī who was like a goddess.

1.9 Being interned by Kaṁsa, the king of Bhojas, Vasudeva could not even once visit Karavīrapura.

1.10 Being ever-conscious of the unbearable step-motherly relation and of having no brother of his own, the king of Kāśi lived in awe of Yadus.

1.11 Hearing the report of Kṛṣṇa's absence from Dvārakā, he stormed it at night but he was defeated by Balarāma and Śaineya (Sātyaki).

1.12 Having suffered a heavy loss of thousands of horses, elephants and foot soldiers, he quietly retreated in the latter part of the night to the city of Vārāṇasī.

1.13 When the night was over and the day dawned, Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned from Badarikāśrama by his mount Garuḍa and came to Dvārakā which was well defended by Balarāma.

1.14 He was received with flags and offered water to wash his hands and feet and the usual presents after arrival, by Yādavas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas who reported to him the whole story. Then he entered the council hall.

1.15 Once Pauṇḍraka the powerful king of Kāśī.....

(After this follows verse 1-b in ŚR.'s Text in ch. 66)

CHAPTER EIGHTY-I

The Story of the Brāhmaṇa Sridāman

VJ.'s Text begins :

1-2A. When the mighty-armed Su (Dur) yodhana was struck down by the mace (of Bhīma) in the battle (and died subsequently), even the glorious Lord Govinda, having accomplished his desired object (of lightening the burden of the earth) made arrangement of leaving the desolate battle field.

2B-5. Kṛpa, Kṛtavarmā and the prominent chariot-warrior Aśvatthāman were the only three great warriors in the army of Su(Dur) yodhana. The survivors on the other (Pāṇḍava) side were the five Pāṇḍava warriors, the mighty Sātyaki, Yuyutsu, the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra by a Vaiśya woman and other eminent people of whom Kṛṣṇa was prominent. As their leader and accompanied by elderly sages, he went to

Hastināpura for the condolence of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and he consoled Gāndhārī, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the highly intelligent Vidura.

6-8. With difficulty he installed Pāṇḍavas to carry out their functions in governing their kingdoms. He was glorified by hosts of sages and bards like Sūtas, Māgadhas and Bards and was followed by sons of Pāṇḍu whose eyes were flowing with tears of joy. He took his leave of them, all of whom were sorry, missing him (after his departure). Hari returned to Dvārakā in a chariot brilliant like the Sun. With the loud blast of conchs and beatings of drums and the loud chorus of auspicious Vedic hymns and of incantation of *mantras* repeating the declaration of the day being auspicious he entered Dvārakā.

9-12. The city was decorated by the citizens with various kinds of arches and waving flags and fluttering banners and its grounds (streets, squares, etc.) were sprinkled and washed by them. He was attended upon by citizens who carried in their hands a specific kind of vessel tufted with tender shoots,[1] and by young prominent courtesans adorned with ornaments and by women of the cities and by Brāhmaṇas and their sons, grandsons and with brothers who brought in their hands lamps, mirrors, pots full of water, flowers, fruits, entire grains of rice.

13-14. Hari entered that excellent city on an auspicious day and was worshipped with due formalities. He entered the world-famous celestial assembly-hall *Sudharmā* and paid respects to Āhuka, Vasudeva, Balarāma and bowed to all mothers who were seated on high seats of gold.

15. He took his seat there and was duly worshipped by prominent Yādavas. Like unto the moon surrounded by the constellations of stars and planets in the sky, he shone there (in the assembly hall among the Yādava chiefs).

16-17. Day and night he was attended upon by the powerful monarchs who survived (the Mahābhārata war) and also by sons (of the monarchs killed) who were installed on the thrones of their respective kingdoms. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the support of the Universe, placed Yudhiṣṭhira in the front (of the world as the *bonafide* emperor, but through him) he governed righteously the earth whose burden had now been lightened.

1. Aṅkura-pūrita-pālika-pātra-viśeṣaḥ—VJ.

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SKANDHA ELEVENTH

CHAPTER ONE

Sage's Curse : Imprecating the Annihilation of Yadu's Race.

Śrī Śuka (The Son of Bādarāyaṇa) said :

1. Accompanied by Balarāma and the Yādavas, Kṛṣṇa brought about the annihilation of the Daityas (some through Balarāma, some through Yādavas and the rest like Pūtanā, Kaṁsa, etc. himself). (In the case of near relatives whom he could not destroy personally) he (being the indwelling soul of all) instigated a fast-growing virulent feud (culminating in the war between Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas) and lightened the burden of the earth.

2. Using as his means (the cause of) Pāṇḍavas whose wrath was extremely (and frequently) provoked by their enemies (Kauravas) through fraudulent gambling, scornful insults, dragging (their queen Draupadī) by the locks of her hair and such other humiliating acts, the Lord removed the burden of the earth by causing the mutual destruction of the kings who assembled there (in Kurukṣetra) as allies on either side (as these were Daityas born as his relatives).

3. Having destroyed completely the kings and their armies which caused a burden to the earth through his Yādava clansmen who were protected by his arms, the Lord of incomprehensible nature (and boundless powers) pondered : "Though (apparently) the burden of the earth has been lightened, I do not consider it as really removed as long as the irresistible[1] clan of Yadus still continues to exist. (It will not be proper for me to annihilate personally my own clansmen openly).

4. Being always under my protection, this clan which has become unrestrainable through ever-increasing power and prosperity, can never be defeated (and destroyed) by others (even by gods). Having instigated an internal discord leading

1. The existence of the powerful invincible, vast Yādava clan was intolerable to Lord Kṛṣṇa—EK.

to their total (mutual) destruction like a forest of bamboos consumed by fire (sparked by their mutual friction), I shall retire quietly to my abode (*Vaikuṇṭha*)."

5. Having made up his mind thus, the Almighty Omnipresent Lord of true, effective resolve, withdrew (to their respective places in the higher world) his own race, making the curse of Brāhmaṇas as the pretext (with a view to establish the greatness of Brāhmaṇas).

6-7. The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa retired to his abode after captivating the eyes of persons with his superb personality which surpassed the world in beauty[1] (and made people's eyes unwilling to see anything else), and by his words he fascinated the hearts of those who remembered them, by his foot-prints he suspended the movements and actions of those who espied them (and had thus concentrically attracted to himself all the propensities of the people who saw him), and after having spread his glory all over the earth—his glory which can be sung in beautiful verses and which if heard or recited, people would easily cross over the darkness of Nescience and Saṁsāra.

King Parikṣit enquired :

8. How is it that the curse of Brāhmaṇas affected[2] the Vṛṣṇis who were devoted and friendly to Brāhmaṇas ; were extremely generous; always rendered services to elderly persons and had their minds devotedly attached to Kṛṣṇa.

9. What was the occasion of the curse ? What was its nature ? How could discord be sown among Yādavas who were of one mind ? Be pleased to narrate to me in details everything about this.[3]

Śri Śuka explained :

10. Possessing a personality comprised of everything that is beautiful in the world, engaged in performing ideally

1. Or which imparted beauty to the world—ŚR.

2. Nārada used to stay at Dvārakā so that he should not be affected by Dakṣa's curse. If Dakṣa's curse was ineffective due to the presence of Kṛṣṇa in the case of Nārada, how could the Brāhmaṇa Sages' curse descend upon the Vṛṣṇis at all—EK. 1.280

3. EK. explains that the Will of Lord Kṛṣṇa to annihilate the Yādava clan is the real cause of the Brahmanical Curse (1.284-85).

auspicious acts even though he had all his desires accomplished, enjoying himself in his home at Dvārakā, the Lord of liberal wish-bestowing glory felt his mission still incomplete and desired to annihilate his own clan.

11-12. Having accomplished highly blissful and auspicious actions glorifying which bring merits and singing of which wipes out the dirt (sinfulness) of the Kali age, he stayed as *Kāla* (the God of destruction) in the house of Vasudeva, the Lord of Yadus. Sages such as Viśvāmitra, Asita, Kaṇva, Durvāsas, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, Kāśyapa, Vāmadeva, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Nārada and others took leave of him and went to the (holy place) Piṇḍāraka.[1]

13. Youths of the Yādava clan who were playing there approached those Sages and though really impudent, they feigned to pay respects to their feet in mock humility, and put a question to them.

14-15. They dressed Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī in the clothes of a woman and said, "This dark-eyed damsel is pregnant and desires to ask you, O Brāhmaṇas—She feels shy of asking you directly. But She is desirous of having a son and will deliver soon. You are of unfailing vision. Be pleased to tell whether she will have a male or a female issue".

16. O King ! The Sages who were thus being cheated (as a practical joke), got angry and replied, "O stupid fellows! She will give birth to a pestle which will exterminate your race".

17. Hearing that (predictive curse), they became extremely terrified. They at once undressed the belly of Sāmba. And lo ! They found a veritable iron pestle in it.

18. "What folly have we—unlucky fellows—committed ? what will now people say to us ?" In such a perplexed mood, they went home, taking the pestle with them.

19. With pale, withered faces, they took it to the royal assembly hall. And in the presence of all Yādavas, they reported the whole matter to King Ugrasena (and not to Śrī Kṛṣṇa).

1. This is near Golagar, sixteen miles to the east of Dvārakā (Saurāṣtra)—GDAMI, P. 157.

20. Learning of the unfailing curse of Brāhmaṇas and seeing actually the pestle, the citizens of Dvārakā were shocked with astonishment and were quaking with terror.

21. Āhuka (Ugrasena), the king of Yadus got the pestle reduced to powder and caused it scattered over the high seas and did the same to the remaining piece of the iron pestle which could be so reduced.

22. Some fish swallowed up that iron piece while the particles of the powder were borne by the sea waves to the shore where they grew into a kind of reed called Erakā.

23. (As Fate would have it) the fish (that swallowed the irreducible iron piece of the pestle) was caught in a net along with other fish in the sea, by some fishermen. The piece of iron found in the bowels of the fish was fixed at the point of his arrow by a hunter.

24. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa knew all the facts. The Supreme Ruler as he was, (he could have but) he did not wish to counteract (and render ineffectual) the curse of the Brāhmaṇas. He, being the Destroyer himself, approved of it (as he desired to exterminate the Yādavas).

CHAPTER TWO

Bhāgavata Dharma : Nārada's Narration of King Nimi's Dialogue with Jāyanteya and others

Śrī Śuka said :

1. In his ardent longing and eagerness to wait upon Kṛṣṇa, Nārada frequently used to stay at Dvārakā despite Dakṣa's curse of eternal wandering to him, as the curse was ineffective at Dvārakā which was protected by the arms of Lord Kṛṣṇa, O best of Kurus.

2. What person possessed of sound senses and hemmed in by death on all sides[1] would possibly neglect to resort to

1. VR. reads *sarvato'mṛtyum* 'in no way affected by death' and this adj. qualifies the 'lotus feet of Mukunda'.

and adore the lotus-feet of Mukunda (for which possession of sense-organs only, and not caste (*varṇa*) and stage of life (*āśrama*) is the qualification, etc.) which are meditated upon and adored by the best of immortals (such as god Brahmā, Śiva and others).

3. On one occasion, when the divine sage Nārada visited his house and was duly worshipped and was comfortably seated, Vasudeva respectfully bowed to him and submitted as follows :

Vasudeva said :

4. "Just as the arrival of the parents is for bringing the well-being of the children or the movements of those great souls who follow the path of the Lord of excellent glory, are conducive for the good of the indigent and helpless, the movements of your worship are for the welfare of all embodied beings.

5. The working of the deities (e.g. showering of rains) may contribute either to the misery or happiness of created beings. But actions and behaviour of pious souls like you who have concentrated their minds on Lord Acyuta, tend exclusively and solely towards the happiness of all.

6. Deities (i.e. the grace they confer) depend on meritorious acts (such as sacrifices etc.). Like the shadow of a person (imitating him reciprocally), they serve their votaries in the same way as their devotees worship them with meritorious acts. But the pious and the righteous people are always kind and compassionate to the afflicted and needy under all circumstances.

7. We, however, request you, O Brāhmaṇa sage, to explain to us the paths of righteousness which lead to the propitiation of the glorious Lord and by listening to which with faith and devotion, a mortal being is emancipated from all fears (i.e. is liberated from *Saṁsāra*).

8. Formerly, in my previous incarnation in this world, I worshipped the Infinite Lord, the bestower of emancipation from *Saṁsāra*, with the desire of getting progeny but not for Liberation from *Saṁsāra*, as I was deluded by the Māyā (deluding potency) of the Lord.

9. O sage of well-observed vows ! Be pleased to instruct us to that course (in this life) whereby we shall directly and easily be liberated from the *Saṁsāra* teeming with various kinds of miseries and beset with fears and dangers on all sides."

Śri Śuka said :

10. Solicited thus by the highly intelligent Vasudeva on this question, the divine sage Nārada being reminded of the excellent qualities of Hari, became pleased with him and spoke to him thus :

Nārada said :

11. "O foremost Sātvata ! Your honour has wisely resolved on this course, wherein you enquired of me, as to what courses of behaviour and virtues delight the Lord and purify all (from sins, etc.).

12. O Vasudeva ! This righteous course of conduct (viz. *Bhāgavata dharma*) if heard, recited, pondered over, accepted with reverence or appreciated approvingly (when followed by others), instantaneously purifies even those who are the enemies of gods or are hostile to all creatures.

13. The most auspicious and glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa whose name, if heard or sung is meritorious, is brought to my mind and memory to-day, by you.

14. On this point, this ancient historical legend is told. It consists of a dialogue between the sons of Ṛṣabha and the great-souled king Nimi of Videha.

15. Svāyambhuva Manu had a son by name Priyavrata. His son was Agnīdhra from whom was born Nābhi, whose son was well known as Ṛṣabha.

16. The knowers say that he was a ray (an aṁśa) of Lord Vāsudeva who had descended on the earth with the intention of propagating the righteous path leading to *Mokṣa* (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*). He had a hundred sons, all of whom were well-versed in the Vedas.

17. Out of them, Bharata, the eldest son, was exclusively devoted to Nārāyaṇa (the supreme soul). It is reported that this wonderful continent is known after him as Bhārata-Varṣa.

18. Having enjoyed the pleasures (of sovereignty) of this earth, he renounced it. He propitiated Hari by austere penance and it is reported that he attained to the Lord's abode after three births

19. Out of those hundred sons, nine became the rulers of the nine continents all around, and eightyone of them became Brāhmaṇas, authors of treatises on rites and rituals (and religious acts).

20. The remaining nine highly fortunate sons became sages, capable of propounding the highest truth. They exerted on the spiritual path, were sky-clad (naked)[1] (lit. wore girdle of the air) but were highly expert in the spiritual (*ātmic*) lore.

21. (Their names were :) Kavi, Hari, Antarikṣa, Prabudha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana.

22. They realised that this universe, both cause and effect or gross and subtle[2], is nothing but the Glorious Lord

1. (i) They were without clothes, but *not* naked—VR.

(ii) EK gives a spiritual description of their nudity : They were clad in *cidākāśa* (sky in the form of *Brahman*). They tied the knot of the threads of *Prāṇa* and *Apāna* (inhalation and exhalation in respiration) at the navel, which resulted in untying the knot of their state as *Jīva* and it became their sacred thread (*Brahma-Sūtra*). —EB. 2.175-178

2. *Sadasadātmakam* : VR as usual interprets this as the conscious or intelligent and unconscious or unitelligent principles which constitute the body of the Lord and are inseparable from him.'

VJ. stoutly rejects the view of the identity between the universe and God or Paramātman, for the adj. *sad-asadātmakam* precludes it and the *lakṣaṇā* (*jahad-ajahad*) is not soundly authoritative. According to VJ : They realised that the nature of the Lord pervades all causes and effects, but is different and distinct from individual soul (*jīva*). The gross universe is also different from Hari (God). It is as the internal abiding soul (*antaryāmin*) that he pervades all and quotes as authority :

antar bahiśca tatsarvaṁ vyāpya Nārāyaṇaḥ sthitaḥ—Nar. Up. 2.

EK. gives a highly idealistic interpretation : Though their bodies were different, they were spiritually one. They looked upon all people as their own self. The sages have realized that there is nothing but Brahman everywhere, and the universes, beings or elements, due to their identity with Brahman, have no separate existence. To them the triad—the seer, the act of seeing and the thing seen was the Self itself. They were so absorbed in *Brahman* that they were not aware of movements, being, becoming, etc. In such a stage, their wandering over the earth took place. EB.2 185-188

himself and not distinct from their self (*ātman*), and ranged over the earth.

23. They were not attached to anything. They freely went about their way, as their paths were unobstructed. They wandered at will in the worlds of gods, Siddhas, Sādhyas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, human beings, Kinnaras and serpents as well as in the spheres of sages, Cāraṇas, the lord of goblins, Vidyādharas, Brāhmaṇas and *Go-loka*.

24. On one occasion, by chance, they happened to attend[1] the sacrificial session of the noble-souled Nimi (the King of Videha) conducted by sages in the Bhārata Varṣa (known also as Aja-nābha).

25. On seeing those most ardent devotees of the Lord who were brilliant like the Sun, the sacrificer (King Nimi), (the presiding deities of) the sacrificial fires (viz. Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya and Dakṣiṇa[2]) and Brāhmaṇas (officiating as sacrificial priests)—all of them stood up to show respect.

26. On coming to know that they were staunch devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa[3], Nimi, the King of Videhas was greatly delighted. When they were comfortably seated, he worshipped them with all the formalities, according to their seniority.

27. The king who was highly pleased (with their visit), bowed low with great humility and submitted to them who were effulgent by their own personal lustre, like the mindborn sons of Brahma-deva (like Sanaka, Sanandana).

King Nimi of Videha submitted :

28. I believe you are direct attendants of the glorious Lord Viṣṇu (the slayer of demon Madhu); for the people (devotees) of god Viṣṇu are always on the move for purifying the people.

1. EK : They arrived there at the time of *pūrṇāhuti*.

EB.2.195

2. These fire-deities were visible only to these nine sages to whom they paid respect—EK 2.201.

3. The Bh. P. gives a special place of honour to the devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa "But of crores of siddhas who are free from attachment and have realised the self, a person who is absolutely devoted to Nārāyaṇa (*Nārāyaṇa-parāḥ*) is very difficult to find"—Bh. P. 6.14.5.

29. To *Jīvas* (embodied souls who are invested with a body in every birth) the attainment of human body (birth as a human being) ephemeral though it may be, is very difficult yet valuable (as it serves a means of liberation from *Saṁsāra*. Even in this rare (and transitory) form of existence, I consider that it is rarer still to meet persons beloved of Viṣṇu.

30. O sinless ones ! We, therefore, ask you about (the pathway to) the *summum bonum*. For in this worldly existence association with saints or the righteous, even for half a moment is like the find of a valuable treasure.

(Just as an ordinary person finds delight in obtaining a treasure, we get the Supreme delight in the company of saints).

31. If we are competent to listen to them, be pleased to expound to us those righteous duties and observances propitiatory to the Lord. So that the Eternal (birthless) Lord may be so pleased as to confer even his Self to the suppliant (devotee).

Nārada said :

32. Respectfully solicited by king Nimi, those worshipful sages complimented the king along with the priests (officiating over the sacrifice) and the members of the sacrificial assembly, and gladly spoke[1] to the king one by one as follows : O Vasudeva.

Kavi said :

33. I believe that uninterruptedly worshipping and meditating on the lotus-feet of Lord Viṣṇu is the surest and safest means of ensuring protection from fears from any quarter. In this *saṁsāra*, a man's mind gets always bewildered by the fear (of three types of miseries), caused by mistaking this

1. ŚR. quotes two couplets enumerating the following topics about which king Nimi raised the questions :

(1) Bhāgavata *dharma*; (2) devotees of the Lord; (3) Māyā; (4) Means of dispelling Māyā; (5) *Brahman*; (6) Karma Theory; (7) theory of re-incarnation; (8) *jīva* and *vāsanās* (9) *Yuga-dharma*.

extremely worthless body, etc. for the soul. But through the worship of the Lord, that fear is completely dispelled.[1]

34. For those means and courses of conduct which have been taught (prescribed) by the Lord, for easily attaining realization of the Self even by ignorant persons—Be sure that those are the duties which please him the most and lead easily to self-realization.

35. By betaking one's self to those paths, O king, no person will ever go astray. (This path is so safe and easy that) even if one runs with his eyes[2] closed (i.e. is ignorant of *Śrutis* and *Smṛtis* which are regarded as eyes) will not miss his path (and take the wrong way). (And even if he hurries across the path of devotion, jumping in haste from one step of *Bhakti* to another out of the nine steps (viz. *Śravaṇa* 'hearing the Name of the Lord', *Kirtana* 'glorifying the deeds of the Lord', and others), he would not stumble (into *Saṁsāra* again or miss the fruit of his devotion).

36. Whatever a person does by his body, speech, mind, cognitive and conative sense-organs, intellect and ego and by the force of nature[3] (as formed by his previous *karmas*), he should dedicate all such[4] (voluntary and involuntary) acts to the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa[5].

1. VR : All fear disappears when the Lord is meditated upon as the *Indweller* (*Antaryāmin*) of this entire universe consisting of the sentient and non-sentient (*Viśvasya kṛtsnasya cid-acidātmakasya jagata ātmatvenā'ntarātmatayā yatropāsane kṛte sati ityarthaḥ*).

2. "Śrutis and Smṛtis constitute two eyes of a Brāhmaṇa. One who does not know one of these (either *Śruti* or *Smṛti* is squint-eyed) but who knows neither is blind " Quoted by ŚR and others :

3. *anusṛta-svabhāvāt*—SR. alternatively explains : Although the Soul is unconcerned with the body, unaffected by passions or untainted by external acts, owing to superimposition of ignorance, he forgets his essential blissful nature—regards himself as belonging to a particular caste, etc. All acts which this ignorant *jīva* performs, should be resigned to the Almighty Lord.

4. All acts prescribed, non-prescribed and prohibited by *Śāstras*—VR.

Cf.

yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat/
yat tapasyasi Kaunteya, tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam//

—*BG.* 9.27

5. EK. in his learned com. (*ovis* 346-453) construes the verse differently: stating generally that acts voluntary, involuntary, prescribed by the Vedas,

37. Due to the force of the Lord's Māyā, loss of memory (of the real nature of the Self), misapprehension about one's real self (leading to the belief in the identification of one's physical body with the self—such as 'I am a god', 'I am a man' etc.) are caused in a person who has turned away from the Lord. When one identifies one's self with what is other than the Self (viz. one's body), it leads to fear (regarding other persons as enemies, friends etc. for he has lost the insight of seeing the Brahman—everywhere). Hence, a wise person should discern that his preceptor is the Deity and his own self and worship the Lord with unflinching, exclusive devotion till one is liberated from *Saṁsāra*.

38*. For, this duality called *Saṁsāra* has no real existence, but appears to be so like dreams (in sleep), and day-dreams or

social duties or by force of nature as a consequence of one's acts in his previous birth—all such acts be dedicated to the Lord. This is the *Bhāgavata dharma* in a nutshell. EK takes every term from the text, explains it with illustrations how that act is to be resigned to the Lord. The realization of the coalescence or one-ness of the triad—The doer, the act of doing, and the thing done—(for example the seer, the seen and the act of seeing) is the way of dedicating the act to God. He illustrates this by applying the trinity formula to each sense. EK emphasizes that motionless physical posture in a trance is not the real *samādhi*. Such a trance is equivalent to swooning. *Samādhi* is an uninterrupted dedication of one's self to *Brahman*. Śrikṛṣṇa transported Arjuna to a supertrance and directed him to participate in the Mahābhārata war. The real propitiation of God is the natural, automatic, dedication of all our natural, voluntary and involuntary *karmas* to the supreme *Brahman*.

(i) SS. (Sudarśana Sūri) :

dvaya—The twin notions about the identity of the soul with the body and their independent existence distinct and separate from God's personality.

Karma—saṅkalpa—vikalpakaṁ manaḥ—

The Mind which under the powerful influence of *karmas* of the past lives broods over the anxieties for maintainining one's body, etc. (*Saṅkalpa*), and desires for obtaining enjoyment like flower-garlands, sandal-paste, etc. (*vikalpa*).

(ii) VR : Though the two notions viz. identity of the body and the Soul and the independent existence of oneself from God though unreal, are entertained in the mind like the dreams (in sleep) and fancies or hallucinations (in the waking state). Hence the necessity of controlling the mind which under the stress of the previous *Karmas* weaves out *Saṅkalpa* (Self—delusion about the identity of the body and the Soul) and *Vikalpa* (our inde-

hallucinations (during wakefulness), on account of the mind of the persons who broods over it. A wise person should, therefore, control his mind which brings forth the ideations and doubts. It (devotion to God with controlled mind)[1] will lead to Fearlessness i.e. Liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

39. (As control of the mind is very difficult, an easier way to *Mokṣa* is enunciated.

Hence, one should (devoutly) listen to the highly auspicious (stories of) the incarnations and deeds of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of the discus Sudaraśana, in this world. (If that too is impossible due to their being innumerable), he should sing the names signifying the descents and sportive acts of the Lord, without feeling fear or shame of being mocked at, and lead a life without attachment.

40. A person who adopted the above-described course of devotion as a sacred vow (to be strictly and constantly observed), develops an ardent love for the Lord by singing the names of his beloved Lord Hari. His heart is melted with love and devotion. He laughs loudly (feeling elated at winning over the Lord by his devotion), cries (feeling that he was neglected so long by the Lord), (out of over-eagerness) screams out ('O Lord ! Be pleased to be gracious unto me'), bursts out into songs (out of ecstasy) and dances like a mad person. Unconventional as he is, he transgresses the ways of the world.

pendence from the Supreme Soul on whom we are really absolutely dependent.)

(iii) *VJ* : The knowledge of *Brahman* is impossible to dawn unless one dedicates everything (including himself) to the Lord and *Mokṣa* is attained through the knowledge of *Brahman*. Hence one should be exclusively and selflessly devoted to the Lord.

Sarva-samarpaṇa-lakṣaṇo'pāsanā'bhāve brahma-jñānaṁ na syāt, tadabhāve saṁsāra-nivṛttir na syāt/ atas tad artham sarva-samarpaṇa-lakṣaṇam upāsanaṁ kartavyam iti bhāvaḥ/

EK. For control of one's mind, complete faith in the spiritual preceptor is essential.

EB 514-523

1. Cf. *mana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ*
kāraṇam bandha-mokṣayoḥ//
—*Maitri. Up* 6.34

41.* Such a devotee would bow to every being with absolute devotion as unto Hari's Person whether it be one of the five elements such as the sky, the air, the fire, the water or the earth, or heavenly luminaries such as the stars, the planets, or living beings, the cardinal points, plants and herbs, etc., the rivers and the seas and mountains (regarding them as a part of Lord Hari's body).

42.** Just as a person who eats food finds satisfaction, nourishment and relief from hunger simultaneously with each morsel of food, similarly to a person who has completely submitted himself to the Lord (the triad, viz.) sincere devotion, realization of the supreme Lord and aversion to other objects (of senses) appear and are found together simultaneously.

43. The devotee of the Lord who steadily and without any interruption worships the feet of Lord Acyuta, attains (simultaneously) the triad, viz. devotion, renunciation of worldly objects and realization of the Lord and through them he directly attains the supreme peace[1] or liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

The king (Nimi) requested :

44.*** Be pleased to describe to me the devotee of Lord Hari (who attains the above-mentioned triad simultaneously). What are his characteristics (that distinguish him from) among fellow-men how he behaves and how he talks and what are his distinguishing traits which endear him to the Lord.

* VR: The devotee should regard himself as an integral part of the God's person. By understanding the world as a part of God's body, he becomes quiescent and controls his mind.

EK. gives a highly poetic description of the realization of the *Brahman* in everything, everywhere (EB. 2.580-602)

** EK : The triad means :

(i) *bhakti*—loving devotion to all beings.

(ii) *anubhava* or *prāpti*—Direct God-realization

(iii) *virakti*—non-attachment to one's body, wife, children, etc.

1. S.S. & VR—Śānti—subsidence and disappearance of the six types of sufferings of a being such as : hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, old age and death.

*** VJ. : King Nimi enquires after the gradations of votaries.

Hari replied :

45.* He who sees his own self (who is Hari himself) existing in all beings as *Brahman* and realizes that all (mobile and immobile) creations are established in his own Self which is *Brahman* (or Hari) himself, is the foremost of all devotees.

46. One who cherishes affectionate devotion to the Lord, friendly feelings towards his Votaries (who entirely depend on him), compassion to the ignorant and indifference towards his enemies is a second-rate votary (as he entertains difference in outlook toward them as contrasted with the "fore-most" type described above).

47. (Believing that Lord Hari is present only in his image and not elsewhere) he who desires to worship and worships with faith Lord Hari and does not respect his votaries and other creatures is an ordinary ignorant votary.[1]

48. Even though the sense-organs receive their objects of enjoyment (if the devotee's heart is so much absorbed in Lord Viṣṇu that) he feels neither repulsion nor joyous attraction toward them and looks upon this universe as the Māyā of Viṣṇu, such a devotee is of the highest order.

*. SR. quotes a Tantra text which proves the identity of Hari with the Individual Soul (*Ātman*) due to his all-pervasiveness and logically accurate knowledge (*ātatatvāt*, *pramāṭṛtvāt*) and as such He is the Inner Controller of even insignificant insects with no dimunition in his six excellences of infinite dimensions due to his association with insignificant creatures. In brief, he who sees the immanence of the glorious Lord everywhere and in everything is the best votary of the Lord.

EK. : There is a great variety in the external appearance and behaviour of the votaries of God, but he who realizes the complete (identity of his Self, Brahman and all beings—he within all and all within himself—is the best devotee of the Lord.

VR. He who realizes the implication of the epithet "Vāsudeva"—The Lord being in all and all beings as well as himself existing on the support of the Lord, or being a constituent part of the Lord, is the best devotee.

VB refutes the notion of "Supporter and the Supported" of Rāmānuja and establishes the non-duality (*advayatva*) doctrine and the knower of this is the best votary.

1. Cf. *Iśa Up.* 6 & 7

(1) VR : This verse does not condemn image-worship but image-worship without devotion to Lord's votaries is depreciated, as such narrow concept of devotion obstructs the fruition or benefit of Lord's worship.

49.* He is the foremost among the Lord's votaries who, by dint of his constant memory (meditation) of Hari is not deluded by (and affected with) the conditions i.e. sufferings in worldly existence such as : The birth and death affecting the body, hunger and thirst (harassing) the vital principle (*prāṇa*), fear, (worrying) the mind, strong desire (exciting) the intellect and fatigue exhausting the sense-organs.

50. He is verily the best among the Lord's devotees in whose hearts the seeds of desires for enjoyment and passions and of actions do not germinate at all and who have Lord Vāsudeva as their only resort.[1]

51. He is verily beloved of Lord Hari who is not attached to his body nor is affected by superiority complex on account of his birth (in a high family) or deeds (e.g. penance performed nor by his position in a particular class in society, stage of life or his caste (such as *mūrdhāvasikta*—born of Brāhmaṇa father and Kṣattriya mother).

52. He who does not entertain the notion of distinction between 'mine' and 'another's' in respect of his property or even his own body, who is equal to all beings[2] and serene-minded, is the best among the votaries of the Lord.

53. He should be regarded as the leader of the followers and devotees of Lord Viṣṇu who will not allow the remembrance of the Lord to be interrupted even for half a winking time

* EK : The five 'places' or components of bondage are the physical body, sense-organs, mind, intellect and the vital principle and they are affected by hunger, thirst, fear, sufferings (*Kleśa*), birth and death. The great sufferings undergone at these 'places' are called 'The properties or conditions of *Saṁsāra*'. EK takes these sufferings one by one and shows how absorption in the remembrance of the Lord brings immunity to the devotee from them, as he is not affected by any of them at all.

—EB.2.664-691

1. Verses 48-50 describe how a great devotee behaves.

(i) VR. explains that this egalitarianism is due to his belief that all souls are intelligent in nature and one with *Brahman*, and physical bodies are products of the unintelligent *prakṛti*.

(ii) VJ differs :

The notion of identity of *Ātman* and *Paramātman* is not entertained by him while in *Saṁsāra* or in his pure stage in *Mokṣa*. He cites a number of authorities to support the Dvaita notion of distinction between *jīva* and *Brahman*.

for gaining the sovereignty of the three worlds. Nor does he waver even for half the twinkling of the eyelid from the lotus feet of the glorious Lord—the feet sought after by gods and others who have not subdued their self.[1]

54. When (once) the fever (in the form) of afflictions in the heart of the devotees (who have submitted themselves absolutely to the will of the Lord) is completely subsided by the cool moon-light emanating from the gem-like (crescent-shaped) nails on the toes of the Lord with very long (universe-covering) strides (or possessing great prowess), how can it (the trouble) arise again ? How could the solar heat affect when the moon has risen ?

55. That person is said to be the chief of votaries whose heart the Lord does not vacate, as his feet are (tightly) fastened with bond of affection therein—Hari who destroys all the accumulated mass of sins, even if his name is uttered unconsciously or under restraint.[2]

CHAPTER THREE

Discourses on the Māyā, the means to Transcend it, the Brahman and the Path of Action

The King (Nimi) said :

1. We are anxious to know the (nature of the) Māyā (the Will Power) of the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu which deludes those (gods like Brahmā) who themselves are endowed with

1. I differ from ŚR and EK on the interpretation of *ajitātma—surādibhiḥ*. ŚR dissolves the comp.—*ajite—Harau eva—ātmā yeṣām te*/ 'whose mind is fixed on the invincible Lord'. But if gods have fixed their mind on the Lord, why should they have to hunt after (to find out) the Lord on whose feet they have already fixed their mind ? If the gods have not subdued their ego or self, then alone they will try and seek the feet of the Lord. Hence, my above interpretation.

2. SR : Verses 51 to 53 describe the nature of a devotee. That 'He sings the name of the Lord' should be regarded as the answer of 'what a devotee does'. The summary of all these is given in verse 55.

such deluding powers. May your worshipful sires be gracious enough to enlighten us (about Māyā's nature).

2. I am a mortal being scorched by the fever (afflictions) of *Saṁsāra*. I do not feel satiated while listening to your speech describing the nectar-like sweet stories of Hari, which are an antidote against the fever in the form of miseries in *Sāṁsāra*.

Antarikṣa said :

VR's Text Adds :[1]

2.1. The glorious Lord wishing to become many through his Māyā, created this universe. Though *Jiva* is pure spiritual essence, free from three *guṇas*, Māyā invested him with a body controlled by *guṇas*. The identification of the soul with one's body is the delusion of *Jiva* (*jiva-bhrama*).

2.2. This *Jiva-bhrama* (delusion of the *Jiva*) is explained with reference to the waking, dreaming and the sleeping states of the *Jiva* (*tat-prayukta-jāgrat-svapna-suṣupti-rūpāvasthātraya-sambandhān ca vadan bhramaṁ prapañcayati|*) The waking state is the misapprehension with reference to external sense; the dreaming state is with relation to the mind; in the sleeping state, the memory is dormant, unmanifest like seeds; and the fourth state is the *Jiva's* condition in relation to *paramātman*. In this stage the *Jiva* is separate from the body which is the product of *Prakṛti* and that is the liberated state (*prakṛtipariṇāmaka-śarīrā' bhāvaḥ muktyavasthā iti|*).

2.3. The *Jiva* is pure consciousness untainted by passions etc. and free from states like dreaming, sleep, etc. He appears through Māyā to be possessed of those stages.

2.4. When the *jiva* realizes the transitory nature and futility of three forms of Māyā, he desists to work for trivial pleasures and becomes serene (*upa-saṁyāti, bahiḥ, kṣudra-sukhārthavyāpārān nivṛtto bhavatiti*).

1. VR's text adds here the above four verses but the *Bhāgavata Vidyāpīṭha* (*Ahmedabad*) *edition* gives only the commentary of VR on these verses and not the original text. From what can be gleaned from the commentary, the above appears to be the contents of those verses.

Antarikṣa explained :

3. It is for the sake of enjoyment of objects and liberation of the embodied souls, his own rays, that the ancient-most Prime Person, the cause of all creation (or the Indwelling soul of all beings) evolved these great and small bodies, out of the five gross elements, O mighty-armed king.[1]

4. In this way having entered as the inner-dweller (for the well-being of all the *Jīvas*) into beings which are created out of the five elements,[2] God divides himself and appears as one (in the form of the mind), and ten (in the form of five cognitive and five conative senses), and enables them to enjoy the *guṇas* or objects of senses.

5. The master of the body—the *jīva* enjoys the objects of senses by means of sense-organs illumined (by the knowledge or activated) by the Inner Controller. He misapprehends this created body as himself and gets attached to it. (This is due to Māyā.)

6. The *jīva* who is conditioned with a physical body, performs with his sense-organs acts, as motivated by the tendencies resulting from acts done in the previous birth. He experiences both the pleasant and unpleasant fruits of *karmas* and revolves in this *Saṁsāra*.[3]

7. In this way, going through various corporeal existences (in consequence of his *Karma*) which carry with them innumer-

1. ŚR states that Māyā, being indescribable, only its effects, viz. creation of the universe, etc. can be described. But according to EK. *Māyā* is unreal (*mithyā*), non-existent like the son of a barren woman, the sky-flower, 'water-catering centre' of mirage, etc. The term *avidyā* means that which never exists.

—EB 2.32-52.

2. EK: God enters his creation in the form off essential characteristics such as liquidity of water. Similarly, he devided himself in the sense-organs by becoming their essential function such as 'seeing' of the eye, 'taste' of the tongue. That we can enjoy an object through our senses is due to the particular capacity of the sense which (the capacity) is God.

—*EB* 2.86-129.

3. This verse explains why a *jīva* is not liberated after enjoying the objects of senses but suffers unending revolutions in *Saṁsāra*—ŚR.

able evils and miseries, the *jīva*, being helpless, experiences repeated births and deaths upto the dissolution of the universe.

8. When the dissolution of the gross elements is impending, the beginningless and endless eternal Time-Spirit[1] forcibly withdraws this manifest universe consisting of gross substances and their subtle *guṇas* into its unmanifest cause (the *mūla-prakṛti*).

9. (When such dissolution is imminent) at that time a severe draught—absolutely rainless—will devastate the earth for one hundred years. And the scorching sun with its heat enhanced by the (destructive) Time-Spirit shall completely consume the three worlds by its heat.

10. Huge flames of fire emanating from the (thousand) mouths of the (serpent god) Śeṣa and burning the nether-world from its bottom, soar up high, burning down every thing and helped by the wind, they envelop the universe on all side.

11. The clouds of deluge called *Saṁvartaka* with each line of drop as thick as the trunk of an elephant, will pour down for one hundred years incessantly and the whole universe is sub-emerged in cosmic waters.

12. God Brahmā the Person (Deity) presiding over the universe leaves his conditioning universe (which has been now dissolved), enters the subtle Unmanifest like the fire entering into the unmanifested principle of fire, when the fuel is completely consumed.[2]

13. The earth being deprived of its distinguishing characteristic—smell is transformed into water and the water being divested of its special property, viz. liquidity, is changed into fire.

1. It is eternal Viṣṇu who as Kāla withdraws, etc.—VJ.

2. ŚR: After the termination of his office, god Brahmā should merge into Prakṛti like all *jīvas*, if god Brahmā be not a devotee of God. But he being a devotee of the Lord, is absorbed into Brahman. VJ. also accepts the merging of god Brahmā into *paramātman*. VR. takes the sing. *Vairājaḥ puruṣaḥ* as representing all jīvas withdrawn into the *mūla-prakṛti* and the illustration of fire shows that their knowledge is narrowed down in that merged state. EK quotes Bh. P. 10.2.32,33 and emphasizes that *bhakti* (devotion) is the precondition of *mukti* (liberation). Merely the office of Brahmā is not enough for *mukti*.

14. Deprived of its property of colour by the *Sāṁvartika* (universe-ending) darkness, fire merges into air and air (*vāyu*) deprived of its special characteristic touch, is lost into the ether (or the sky). The ether in its turn, being divested of its characteristic property, viz. sound, by the Supreme Soul in the form of Time-Spirit (*Kālātman*) the ether gets merged into the *ātman* i.e. *Tāmasic* Ego.

15.* Sense-organs and Intellect enter the (*rājasika*) Ego while the mind along with the presiding deities of senses merges into the (*sāttvika*) Ego. And this Ego, with all its (*sāttvika, rājasika* and *tāmasika*) characteristics, merges with the *Mahat* which in its turn enters the *Prakṛti.*

16. We have now described to you the Māyā of the glorious Lord, characterised by three colours (i.e. *guṇas* such as *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) and which brings about the creation and carries out the maintenance and destruction of the universe. What more do you wish to hear?

The King Nimi submitted :

17. O great sage! Be pleased to expound the way whereby persons who have identified their 'I-ness' (soul) with the gross (physical) body, will easily cross over this Lord's Māyā from which it is very difficult to get liberation by persons with uncontrolled minds. Is there any path other than *bhakti* which has already been mentioned (supra 11.2.37).

Prabuddha explained :

18. Persons leading a householder's life (living as husband and wife) and following the path of *Karma* for the removal of miseries and attainment of happiness, should observe and consider how contrary results are met by them.

19. (They should also consider:) What pleasure is derived from wealth which is so very difficult to obtain and

* VJ: The process of dissolution is as follows : *Ākāśa* into the Tāmasic Ego; senses, mind, intellect with their presiding deities into Taijasa Ego. The threefold Ego and its products into the *Mahat* which in its turn merges into *Ātman*. The *Virāṭ puruṣa* withdraws all effects into their causes, and he enters into the subtle Unmanifest.

which (when obtained) entails nothing but miseries—a veritable death of one's own? Or what happiness one can get after acquisition of houses (property), children, relatives and cattle which are so very transient.

20. One should know that in the same way (as in this world), the other (celestial) world, attained by performance of *karmas* is transient (and full of miseries). There is rivalry with the equals, jealousy towards the superiors and the fear of destruction (and termination of the period of the stay in celestial regions)[1], as we find it among the dependent princes (under an emperor), here (on the earth).

21. A person desirous of knowing the highest good, therefore, should resort to a preceptor who is expert in logical exposition of the Brahman couched in words (i.e. *Upaniṣads* and *Śrutis*) and has realized the Supreme Brahman and (the sure index of which is that he) is well-established in the serenity of mind (and detachment).

22. Regarding his spiritual preceptor as his own self and his Deity (Hari), he should, by rendering sincere and devoted service to his preceptor, learn (and practise) the duties and ways of life of Lord's votaries, so that Lord Hari who is the soul of the universe and confers self-realization (on his devotees), becomes pleased with him.

23. In the initial stage, one should learn (and practise) to detach his mind from everything (such as wife, children, property) and attach his mind to the pious persons (devoted to the Lord), and also should cherish mercy (to the subordinate and inferior beings), friendliness (with the equals) and modesty (towards the superiors) accordingly.

24. He should further imbibe the virtues of (mental and physical) purity, practise penance or religious duties, cultivate forbearance, observe silence (i.e. avoid unnecessary wastage of words), study the scriptures, practise straight forwardness, celibacy, non-violence and balanced attitude of mind under the stress of contradictory conditions (e.g. pleasure and pain, respect and insult, etc.).

1. Cf. *Yatheha karma-cito lokaḥ kṣīyata evamevāmutra puṇya-cito lokaḥ kṣīyate.* *Chāndogya Up.* 8.1.6.

25. He should realize that the Soul, as an intelligent existence, has pervaded the world and is the (omnipresent) Lord, the controller of the universe; and he should live in solitude, should not cherish any attachment to his house (property, relatives, etc.,), wear washed rag-cloth or bark-garment (as dress) and remain contented with whatever one gets.

26. He should entertain firm faith in the scriptures glorifying the Lord, but should not denigrate scriptures of others. He should control his mind (by breath-control—*prāṇāyāma*), speech (by silence) and deeds (by non-attachment) should speak the truth and control his internal organ (the mind as well as the external senses.

27. He should always listen to, glorify and meditate on the incarnations, deeds and excellences of Lord Hari of miraculous deeds, and learn to dedicate all his acts (including performance of sacrifice and such other religious acts to him.

28. He should also learn to resign unto the Supreme Lord all his performances of sacrifice, worship, charitable gifts, penance performed, muttering of sacred syllables or names of God, his activities and whatever is dear to him such as (scents, flowers, etc.) and dedicate[1] to the service of the Lord wives, children, houses (property) and his very life itself.

29. Thus he should entertain friendly relations to persons who have realized Lord Kṛṣṇa as their very Soul and as their protector or as the controller of all *jivas*. He should adore the Lord as abiding in both the mobiles and immobiles[2] especially in men, and chiefly in the righteous men who observe their religious duties and out of them, specially in the devotees of the Lord.[3]

1. EK. explains that this dedication implies complete non-attachment to wives, children, etc. —*EB*. 3.565.

2. *Ubhayatra* : He should try to worship the Lord as abiding in the heart but if the Lord cannot be visualized within in spite of meditation, he should worship the images of the Lord which are both mobile and immobile. The chief images at ancient sites like Dvārakā or Pandharpur are the "immobile images" while the images on worships at home are "mobile" —*EB*-3.569-571.

3. Under *mahatsu* EK. includes *guru* or the spiritual preceptor as the most important person to be served, as the *guru* and Brahman are identical—nay the *guru* is superior, as he introduces us to *Brahman*. And everything should be dedicated to the *guru*. —*EB*-3.576-581.

30. He should learn how to discuss with each other and sing of the sanctifying glory of the Lord. And in this way, in association with these, he should (forget rivalry, jealousy, etc. and) find spiritual joy, happiness and complete freedom from all miseries.

31. Remembering themselves and reminding each other of Hari who annihilates the mass of sins instantly, their devotion is developed unto Love divine and out of the thrill of ecstasy of this divine Love, the hair all over their bodies stand on their end (and this spiritual delight of the disciples, gives the spiritual preceptor the highest delight[1]).

32. Devotees (who have reached such a stage) behave in an unconventional manner. They sometimes weep (out of anxiety to visualize him), some times burst out into laughing and feel delighted (at his remembrance), some times they go on talking (about his sportive acts), some times they dance (in ecstasy), some times they sing of him and imitate his acts. In this way, coming to realize him and attaining the Supreme bliss, they remain silent.

33. He who thus learns (and practises[2]) the duties and the way of life of the devotees of the Lord, develops Love divine and thereby becomes absolutely devoted to (and absorbed in) Lord Nārāyaṇa, and easily crosses the Māyā which is otherwise very difficult to transcend.

King Nimi asked :

34. As you are the foremost among those who have realized the *Brahman*, it behoves you to propound to me the nature of *Brahman* or the Supreme Soul which is also designated as Nārāyaṇa (Do the terms *Brahman*, *Paramātman* and *Nārāyaṇa* denote the same attributeless entity or imply any special feature ?).

1. EK. vide *EB* 3.576-614.

2. EK. emphasizes that one should resort to a spiritual preceptor and under his guidance learn and practise the duties and way of life of the *Bhāgavatas*. —*EB* 3.615.

Pippalāyana replied :

35. O lord of kings ! Please do understand that to be the Supreme Reality, which (as *Nārāyaṇa*) is the cause of the creation, sustenance and dissolution (of the universe) but (being eternal and beginningless) is himself un-caused (and indulges in the above activity without any cause or motive); which (as *Brahman*) exists persistently in three states namely those of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep as also in the fourth supra-conscious) state, both during *Samādhi* (trance) as well as outside in other states also, animated by which (as Paramātman) the body, senses, vital breath and the mind carry out their own function (The three aspects[1] viz. Nārāyaṇa, *Brahman* and Paramātman constitute one and the same Reality ?

36.* Even as sparks of fire can neither illumine nor burn the fire, (their source) neither the mind, speech, the power of seeing, intellect, the vital breath and the sense-organs can enter (i.e. reach and comprehend) the *Brahman*. The word (i.e. the Vedas) which is (regarded as) authoritative in matters relating to *Ātman* indirectly hints at it by inference, as it denies

1. Although ŚR distinguishes the three aspects of Reality, viz. as the creator etc. of the universe (Nārāyaṇa), eternal existence in all states of consciousness, Samādhi, etc. (*Brahman*) and the animator of the body, vital breath, etc. (*Paramātman*), EK says that it is all Nārāyaṇa and to facilitate the realization of *Brahman*, he puts forth the *Paramātman* aspect and emphasizes that-that which is within man as animator is the *Brahman* and *Nārāyaṇa* and that Paramātman, *Brahman* and Nārāyaṇa are one.

—*EB* 3.630-646.

* VJ: The terms mind, speech etc. indicate their presiding deities such as Rudra, Sarasvati, Sūrya, Brahmā, etc. These deities cannot comprehend the *Paramātman*. Lakṣmi the presiding deity of Veda cannot do it. The Veda conveys him negatively by eliminating what is not *Paramātman*. The goddess Lakṣmi indirectly conveys him to her cause.

VR : (The gist) :

Flames are attributes of fire. Just as fire cannot be the object of cognition of flames, Brahman cannot be cognised by the mind, senses or the *jīva*. The Word (Vedānta or Śruti) conveys Brahman as its purport or implication. If the Brahman were non-existent, the statement of inability of senses or the mind to cognise it is meaningless. Denying the senses, etc., the power of cognition means that Brahman *does* exist and that the Veda is the only means of knowing the Brahman.

itself the power to describe it directly in positive terms. But in the absence of Reality, no negative description is possible.

37.* At the beginning (before the creation of the universe) there was one (Brahman) which came to be known as threefold *Pradhāna* consisting of the attributes *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. By the predominance of *Rajas* or its active creative power, it is called *Sūtrātmā* or Hiraṇyagarbha and with the dominance of *Sattva* or the power of knowledge it is termed as *Mahat*. When the condition of *Avidyā* is invested, it is called *Jīva* (Individual Soul) or *Ahaṁkāra* (Ego). This one *Brahman* becomes many and shines as deities (presiding over senses), the cognitive and conative senses and objects of senses as well as the resulting fruit, (viz. the experience of pleasure and pain, etc.) through his immensely powerful Māyā. The gross (i.e. the effects) and the subtle (i.e. their causes) are both (caused and) illumined by *Brahman* which is beyond the reach of both.

38.** This soul (Ātmā) was not born and shall not die;

* EK: At the beginning there was only the *Brahman* Om. It became threefold in its three *mātrās*, A-U-M of the nature of the three attributes, viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. When these attributes are all in a balanced stage, it is called *Pradhāna*. —*EB*. 3.703-701.

VR : (The gist only) *Pradhāna* is the common thread of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Mahat*, *Ahaṁkāra* and *Jīva* are its products. The *Jīva* experiences the fruits of his acts—pleasure and pain through his senses. The *Brahman* is different from them and the intelligent and unintelligent creations constitute his body.

VJ : The verses summarise different views which identify *Brahman* with the *Jīva*, etc. These views are not correct. Brahman is distinct from and greater than what is known as cause and effect. [*tayoḥ kārya-kāraṇayoḥ paraṁ vilakṣaṇaṁ bhinnaṁ Brahma iti*.

** VR (The latter half) : In every category of life (such as in the bodies of god, sub-human beings, etc.) the soul is always connected with *Prakṛti*, till he attains liberation (*ā-mokṣāt-Prakṛti-sambandhavān*) though essentially it is pure intelligence and knowledge (*Jñāna-mātra-svarūpa*). It is through the influence of senses that he appears to be divided and transformed, while he activates the body.

VJ. quotes his authorities and states that Brahman is always present as unmodified essence & unmixed consciousness, in all things which are subject to birth, death, change, etc. Just as the vital breath is called by the sense through which it functions, Brahman is described differently. *Yathendriya-gataḥ prāṇas teṣāṁ Śaktyā vikalpate / evaṁ sad-rūpakaṁ Brahma tat-tacchaktyā vikalpyate // ekaṁ eva mahā-śakti-prāṇasyāpi bala-pradam //*

He neither grows nor does he decrease; He is the knower—the witness—of the times of the different states (such as youth, old age) of all bodies (just as the seer is different from the body). He is all-pervading, eternally unchanging pure consciousness-cum-existence. As in the case of Prāṇa, this consciousness-cum-existence appears as many, under the influence of senses.

39.* In whatever category of body—whether born of eggs or from wombs or from seeds or from sweat—the *jīva* is born, the vital force (*prāṇa*) follows him (himself remaining the same, unaffected by the category of the body), (similarly) when all the sense-organs (which are active in wakefulness) and the Ego (which functions in the dream state) remain oblivious (as in a deep sleep), the soul being devoid of conditioning states, alone persists in that stage as can be inferred from our remembrance (of having enjoyed a sound sleep).

40. If with intensive devotion generated through desire for seeking the feet of the lotus-navelled God, a person, by his own mental efforts, cleanses all the dirt and impurities clogged on his heart due to three *guṇas* and acts (resulting in merit or sin), the Soul (which pre-exists there) directly reveals himself in that extremely pure heart like the light of the sun become visible to clear eyes.

The King requested :

41. Be pleased to describe to us that Path of Action (*Parama Yoga*) being purified by which a man quickly shakes

39.* VR (The latter half) : When we become oblivious of our body and the activities of the sense-organs, the Ego and the mind remain in abeyance (as in deep sleep), we *jīvas* realize the existence of the self (...*dehāvabhāsaṁ vinā yathāvad ātmā svarūpa-prakāśo bhavati.*)

EK. In deep sleep, the Ego lies dormant in *Avidyā* ; hence we cannot visualize *ātman*. It is after the elimination of *Avidyā* and Ego that the self-or Brahman is revealed.

—*EB.* 3.733-35.

VJ : (The gist only)

In the various categories of bodies Jīva enters through the medium of Prāṇa and Paramātman. If Paramātman were absent, Jīva could not have any memory of his state of deep sleep *mṛti-supti-prabodhāder niyantā Harir ekarāṭ*.

off all *Karmas* and attains the supreme knowledge attainable only through disassociation from all actions.

42. Formerly, I asked this very question to Sages (like Sanaka and others) in the presence of my father (Ikṣvāku). But those (mind-born) sons of god Brahmā did not answer it. (Pray be pleased to explain to me the reason of their silence.

Āvirhotra replied :

43. The classification of *Karma* into *Karma* (duties enjoined by Vedas), *Akarma* (acts prohibited by Vedas) and *Vikarma* (omission of *Karma* and commission of *Akarma*) belongs to the sphere of the Vedas and not within the range of ordinary parlance of men.

As the Vedas are the revelations from God, even wise sages stand confounded in their interpretations. (The sages whom you questioned were omniscient. But then you were of pre-mature age and could not have understood their explanation. Hence their silence then).

44. The Veda implies something deeper and different from what appears to be the superficial interpretation of the text. Just as a child is tempted with something sweet to make it swallow (the unpalatable) medicine (the object of the medicine being restoration of the child's health and not the sweet thing that the child gets immediately after gulping down the medicine), similarly, the real object of the Veda is to liberate one from the bond of *Karma* and its consequence, for which *Karmas* are apparently prescribed.

45. (One should not indulge in dereliction of the prescribed Vedic duties from the beginning, prematurely thinking that liberation from *Karmas* is the real object in life). If a person being himself ignorant and having no control over his senses, does not perform the duties prescribed by the Vedas, due to the *Adharma* (the course of unrighteousness) in which he is involved by *Vikarma* (non-performance of the prescribed act and commission of the acts prohibited by the Veda), he goes from death to death (as he remains entangled in *Saṁsāra*).

46. He who performs acts prescribed in the Veda but has no attachment to the fruits thereof and dedicates them to

the Supreme Ruler, attains to that state of accomplishment[1] (i.e. Mokṣa) in which *Karma* or its fruit does not bind him. The promise of fruits of *Karmas* is meant to create interest in the *Karma*.

47. Whoever is desirous of instantaneously cutting as under the knot (of egotism) of the heart of his self which is Brahman himself, should, in addition to the Vedic rites, perform the worship of Lord Keśava in the manner prescribed in the (*Pāñcarātra*) Tantra.

48. After getting oneself initiated (in the Tāntrika path) through the grace of the spiritual preceptor[2] and being shown the technical method of worship by his *guru*, he should worship the Supreme Person in the form of (whatever) image (of the Lord) that he likes the best.

49. In a thorough clean state of the body, he should sit in front of the idol of God. He should cleanse his body (internally) by means of breath-control and other practices. He should armour himself by assigning the protection of various parts of his body to different deities[3] and worship Lord Hari.

50-51. He should first purify the articles of worship (like flowers by removing insects if any and sprinkling water), the ground (by sweeping and washing), his ownself (by *Nyāsa* and

1. ŚR. explains; Just as a child is tempted to gulp medicine by offering 'the fruit' of sweet-meats, the promise of heaven to a sacrificer is for persuading a person to perform the Vedic *Karma*. He quotes Bṛhad. Up. and shows that *Karma* is an accessory of spiritual knowledge and the performer of *Karma* realizes it and loses the zest and attachment for *Karmas*. This non-attached pure state of mind leading to the realization of *Brahman* is attained by him. VR. thinks that such a person gives up all *Karmas* leading to *Saṁsāra* and attains *Mokṣa*.

EK. defines *naiṣkarmya* as the *Karma* dedicated to God and such *Karma* leads to realization of *Brahma*.

—*EB*. 3.793-802.

2. VD. insists on the selection of proper *guru*. Quoting a number of *Purāṇic* and other texts, he asserts that the spiritual preceptor should be a Brāhmaṇa householder possessing spiritual qualities, etc.

3. *Nyāsa* :—Assignment of the various parts of one's body to different deities which is usually accompanied by prayers or pronunciation of some sacred symbolic syllables and corresponding gesticulations.

—*ASD. P.* 306.

concentration of the mind) and image of god (by removing the previous coating of sandal-paste and other articles). He should then purify, by sprinkling with water, his own seats and keep ready at hand articles of worship (such as water for washing the feet of Deity and other materials of worship). With his heart serene and concentrated, he should invoke the Lord (in the image, mentally). Performing the six *nyāsas* from the heart onwards, he should chant the *mūla-mantra* (the sacred syllables or names received by him from the preceptor) and worship the Lord with the available articles of worship as abiding both in the image and in his heart (wherein he should also instal him).

52-53. He should perform the worship of the image of the Lord including the various limbs of his persons, and the arms and emblems he holds (such as the discus Sudarśana and others) and the attendant deities (like Sunanda, Garuḍa). He should worship each form of the Lord chanting the sacred *Mantra* peculiar to it, offering water to wash his hands, feet and for *ācamana* (rinsing the mouth), etc. He should bathe the Deity and decorate it with cloth ornaments. According to the prescribed rites of worship, he should worship the Lord with sandal-paste, flowers, Akṣatas[1] (unbroken grains of rice to be applied to the Deity's fore-head only), garlands, he should burn scented incenses before him and wave lights before him and offer food. After eulogising the Lord with appropriate hymns, he should prostrate himself before the Lord (i.e. Lord's image).

54. He should worship the image of Hari (before himself) contemplating himself as being one with Hari. He should then place the relic of worship (such as flowers, etc.) on his own head, and deposit the image of Hari in its proper place and Lord Hari in his own heart.

55. He who worships the Lord, the Supreme Soul as present in the fire, the sun, the water, etc., in the guest (who arrives unexpectedly) and in his own heart, is liberated (from *Saṁsāra*) before long.

1. As ŚR. notes the *akṣatas* are to be used for application on the fore-head of Hari and not elsewhere in the worship. He quotes an authority which prohibits the use of *akṣatas* in Viṣṇu-worship and the Ketaki (flower) in Śiva's worship.

CHAPTER FOUR

Description of the Lord's Incarnations by Drumila

King Nimi said :

1. Be pleased to describe to us those various deeds performed by Lord Hari in his various incarnations which he has taken at his own sweet will, in the past, present and future.

Drumila replied :

2. He is a person of childish (immature) understanding who seeks to count the innumerable excellences and attributes of the Infinite Lord. It may be possible for him in the course of a long period of time and with extreme difficulty, to count the particles of dust on the earth, but never the excellences of Almighty Lord—the resort of all powers.

3. When, with the five elements evolved out of himself, Nārāyaṇa, the First Prime Deity, created this universe known as *Virāj*, like his own body, and entered it with a ray or part of his own (as Inner Controller) he came to acquire the epithet *Puruṣa* (the Indweller in the body).

4. The assemblage and arrangement of three worlds rest on the support of the Lord's personality[1]. Both the cognitive and conative sense-organs of all embodied beings function due to his sense-organs only. He is by himself knowledge or consciousness. It is through his birth that creatures derive their physical strength, the energy and strength of their senses and activity. Through *Sattva* and other attributes (viz. *Rajas* and *Tamas*), he became the Prime Agent of creation, subsistence and destruction of the Universe.

5. At the beginning of creation (of the Universe) this Prime Deity, in association with the attribute *rajas* appeared as Brahmā for the creation of universe; (associated with the attribute *Sattva*), he become Viṣṇu, the dispenser of the fruit of sacrifice and the protector of the twice-born castes (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) and the religious order; associated with

1. Or : The three worlds constitute a part of and exist within his person—ŚR.

his attribute *tamas*, he became Rudra for the destruction of the universe. In this way, he from whom the creation, protection of the universe ever continues through the instrumentality of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra, is the First and Foremost Deity.

6. As Nārāyaṇa and Nara, the foremost of the sages and of perfectly serene mind, he was born of Dharma and his spouse Mūrti, the daughter of Dakṣa. He expounded to sages (like Nārada) the path of action leading to the realization of the Soul (who is characterised by actionlessness). He practised (an ideal type of) penance and his feet are still served (and worshipped) by prominent sages.

7. Suspecting with the apprehension that this sage (Nārāyaṇa-Nara) covets to take possession of his position (as the king of heaven), Indra deputed Kāmadeva, the god of love, along with his troupe. Being ignorant of his (Nārāyaṇa's) spiritual greatness, Kāmadeva went with his paraphernalia—a bevy of celestial damsels, the vernal season and the gentle wind (from the sandal-forests of Malaya) to his hermitage at Badarī, and hit him with shafts in the forms of side-glances of heavenly damsels.

8. Knowing perfectly well that the indiscretion has been committed by Indra, he laughed loudly without even slightly feeling the touch of pride (at his own moral strength). He assured the trembling visitors, "O (mighty) god of Love, O (South) wind, O heavenly damsels, do not be afraid. Please accept our hospitality (If no hospitality is offered, the hermitage would be as good as void). May our hermitage be non-void (i. e. worthy of its existence)."

9. When the sage Nārāyaṇa who removed their fear addressed them thus, the gods who bent their head low with shame, submitted to him, "O all-pervading Lord who are transcendental to the Māyā, this unpurturbedness in you is not surprising. You are the Supreme Self subject to no modifications, and your lotus-feet are respected with obeisance by hosts of sages who revel in the bliss of self-realization.

10. (It is not surprising that we should behave according to our nature and create obstacles in your penance). A number of obstacles are created by gods in the path of your servants (devotees) who want to transcend the abode of gods (the

heaven), and attain directly to your highest region. No impediments obstruct the path of others who offer in sacrifices the respective shares of gods as oblations. But as you are the protector of your devotees, your votary sets his foot on the heads of obstacles (and trampling them down ascends to Vaikuṇṭha).

11. (When your non-devotees perform penance they fall a victim to us—the erotic passion or the passion called Anger). Those who cross the immeasurable oceans in the form of tempters like us overcome hunger, thirst, (extremes of climate in) three seasons (viz. the summer, rains and the winter), winds and curb the palate and the sexual urge, succumb to futile anger and thereby waste their austerities in uttering imprecations). They are like ocean-crossers who get themselves drowned in the cavity caused by a cow's hoof."

12. While they were praising him thus, the Almighty Lord, (in order to humble down the pride of beauty of celestial nymphs and others) created by Yogic Power and showed them women of marvellous beauty, all well adorned with costly ornaments and raiments, waiting upon himself.

13. When those attendants of gods (viz. Kāma, the spring season, heavenly ladies) saw women beautiful like goddess Śrī, (their pride for their own beauty was humbled down and) their own complexion became faded at the excellence of the superior beauty of those women and they were enraptured with fragrance of their bodies.

14. The god of the Lord of gods (Nārāyaṇa) laughingly told them who were bowing to him with humility, "Choose any one of these women who is suitable, as an ornament of the celestial world."

15. Saying "so be it", the servants of gods complied with his Command. They selected Ūrvaśī, the most beautiful among heavenly damsels and repaired to the celestial regions following her.

16. They paid their respects to Indra in the assembly of gods and while all gods were eagerly listening, described to him the superior spiritual power of Nārāyaṇa at which Indra was astonished and became afraid (at his indiscretion in offending Nārāyaṇa).

17. It is for the good of the world that Lord Viṣṇu incar-

nated with a ray (part) of his own, in the form of a swan (to expound *Jñāna yoga* to god Brahmā when questioned by his sons), as Datta (the son of Atri) as the ever celibate Sanat-Kumāra, as our father Ṛṣabha. Taking the form of Hayagrīva (a horse-necked God), he killed the demon Madhu and recovered the Vedas from him.

18. In his incarnation as a Fish, at the time of deluge (at the end of Kalpa), he protected Manu, the earth and the sages and (seeds of all) plants and herbs. In his descent as a divine Boar, he killed demon Hiraṇyākṣa, the son of Diti, while he was lifting up the earth from the bottom of the sea. Assuming the form of divine Tortoise, he supported the mount (Mandara) on his back at the time of churning the ocean for nectar. Descending as Hari, he rescued from the jaws of a crocodile the afflicted king of elephants who appealed to him for succuor.

19. He rescued the sages (called Vālakhilyas) who were thumb-sized and who, while they went to fetch *samidhs* for sage Kaśyapa, fell into a hollow created by cow's hoofs who were drowning as if in a sea (and were therefore, ridiculed by Indra) and were praying him (for life). He absolved Indra also who was involved in the darkness (of the sin of slaying a Brāhmaṇa) due to his killing of Vṛtra (who was a Brāhmaṇa). He set free the heavenly ladies who lay helplessly imprisoned in the houses of Asuras. For ensuring freedom from fear for the righteous people, he incarnated as a Man-lion and killed Hiraṇyakaśipu, the King of Asuras.

20. In every Manvantara, during the wars between gods and Asuras, he incarnated with his rays for the sake of gods and killing the leaders of Asuras, he protected the three worlds. Appearing as the divine Dwarf (Vāmana), he, under the pretext of requesting for alms took away this earth from Bali and gave it back to gods, the sons of Aditi.

21. Incarnating as Paraśurāma, the conflagration born in the Bhṛgu clan for destroying the forest in the form of Haihaya family, he extirpated the Kṣattriyas from the surface of the earth twentyone times. As Rāma, the consort of Sītā, he constructed a bridge across the sea (to Laṅkā) and killed the ten-headed

Rāvaṇa destroying his fort of Laṅkā. Victorious is[1] Rāma whose glory destroys the Sins of the world.

22. For the removal of the burden of earth, the eternal, birthless Lord will take birth in the race of Yadus, and will accomplish feats which would be very difficult even for gods to perform. Then he would incarnate as Buddha and would delude by his disputations and dialectics those who, though ineligible, will try to perform sacrifices. And ultimately at the end of Kali Age, he will descend as Kalki and exterminate the Śūdra rulers.

23. O mighty-armed Janaka (Nimi) ! Innumerable are such incarnations and deeds of the Lord of the universe of immense glory (a few of which have been recounted to you.

CHAPTER FIVE

Nature and Fate of non-Devotees : Yuga-Wise Methods of Worshipping the Lord

The King (Nimi) enquired :

1. O sages, foremost among those who have realized the *Ātman* ! What is the condition and fate of those persons who do not mostly adore Lord Hari and whose desires are still unsatiated and whose minds and senses uncontrolled ?

Camasa replied :

2. From the mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Person were severally originated the four *varṇas* (classes of society) along with the *Āśramas* (Stages in life). According to their predominant characteristic qualities (viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and their combinations), they were distinctly classified as Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra.

1. ŚR states that this verb in the present tense (*Jayati*) indicates that this dialogue took place while Rāma was alive. The use of the future tense with reference to Kṛṣṇa and others supports this view.

3. Out of these, those who do not adore the Supreme Ruler, their direct Originator, either through ignorance or through negligence of that Great Person, lose their present status and fall down into hell.

4. Women, persons from Śūdra and such other classes (who are denied the opportunity and hence) are away from (the places or chances of) hearing the stories of Hari and also from listening to the songs of the excellent qualities of Hari,[1] deserve compassion from sages like you. (It behoves you to guide them in the path of Devotion.)

5. But Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas and Vaiśyas, by virtue of their original birth, and second birth through their *Upanayana* (investiture of the sacred thread) ceremony (become eligible for studies, performance of sacrifices, etc.), stand in the proximity of Lord's feet. But even they are deluded (to become attached to the fruit of their *Karmas*) by accepting the *Arthavāda* (apparent and superficial meaning) of the Vedas.

6. These persons are ignorant of the method of performing *Karmas* (without getting themselves involved in the fruits of the acts), being conceited fools, they regard themselves as the learned ones (and hence do not seek guidance of others for the technique of performing *Karmas* without getting bound by them). These fools being fascinated and impatient by the sweet words of the Vedas (promising happiness in heaven) indulge in sweet talk.

7. Due to the influence of *Rajas*, they are ruthless in their designs; are lustful and revengeful like serpents. These wicked, conceited hypocrites laugh at the real devotees who are beloved of Hari.

8. Addicted to sexual pleasures, they adore (and cajole) women. Living in houses dominated with craving for conjugal pleasures, they talk to each other of their (present and prospective) achievements (or they wish each other to be blest with wives, children, prosperity). They perform sacrifices without observing the correct procedure or distribution of (adequate) food or giving of (the due) sacrificial fees. They kill animals for

1. Or : are far from i.e. cannot approach those who extol the excellences of the Lord (in *Kīrtana*).

personal appetite unmindful of the consequences of such destruction of life.

9. Being elated with the pride of wealth, prosperity, lineage, learning, munificence, personal beauty, physical power and superior aptitude for action, these wicked people get blinded and despise not only righteous devotees beloved of Lord Hari, but also the Supreme Lord Himself.

10. Persons lacking in the wisdom do not care to listen what is explicitly sung in the Vedas about the Supreme Lord—that he is the eternal principle permeating everything like the sky and is the beloved-most Indwelling soul in all embodied beings. They interpret the Vedas suitably as sanctioning their desires (for women, wine, etc.).

11. It is the natural tendency of creatures to indulge in sexual intercourse, and enjoy non-vegetarian food and wine. No injunction for these is necessary from the Veda. The Veda provides a check over this by allowing sexual intercourse with one's married wife (at the proper time of the period), eat meat at the end of a sacrifice and drink wine during the Sautrāmaṇi sacrifice (but never otherwise). The real intention of the Vedic injunctions (in these matters) is to make a person abstain from them.

12. The only object of wealth is to bear fruit, viz. *dharma*. It leads to spiritual knowledge and direct realization of the soul and supreme peace (*mokṣa*). But people utilise their wealth for the family or personal comfort and fail to take cognisance of the god of death, the formidable and inexorable enemy of their bodies.

13. The smelling of wine (in the *Sautrāmaṇi sacrifice*) is laid down as its intake (and no drinking of liquor is permitted); a beast is to be (symbolically) offered to the deities (by touching it) in sacrifices, but no killing for meat-eating is allowed; similarly, sexual intercourse (with one's wife) is to be indulged in for procreation but not for sexual enjoyment. But people do not understand this pure course of their own *dharma*.

14. But those wicked persons who do not know the real nature of *Dharma*, and being obstinate and haughty, consider themselves to be righteous and kill beasts without any remorse

and are reciprocally eaten by those very beasts in the next world in hell.

15. These godless people hate Lord Hari—their very indwelling self who abides in the bodies of others as well (as their Soul); and fixing their attachment to their mortal body and its relatives (wives, sons, etc.), they fall down deep into hell.

16. Those who have not grasped the correct knowledge of Reality and have crossed the stage of total ignorance (by possessing imperfect knowledge) regard themselves as non-momentary (permanent), and pursue the three objectives of human life (*Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*); such persons (who thus follow a suicidal path) ruin themselves.

17. Such people shrouding their Self in ignorance and with their desires unrequieted, mistake ignorance (i. e. *Karma*) for knowledge. Being thwarted in acheiving their objects and their hopes and wishes being frustrated by the Time-Spirit they ruin themselves (and suffer misery)[1].

18. Persons, averse to Lord Vāsudeva, are compelled against their will to abandon their household, children, friends and wealth (property) acquired by them with great efforts and are forced to enter into the dark hell (i.e. ignorance).

The King Nimi said :

19. Be pleased to explain to us now, in which ages (*yugas*) of what complexion and form and by what names is the Lord known and with what rites of worsnip he is worshipped by men.

Karabhājana replied :

20. In the ages Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, Lord Keśava assumes different forms, complexions and names and he is to be worshipped in different ways.

21. In the Kṛta age, the Lord is of fair (white) complexion, has four arms, wears matted locks of hair, is clad in bark-garments and deer-skin; he puts on a sacred thread and carries in his hands a rosary of Rudrākṣa, a staff and a water-jar of gourd.

1. *Asuryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasā" vṛtāḥ/*
tāṁs te pretyā'bhigacchanti ye ke cātmahano janāḥ // Īśa. Up.

22. Men of that Age are quiescent by nature; entertain no feeling of enmity, are friendly towards all and look upon all beings as equals. They worship the Deity with penance, meditation, control of mind and the senses.

23. The Lord is addressed with the epithets Haṁsa, Suparṇa, Vaikuṇṭha, Dharma, Lord of Yoga, Amala, Īśvara, Puruṣa Avyakta (the un-manifest) and Paramātman (the Supreme Soul), in that age.

24. In the age called Tretā, he the Lord is red in complexion, has four arms and wears a zone of three cords (round his waist indicating initiation), he has golden locks of hair. He, being the embodiment of sacrifice as described in the three Vedas, carries in his hand *sruk*, *sruvā* (ladles and spoons for offering oblations in the fire and other accessories for performing sacrifices.

25. In that age, righteous men who are the expounders of the Vedas, worship Lord Hari, the embodiment of gods, through (rites prescribed in) the three Vedas.

26. He is then called Viṣṇu, Yajña, Pṛśnigarbha (the son of Pṛśni, the wife of Prajāpati Sutapas), Sarva-deva, Urukrama, Vṛṣākapi, Jayanta and Urugāya.

27. In the Dvāpara age, the Lord is bluish (like the *atasi*-hemp-flower) in complexion. He wears yellow silken cloth and bears all his original arms (like Sudarśana discus, Kaumodakī mace and others). He is distinguished by his characteristic marks like Śrīvatsa (on his bosom).

28. In that age, people desirous of knowing the Supreme Brahman worship that Supreme Man characterised by the emblem of a sovereign emperor (white umbrella, chouries, etc.) with (the rites prescribed both in) the Vedas and Tantra texts.

29. Salutations to Vāsudeva, bow to Saṅkarṣaṇa; obeisance to Pradyumna and Aniruddha, to you O glorious Lord (in the four manifestations or *Vyūhas*).

30. Hail to the (perfect) sage Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme person, the All-pervading Lord, the Ruler of the Universe, the Indwelling Soul of all created beings.

31. It is in this manner, O Lord of the earth, that they extol the Ruler of the universe. Now listen to me how people worship him with rites prescribed in various Tantric Texts.

32. It is known to all that highly intelligent and discerning people, through sacrifices mostly consisting of chanting his name and extolling his glory, worship that Lord of dark complexion but brilliant (like Sapphire) in lustre. The Lord who is perfect in every limb, beautified with ornaments (like Kaustubha gem and others), equipped with his weapons and missiles (like the discus Sudarśana) and accompanied with his attendants (like Sunanda and others).

33. O Supreme Person ! Protector of the votaries (who bow to your feet), I salute your lotus-feet which are even worthy of being meditated upon, which end all the insults and insubordinations (suffered from the members of the family and one's own sense-organs), bestow all the desired objects, the resort of all sacred places, are praised by god Śiva and Brahmā, an asylum—worthy of taking refuge, annihilate the afflictions of your servants (devotees) and which is a boat for crossing the sea of *Saṁsāra*.

34. O the most religious-minded King (Nimi), I bow to the lotus-feet which, at the word of his father (Daśaratha), resigned his prosperous kingdom which was covetable even to gods and hence was very difficult to give up, and departed to the forest, and which gave chase to an illusory deer which was desired by his beloved (Sītā)—To those lotus-feet I bow, O exalted Person.

35. In this manner, O King, glorious Lord Hari, who confers all blessings, is worshipped under different names and forms appropriate to the Age (e g. Kṛta, Tretā) by men belonging to the particular Age.

36. Noble discerning persons who know the excellences and essentials, appreciate Kali Age in which all the desired ideals in human life are fully accomplished by merely singing the name and deeds of Hari.

37. To persons who are wandering in the cycle of *Saṁsāra* in this world, there is no higher gain than this[1] (glorification and singing the name and deeds of the Lord) ; for it is by

1. EK. Poetically explains how four types of *muktis* (liberation), viz. *salokatā*, *samīpatā*, *sarūpatā* and *sāyujyatā* are attained during the Kirtana (glorification of Hari's names and deeds)—EB 5.425-440.

virtue of it, that a person attains sublime serenity and the *Saṁsāra* in his case comes to an end.

38. Persons belonging to the ages like Kṛta and others (Tretā and Dvāpara) wish to be born in the Kali Age, O King. It is certainly in the Kali age alone that persons exclusively devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa will be born.

39-40. O great King ! such (exclusive devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa) will be born in some place here and there (in Kali age), but a majority of them will be born in the Dravidian lands wherein flow the rivers, the Tāmraparṇī, the Kṛta-mālā, the Payasvinī, the sacred-most Kāverī and the western Mahānadī. People who drink water from these rivers become pure in heart and generally turn into votaries of the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, O ruler of men.

41. (With the realisation that Lord Vāsudeva abides everywhere and hence) entertaining no notion of difference (*or* absolutely giving up all duties prescribed by *Śāstras*, he, who, with all his heart, seeks resort in Mukunda (Viṣṇu), the shelter of all beings, is under no obligations of gods, sages, creatures, relatives and people, nor is he the servant of any of these. (Hence the performance of the *pañca-mahāyajñas* which is obligatory for all according to *Śāstras*, is not applicable to him. He is above the prescriptions and interdictions of the *Śāstras*).

42. (A devotee stands in no need of expiation for the non-observance of the prescriptions of *Dharma*). As Lord Hari, the Supreme Ruler, abides in the heart of his devotee who sought shelter at his feet, giving up attachment to his body, etc., (and is not propitiating any other god), the devotee (does not go astray but) if perchance, he commits any sin (due to the force of previous *karma*), Lord Hari absolves him of all sins.

Nārada said :

43. Thus having listened to the exposition of the course of duties meant for the devotees of the glorious Lord, Nimi, the king of Mithilā, became highly delighted. Accompanied by his family priest, he duly worshipped the nine sages, the sons of Jayantī.

44. Thereupon, immediately all the *Siddhas* vanished while all people remained merely looking on. The king also

practised the duties (the *Bhāgavata* way of propitiating the Lord) and attained to the highest state (viz. *Mokṣa*).

45. O highly fortunate Vasudeva ! If entertaining no attachment and with devout faith, you follow the *Bhāgavata* course of conduct, you also will reach the highest goal.

46. The whole world is filled with the fame of you both (Vasudeva and your queen Devakī) as the Supreme Lord Hari is pleased to accept you as his parents (lit. is pleased to be your son).

47. Your soul has been already purified by cherishing parental affection to Kṛṣṇa (as your son) by his sight, embrace, conversation as also by sleeping and sitting with him and by feeding him.

48. If inimical Kings like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍra, Śālva and others brooded over him with hatred (all the while) while sleeping, sitting, etc. and had their mind transformed, as it was deeply impressed with his gait, graceful activities, glances, etc. and could attain to the semblance of his personality (the *Sarūpatā* type of liberation), what need be said of those whose mind is deeply attached to him.

49. You should not entertain the notion that Lord Kṛsṇa is your child; for he is the Supreme Ruler, the soul abiding in all beings, the immutable transcendence who has concealed his Supreme nature by assuming a human form, by the dint of his Māyā potency.

50. In order to annihilate the demonic Kṣattriyas who, being veritable Asuras, were a burden to the earth and for the protection of the good and for conferring liberation from *Saṁsāra* on them, Lord Kṛṣṇa has descended on the earth, and his glory spreads all over the universe.

Śrī Śuka said :

51. Having listened to this, the highly fortunate Vasudeva and the blessed-most Devakī were extremely astonished and the infatuation (of parental affection to Kṛṣṇa) was dissipated (from their mind).

52. Whoever with a concentrated mind understands and retains in memory the sacred account (of the discourses of nine Siddhaṣ) will shake off the illusion (of *Saṁsāra*) here and become eligible to attain the Brahma-hood.

CHAPTER SIX

Lord Kṛṣṇa Requested to return to Vaikuṇṭha : Uddhava's Desire to follow him

Śrī Śuka resumed :

1. Then after the departure of Nārada who discoursed with Vasudeva about the spiritual love discussed in previous chapters), god Brahmā accompanied with his (mind-born) sons (like Sanaka, Sanandana and others), gods (such as Indra), and Lords of creation (e.g. Marīci and others) approached Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā. And god Śiva who blesses all beings with happiness or the Lord of the past and the future creation, also came there, surrounded by hosts of goblins.

2-4. The divine Lord Indra with Maruts (the forty-nine wind-gods), the (twelve) sun-gods, (eight) Vasus, two Aśvini-Kumāras (divine physicians), Ṛbhus, Aṅgirās, (eleven) Rudras, (the group of ten deities known as) Viśve-devas, the Sādhyas and other divinities, Gandharvas (celestial musicians), Apsarās (divine damsels and dancers), Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇ-as, Yakṣas, Sages, Manes, or human ancestors, along with Vidyādharas and Kinnaras—all arrived together at Dvārakā with a desire to see Lord Kṛṣṇa—Kṛṣṇa who, by his attractive personality, fascinated the minds of all human beings, and spread all over the worlds his glory which washes off the sins of all people.

5. In that city brilliant with the splendour of abounding prosperity and affluence, they, with unsatiated eyes, gazed at the wonderful form of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

6. They covered the foremost of Yadus (i.e. Lord Kṛṣṇa) with (garlands of) flowers available only in the celestial garden (like Nandana) and eulogised that Lord of the universe, with hymns couched in charming words conveying wonderful thoughts (arranged as in rhetorics).

Gods praised :

7. With our reasoning faculty, cognitive and conative senses, our vital principle (activitating our bodies), mind and

speech, we lay ourselves prostrate O Lord, at your lotus feet[1] which are contemplated upon within their hearts by those who are full of devotion unto you and wish to extricate themselves from the complicated strong noose (net) of *Karmas*. But we are wonderfully lucky on visualizing you directly while bowing, for the meditators can merely contemplate without seeing you.

8. Stationed (as a controller) in the three *guṇas* (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*), you create, protect and destroy this manifest, incomprehensible universe within yourself through your Māyā power consisting of its three *guṇas*. But, O invincible Lord, you are not at all affected by any of these acts (mentioned above). For you are absolutely free from attachment and other defects and are completely absorbed in your obvious eternal, essential bliss.

9. O praise-worthy Lord ! The purification of the minds of persons with evil propensities (like sensualism, etc.) does not effectively take place to that extent, through worship, learning, Vedic studies, charitable gifts, penance and other ritualistic acts (prescribed in *Śāstras*) as that brought about in the minds of persons with *sāttvika* nature, through the ever-increasing pure faith and devotion engendered by listening to your glory, O Supreme Lord.

10. May your feet be like a fire to burn down our inauspicious and evil inclinations (to enjoy worldly pleasures,)—your feet which are born (i.e. contemplated) by sages in their hearts moistened (with devotion), for the sake of the *summum bonum* (or *Mokṣa*), which are worshipped by your devotees in Your (four) manifestations (viz Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha) for the attainment of glory similar to you which, the self-possessed and intelligent ones (out of your votaries) worship three time a day[2], with a desire to transcend the

1. ŚR quotes a traditional verse which gives a different list of the eight parts of the body in prostration *sāṣṭāṅga namaskāra*) They are : feet, hands, knees, chest, head, sight, mind and speech. The verse is as follows :

dorbhyām padābhyām jānubhyām urasā śirasā dṛśā /
manasā vacasā ceti praṇāmā'ṣṭāṅga iritaḥ//

2. *Savanaśaḥ* (Literally) : According to the time when the *soma* juice is extracted out of the *Soma* plant in a sacrifice, which is done three times a day, viz. in the morning, at noon and in the evening.

Svarga (and attain directly *Vaikuṇṭha* which is beyond the region called *Svarga*).

11. (Your feet)—which are contemplated upon, O Lord, by sacrificers taking in their palms purified and controlled (by Śāstric injunctions), the oblation according to the procedure laid down in the three Vedas, for offering them into the sacrificial fire[1] and which are meditated upon by Yogins in their Yogic practice with a view to comprehending your Māyā (the bestower of super-human mystic powers) and thereby aspiring to possess those powers[2], and which are worshipped every-where (and at all times) by the highest type of your votaries (who are free from all desires), for the sake of liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

12. O Lord ! May your feet ever act as a fire burning down all evil propensities in our hearts—your feet which accept with pleasure, as duly offered, articles of worship, the faded garlands of forest flowers (offered by your devotees) with which even this glorious goddess Lakṣmī envies like a rival co-wife.

13. O glorious Lord ! May your feet purify all the sins of us, your votaries—your feet, O perfect and almighty Lord, which (at the time of ousting Bali from his kingdom) covered the universe in three strides but which (in the second stride) reached Satyaloka, whence it shone as the topmost flag of which the river Gaṅgā flowing over the three worlds, became a threefold streamer; which struck terror and assured from

1. ŚR raises the objection that in a sacrifice the deity (e.g. Indra) to whom the oblation is to be offered, is to be contemplated by pronouncing the word *Vaṣaṭ* and not the Lord, and answers that whatever deity is thus contemplated, it is the Lord of the sacrifice who is ultimately meditated, though the deity to whom oblation is so offered be Indra or Varuṇa, etc.

EK. separates the Yogis from the seekers of Siddhis. According to EK. (1) sacrificers, (2) Yogis, (3) Seekers of the nature of the Māyā and (4) the highest types of desire-less votaries meditate upon the Lord's feet. These votaries realize that the Lord is every-where, hence they worship him so.

—*EB* : 6.122-137.

2. Out of six categories of the servants of the Lord, viz. sages, Sātvatas, *Ātma-vids* (Seekers after the Self), sacrificers, Yogis and the highest votaries, the last type of devotees are more beloved of the Lord than even goddess Lakṣmi—ŚR.

fear the armies of Asuras and gods respectively and which leads the righteous to the heaven and the wicked to the hell.

14.* May the feet of the Supreme Person (Puruṣottama) enhance our happiness—Puruṣottama under whose control as the Time-Spirit, all embodied beings like god Brahmā and others who are harassing each other (by warfare, etc.) obey like bulls controlled by the nose-string (perforated through their nose) and (you) who are transcendent to both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*.

15. You are the Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*) the ultimate cause of the emergence, continuance, and disappearance of this universe. The Śrutis call you, the Time-Spirit, as the controller and destroyer of *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and the *Mahat* (principle of cosmic intelligence). As time (counted by a year of twelve months), you possess three navels (three four-monthly periods of the Summer, the rainy season and the winter) and with inexorable yet imperceptible speed, you are engaged in finishing with all.[1]

16.** Having derived seminal power from you, the *Puruṣa* (*Īśvara*) of unfailing energy deposits with Māyā the principle called *Mahat* like a child in the womb, that Mahat, being endowed with that seminal force creates out of itself this golden egg (universe) with its (seven external) sheaths[2] enveloping it.

17. O Lord of sense-organs! Inasmuch as you are not attached even while enjoying the objects of senses evolved by

* VJ. takes the presiding deities of the senses which cause pleasure or pain as the 'gods' who are under the control of Hari's feet. The nose-string is the span of life of hundred years The Lord has no attachment to these embodied beings. The almighty Time-Spirit is superior to *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*.

1. Cf. *asmāt kṣaram atīto'ham*
akṣarād api cottamaḥ/
ato'smi loke Vede ca prathitaḥ Puruṣottamaḥ//

—*BG*, 15.18

**. VJ. gives a Purāṇic turn to this process of evolution as follows : Pradhāna=Lakṣmi, Mahat=the four-faced god Brahmā, Śeṣa=Ahaṁkāra. But the explanation is complicated : *Parabrahman* or Nārāyaṇa sported with Lakṣmi during *mahā-pralaya*, brought forth Puruṣa who infused his energy into Lakṣmi (*Pradhāna*) and the four-faced god called Puruṣa and Gāyatrī called Pradhāna are created and Gāyatrī called *Śraddhā* through Gāyatrī known as Pradhāna".

2. The Sheaths are : the five gross elements, the mind and ego.

the modification of the *guṇas*—the attributes of your Māyā, you are, therefore, the sovereign Lord of the mobile and immobile creations, while other *jivas* (or even Yogins) are afraid of (i.e. are bound by longing for) the objects of enjoyment they have renounced or do not exist.

18. You are unattached to the sense-objects for with all their seductive charms (like arrows of the god of Love) and other erotic ways of effectively conveying the messages of love communicated by their arched eyebrows expressing their heart-felt love and through their smiles and side-glances, your sixteen thousand wives were not able to affect or agitate your mind.

19. The streams of nectar in the form of your sweet stories and rivers like the Gaṅgā that flow forth washing your feet—both are capable of deterging all the sins of the three worlds. Your votaries who abide by the pure duties prescribed for their stage of life and class in the society partake of both kinds of *Tirthas* (holy waters)—one in the form of your glories extolled in the Vedas and the other the water of the Gaṅgā flowing forth from your feet—the former, by means of their ears and the latter, with their bodies.

20. God Brahmā, the performer of a hundred sacrifices, accompanied by god Śiva and other celestials eulogized Lord Hari (in a hymn) and standing up in the sky (all the while) bowed to Kṛṣṇa and submitted the following prayer.

Brahmā said :

21. O Lord ! You were formerly entreated by us to relieve the earth of her burden; that has been accomplished by you according to our prayer; O Indwelling Soul of all.

22. The righteous course of life has been firmly established by you among the pious people who are pledged to the truth. Your glory which washes off the sins of all the world, has been diffused in all directions.

23. Incarnating yourself in the race of Yadu, and assuming excellent-most charming form, you have performed deeds of extra-ordinary powers for the good of the world.

24. O controller of the World ! Those righteous people who, in the Kali age, listen to and extol your (sportive) deeds, will easily cross the darkness (of *Saṁsāra*).

25. O Supreme Person, hundred and twenty five Autumns (years) have elapsed since your worship appeared in the family line of Yadu, O Lord.

26. O Support of the universe ! No work that was to be achieved for the sake of gods, has remained unaccomplished. As to your race, it is as good as extinct through the curse of Brāhmaṇas.

27. If you are pleased to approve of it, be pleased to reenter your own supreme abode and protect us, your servants along with all the worlds and their guardian deities (by blessing us with a visit to our region and accepting worship from us).

The Veṅkaṭeśvara edition adds

Śrī Śuka said :

27-A. The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who was thus praised by gods like Brahmā and others, the Lord who assumed a human form through his Māyā, approved of their prayer and rep ied to them, O King.

The Lord replied :

28. I have already determined whatever you have spoken to me, O Chief of Gods. All of your work has been accomplished and the burden of the earth has been lightened.

29. That this clan of Yādavas, grown insolent by their prowess, valour (required for defence and aggression in battle) and affluence, is desirous of subjugating the whole world, but like unto the shore keeping in check (the flow-tide of) the ocean, I have controlled them.[1]

30. If I depart from the earth without destroying this enormous clan of power-drunk, insolent Yadus, the whole world shall be destroyed by this surging tide of Yadus which has crossed its limits.

31. The process of annihilation of the Yādava family

1. VJ : Yādavas....are desirous of returning to celestial region (Yādavas were the gods who descended in the Yādava race to help God achieve His purpose. They are naturally eager to return to their own region). (But this interpretation is not consistent with the next verse).

has been already set in motion by the curse of Brāhmaṇas. It is after the complete destruction of this race that I shall visit your region (*en route* to Vaikuṇṭha). O sinless Brahmadeva.

Śrī Śuka resumed :

32. Thus, addressed by Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe, the self-born god Brahmā paid obeisance to him and returned to his region along with the hosts of gods.

33. Then, noticing that serious evil omens were appearing over the city of Dvārakā, the Lord advised the elderly Yadus who had assembled there.

The glorious Lord said :

34. These extremely ominous portents are verily appearing on all sides; and an imprecation from Brāhmaṇas which is very difficult to avert, has now been pronounced against our race.

35. Hence, it is not desirable to stay any longer here, if we wish to remain alive, O elderly Yādavas. Let us start just today to go to the highly sacred place Prabhāsa. Please do not delay any further.[1]

36. It was at Prabhāsa, that the moon god who, under the curse of Dakṣa, was affected with consumption, but was immediately cured of the disease by performing ablutions in the sacred waters thereof, regained the waxing of his digits.

37-38. Let us perform ablutions in the sacred waters thereof (at Prabhāsa) and please our manes (ancestors) and gods by offering libation of water. Let us also feed worthy Brāhmaṇas with dainty, tasteful food and devoutly donate valuable gifts to deserving persons. It will be by virtue of our precious charitable gifts that we shall cross over (i.e. be absolved of) all our sins, as people cross the sea with the help of boats.

1. ŚR explains that Yādavas who were *aṁśas* of Devas were not eligible immediately to attain *Mokṣa*. Had they died at Dvārakā, they would have straight-way attained *Mokṣa* like the flight of bird. Hence Kṛṣṇa led them to Prabhāsa whereafter death, they would attain immediate prosperity and gradually attain Liberation in due course.

Śri Śuka said :

39. Directed by the Lord in this way, O delight of your family, the Yādavas made up their minds to shift to that sacred place and began to get ready their chariots.

40-41. O King, observing these (preparations of Yādavas) and having heard the advice given by the Lord, and noticing the terrible portents, Uddhava, who was earnestly devoted to and waiting upon Lord Kṛṣṇa, approached him in a secluded place (i.e. when he was alone). He bowed at the feet of the Lord of the rulers of the world, with his head and with folded palms, he submitted to Kṛṣṇa as follows :

42. "O Supreme Ruler of gods, O Master of yoga, O Lord of hallowing glory, I believe that your lordship means to depart from this world after exterminating this Yādava race, inasmuch as, you, though competent to do so, did not counteract the curse of Brāhmaṇas.

43. O Keśava, I cannot bear separation from you even for half a moment. Hence, O Lord, take me also with you to your region.

44. Your sportive acts, O Kṛṣṇa, which are highly auspicious to people, are sweet like nectar to the ear after tasting which once, people cease to have any other craving for wealth, wives, children.

45. How can we, your devotees who have attended upon you while you were in bed, were sitting, wandering, staying at home, bathing, playing or having your meal, live without you (*lit.* abandon you) who are our very soul. (We shall not be able to bear separation from you).

46. (It is not through the fear of Māyā that we pray you thus. We, your slaves, who adorn ourselves with garlands, scents, garments and ornaments enjoyed and given up by you and ate the remnants of your food, shall certainly overcome your Māyā.

47. Sages who subsist on air,[1] who exert themselves in penance and observe strict celibacy for life, become tranquil, sinless renouncers of worldly life and attain to your abode called Brahman.

1. v.l. *Vāta-raśanāḥ*—who are sky-clad i.e. naked.

48-49. But we, O great yogin, who wander in this world through the paths of Karma will cross over the impassable darkness (of *Saṁsāra*) by conversing with fellow-devotees about you, remembering and glorifying your acts, speech, movements, smiles, glances and jokes and whatever you did to carry out your role as a human being."

50. When thus implored (by Uddhava) O king Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Son of Devakī addressed his exclusively devoted servant[1] and beloved devotee Uddhava as follows :

CHAPTER SEVEN

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Spiritual Guidance to Uddhava : The Legend of the Avadhūta and his Preceptors

The Lord replied :

1. O highly blessed Uddhava ! What you have spoken to me (about my future plans (*Supra* 6.42) has been decided by me (to execute). God Brahmā, Śiva and guardians of the spheres eagerly desire my (return and) stay in heaven (i.e. Vaikuṇṭha).

2. The mission—the work of gods—for which I incarnated along with a ray of mine (my *aṁśa*—Balarāma) on the earth in response to the prayer of Brahmā, has been completely accomplished by me.

3. The clan (of Yādavas), already consumed as it is by the imprecation (of the Brāhmaṇas) will surely be exterminated by mutual infighting and the sea will overflow and submerge this city on the seventh day (when I am no more here).

1. EK : Uddhava was such a beloved servant of Kṛṣṇa that he had access to him when Kṛṣṇa's nearest and dearest relatives, his chief queen Rukmiṇi, his parents, sons like Pradyumna were not allowed to see him and Kṛṣṇa used to give his choicest gifts to Uddhava.

—*EB*.6.404-411

4. As soon as I leave this world, it will, before long, lose all its auspiciousness, as it will be overcome by Kali (the Dark Age), O pious one.

5. You should not live here any longer when I have withdrawn myself from this world; for in this Kali Age men will be more interested in unrighteous ways.

6. You also should give up all attachment and friendship with your kith and kin and concentrating your mind on me firmly, you wander over the earth looking upon all with impartiality.

7. Whatever is perceived by mind, speech, eyes, ears (and other cognitive and conative senses), know that that is a product of Māyā and mind and that it is transient.

8.* The notion of difference or diversity is the misapprehension of a distracted and unrestrained mind. It results in good and evil consequences. (It may be argued that by its enjoining of injunctions and interdictions, the Veda supports the notion of difference. But that is not correct). The distinc-

* (i) EK. A person who forgets the identity of his Soul with the Supreme Soul conceives the misapprehension of diversity and develops the notion of good and evil. This notion leads to the triad of *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma*. All physical, verbal and mental activities are *karma*. The act when performed (without attachment) leaves no 'seed' (the effect or fruit of the *karma*). Such a 'seedless' act is *Akarma*. The act which is done irrespective of its prescriptive or prohibitive nature is *Vikarma*. As the *jīva* is born out of *Avidyā* all his acts are due to and full of *Avidyā* (EB.7.57-71.)

(ii) VR. : (The gist only) The *Paramātman* is one and all other entities form a part of his body and are controlled by him. To regard independence of entities is misapprehension. A person with such misapprehension experiences pleasure, pain, etc.

Karma=The prescribed act (both of daily routine and occasional).

Akarma=a prohibited act.

Vikarma=an act giving various fruits (*vividha-phalāya Codituṁ Kāmyaṁ Karma*).

A person with the notions of good and evil is disturbed with the thought of *Karmas* and their consequences.

(iii) The notion of one's own agency of acts irrespective and independent of God creates good and evil and the snare of *saṁsāra*; one who knows that the God is the real agent or doer, is liberated. Due to *Rajas* and *Tamas*, the mind is confused with *karma*, *akarma*, etc.—VJ.

tion between the prescribed act, its non-commission and prohibited action is meant for the guidance of those who possess the misapprehension of good and evil (The Veda is for the guidance of those who are affected with *avidyā*).

9. Therefore, controlling all your sense-organs and concentrating your mind (on me, train yourself to) visualize all this vast universe within your own self and to see that your own soul in (i.e. identical with) Me, the *Brahman* (The identity of the *Brahman* and the Soul explains the latter's capacity to pervade or contain within itself the whole universe).

10. Being well-equipped with the knowledge (of the essential teachings) of the Vedas and the Self-realization (of those teachings) and the realization of the identity of your soul with the (souls of) all embodied beings, you become stated with the (Supreme) bliss of self-realization and you shall experience no obstacles (from gods, etc.)[1]

11. He who is above the sense of good and evil is like an innocent child. He does not desist from a prohibited act with the consciousness of its being evil (but due to his previous hallowed impressions—good *saṁskāras* that he abstains from doing an evil act). Nor does he perform a prescribed act with the desire of deriving its good fruit (but his pious *saṁskāras* lead him to do so. Hence, there is no danger of such person becoming way-ward).

12. He is a friend and well-wisher of all beings, tranquil in mind, possessed of firm knowledge (of *Vedānta*) and its realization. He looks upon the Universe as identical with me. Verily he is never involved in the miseries of *saṁsāra*.

Śri Śuka said :

13. Uddhava, the great devotee of the Lord, who was thus instructed by the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, became eager to

1. ŚR. One should perform the prescribed *karmas* till self-realization after which gods, etc. shall not dare trouble you for the non-performance of *karmas*.

Cf. *tasya ha na devās' ca nābhūtya īśate /*
ātmā hi eva eṣāṁ sa bhavati//

—*Bṛhad. Up.* 1.4.10

know the truth. He prostrated himself before Acyuta (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and submitted as follows:

Uddhava said :

14. O Lord (bestower of the fruit) of Yoga, O ultimate secret treasure of the knowers of Yoga or the abode of Yoga, O embodiment of Yoga O the source (the first propounder) of Yoga[1], renunciation without any expectation in return (which is the characteristic of *sannyāsins*) has been taught to me by you for my Final Beatitude (or *Mokṣa*).

15. But I think that such renunciation of desires is very difficult to practise, O Perfect Lord, for those whose minds are addicted to sense-objects (of pleasure)—nay it is all the more difficult—(practically) impossible—by those who are not your devotees, O the Indwelling Soul of all beings.

16. O Lord, I am ignorant. My mind is deluded with the notion of 'I-ness' (my identity with my body) and 'mine-ness' (the notion that all my wife, children, property, etc. are mine) created by your Māyā. Hence, O Lord, instruct (this servant of yours in such a way as he (I) can practise it and attain that (degree of) renunciation propounded by you.

17. I do not see even among gods who can expound to me the nature of the Soul except You who are self-illumined (all-knowing) *Ātman* and the only Reality. All the embodied gods like Brahmā and others have their minds deluded by Māyā and look upon external objects as the only reality.

17A*.

18. Being schorched by miseries in life, my mind had

1. Uddhava gave these epithets to Śrī Kṛṣṇa to imply that your above-mentioned teaching is meant for Yogis and *sannyāsins*, but what about your ignorant devotees like me who are not competent to practise it—ŚR.

* VR. adds : (Their minds are deluded by Māyā which is not removed by mere reasoning and argument of those who make enquiries about it, unless they associate themselves with the Lord's devotees who have the experience (of bliss) of the lotus-feet of the Lord. Such association is possible even to those who lead a householder's life and have undergone three types of miseries and their burden of sins being thus lightened, they are less inclined to sensual pleasures (*tāpa-trayā' bhi-taptānām. . . . .nṛṇāṁ khalu sat-saṅgamaḥ syāt natu viṣaya-lālasānām*).

become dissociated with the world[1]. I, therefore, seek asylum with you, O Nārāyaṇa, the friend of all living beings, who are the Omniscient Supreme Lord abiding in the eternal, time-less, Vaikuṇṭha and who are devoid of all defects, infinite in time and space (transcending them both).

The Lord said :

19. It is well known that persons who investigate with themselves (even without the guidance of a spiritual preceptor) the true nature of the world, lift themselves by self-effort and become free from longings for worldly pleasures.

20. The *Ātman* (Soul) is the real preceptor and guide of oneself, especially in the case of human beings; for he can arrive at what is his own good by (rational logical reasoning using the tools of knowledge like) direct perception and inference.

21. It is in human life that people of mature judgement who are experts in the Paths of Knowledge. (*Sāṅkhya*) and Yoga, realize me quite distinctly as being endowed with all powers.

22. Many (categories of) bodies with one foot, two feet, three feet, four feet, multiple-footed and foot-less have been created by me. Out of them the human body is the dearest to me.

23. In this human body those who are alert and vigilant, directly endeavour to find me, the Supreme Ruler who cannot be ascertained by means of the qualities or attributes (of *jīva* such as intelligence) which are themselves within the range of perception or by inference[2] (based on inferable evidence).

24. As an illustration on this subject, they narrate the

1. v. l. *nirviṇṇadhīriha muhuḥ*—I who am every now and then scorched, etc.

VJ. reads *aharahaḥ* for *nirviṇṇadhīriha muhu* in ŚR. It means 'everyday I am being scorched, etc.' Both the v.l.s are good emendations for *ahamu ha*.

2. ŚR. cautions that Ātmā should not be regarded as inferable. By inference we know that *Ātmā* is distinct from tangible objects like the body and from inferable objects as well. By inference we can understand *Ātmā*'s distinctness from the body, attributelessness and pure nature.

following ancient legend of a conversation between a recluse who had realized Brahman and was of immeasurable splendour and king Yadu (of immense power and intellectual brilliance)

25. On seeing a certain youthful, Brāhmaṇa ascetic[1]. a knower of Brahman full of (spiritual) wisdom wandering fearlessly, king Yadu, an expert in *Dharma* put to him the following question:

Yadu said :

26. Whence did you, though (apparently) inactive, come to possess such extraordinary penetrating intelligence and wisdom (in so youthful a stage), endowed with which and enlightened (in the nature of *Brahman*) you roam about in this world like a child.

27. Generally men try to attain religious merit, wealth and enjoyment. They evince desire to know the nature of the Soul but they are motivated with a desire for longevity, fame and fortune.

28. You are physically capable (able-bodied), wise, skilful and alert, good-looking, nectarlike sweet in speech (and none of the factors which cause indifference or incapability in active life like weakness, ignorance, want of skill or ugliness are found in You). Still you behave as if you are a dunce, lunatic or as one haunted by a ghost.

29. While people are burnt with the forest conflagration in the form of passions, and covetousness, you are not even touched by that fire and stand immune like an elephant immersed in the waters of the Gaṅgā (and hence untouched by a forest-fire).

30. Be pleased to explain to us who are making this enquiry seriously, the cause of your blissfulness in your own self, even though you are devoid of objects of pleasure and are leading a single (unmarried life), O knower of *Brahman*.

1. VD. & RR identify him with the sage Dattātreya on the strength of *Supra* 11.7.4 :

yogardhim āpur abhayīṁ Yadu-Haihayādyaḥ|

Avadhūta—a philosopher (*Brahma-vid*).

Monier Williams—*SK. Dictionary*, p.100.

The glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa said :

31. When respectfully questioned thus by the highly intelligent Yadu who was friendly to Brāhmaṇas, the blessed Brāhmaṇa sage, duly honoured, explained to Yadu as he stood bowing to him in modesty.

The Brāhmaṇa (Dattātreya) explained :

32. Many are my preceptors whom I have selected (and accepted) through my own judgement, O King. Please listen to the names of those preceptors from (each of) whom I assimilated (some specific) wisdom and I wander all over the world free (from worldly troubles).

33-35. The earth, the air, the ether, water, fire, the moon, the sun, the pigeon, the boa-constrictor, the sea, the moth, the bee, the elephant, the honey-gatherer, the deer, the fish, the courtesan Piṅgalā, the osprey, the child, the maiden, the blacksmith, the serpent, the spider and the wasp—these twentyfour have been adopted as teachers by me. It is from their special ways of behaviour that I imbibed whatever lessons were useful to me in life.

36. I shall explain to you fully what lessons I picked up from each preceptor, O son of Nahuṣa. Please do understand them, O tiger among men.

37. From the earth, I learnt the vow (of firmness and forbearance) to remain undisturbed even when trodden over (and mal-treated) by other beings. With the full knowledge that they (these oppressors) are working under the influence and will of the Providence, a strongminded wise person should not deviate from his path of duty (*dharma*).

38. As a disciple of the mountain (which is a part of the earth and the products from which such as trees, grass, water-currents are meant for the use of others) a righteous person should learn to resign all his activities for the good of other beings. And also as a pupil of the tree (which is another part of the earth and which allows itself to be cut, uprooted and transplanted at the will of others), he should learn that he is meant for others and be useful according to their will.

39. Just as the wind in the form of the life-breath (expects food and water for subsistence and not form, taste and

other objects of senses), a sage should be satisfied with bare necessities of subsistence and not crave for objects of sense-pleasure. He should however manage to take in that much (which may not result in starvation) which (if not taken) would cloud his mental faculty and obscure his knowledge; nor should he get his mind and speech distracted (by the desire for sense-objects).

40. Just as the wind is unattached (to the natural beauty or the burning of the forest), a *yogi*, though participating in the surrounding objects of senses of various characteristics (such as hot, cold, sweet and others), should keep his mind aloof and unattached from the excellences and defects of these sense-objects.

41. Just as the wind, though a carrier of scents and odours (which are due to the particles of the earth wafted by it), is distinct from the smell, a *yogi* should bear in mind that though he has entered the earthly bodies and (is the basis of and hence) appears to possess their characteristics (such as childhood, youth, fatness, slimness, etc.), and have his sight (mind) fixed on his self which is distinct from the body and its attributes.

42. A contemplative sage should comprehend that his soul though invested with the physical body, is identical with *Brahman* and as such interpenetrates and permeates all mobile or immobile creation—all-pervading yet unconnected like the sky[1], (which is unlimited and untouched by other objects).

43. Just as the sky is not touched by the clouds tossed about by the wind, the Person (Soul) is not affected by the products of the Time-spirit and by things such as fire, water and food.

44. Water in a holy spot is by nature pure, smooth, soft and sweet and purifying by sight, touch and chanting of its name. Similarly, a sage should become a friend of men and make them pure (by absolving them from sins). (The *Avadhūta* learnt this from water).

45. The *Avadhūta* learnt from the fire to be Brilliant

1. VJ.'s v.l. *nabhovat vitatasya*—'all-pervading like the sky' is better than ŚR.'s *nabhastvaṁ vitatasya*.

(with his spiritual knowledge), aflame (as his supreme knowledge is enhanced and made brighter like a flaming fire), formidable (as the sage remains unperturbed even under stress), with his belly as his vessel (for keeping food i.e. completely devoid of all belongings). Like fire, a self-controlled *yogi* does not take in what is impure, though he may accept anything and everything offered to him.

46. Like the fire (sometimes lying hidden in the fuel or ashes), the sage remains unnoticed (among common men); sometimes (like a fire ablaze) he becomes known to others and is worshipped by the seekers of spiritual good. (Just as the fire consumes only what is offered as oblation in sacrifices) the sage eats whatever is offered by pious donors and burns down the sins committed by them in the past and the future.

47. Just as the fire assumes the shape and size of the fuel (e.g. a log of wood, etc.) in which it abides, the all-pervading Lord-*Ātman*—(though unrelated to the body) appears to possess that size and shape of the bodies whether high or low (like that of gods and sub-human beings) in which he has entered, after creating it through his Māyā.

48. The six stages beginning with birth and ending with death, which are brought about by the Time-spirit of unmanifest course, belong to the body and not to the Soul, just as the appearance and disappearance of the digits of the moon are caused by the Time to the digits of the moon and not to the moon itself.

49. The births and deaths of bodies though eternally taking place due to the inexorable force of Time flowing like a rushing torrent, do not affect the Soul, just as there is a beginning and end to the flames of fire and not to the Fire itself.

50. Just as the sun evaporates the water with its rays and is not affected (either by sucking up water or showering it as rain), a *yogi* enjoys the objects of senses with his senses or rejects them according to the (exigencies of) time, but he is in no way attached to those objects.

51. To those who regard the gross, physical body as the *Ātman*, the *Ātman* though essentially one, is regarded as different due to the different bodies wherein he abides, just as

the Sun, though one, but when reflected in different reflecting media, appears as many (and different) to persons of gross understanding (the Ātman though one appears as many and different, due to its limiting conditions (*upādhis*).

52. Excessive attachment or over-association with anyone should never be contracted by a person If he does so, he will come to grief like the dull-witted he-pigeon (in the following legend).

53. A certain dove built a nest on a tree, in a certain forest. He lived with his mate, a female dove, for some years.

54. Their hearts tied together with the bonds of love, the pair of pigeons led a conjugal life binding together each other's eyes with eyes, body with body and heart with heart.

55. It was in the mutual company that they slept, ate, flew about, stood, chatted, sported together and fearlessly wandered in the rows of forest trees

56. The female dove satisfied his conjugal desires and was (reciprocally) treated with sympathetic affection by him. The dove, being of uncontrolled senses, procured for her whatever she desired, irrespective of the strain involved in obtaining it.

57. At the proper period, the female dove conceived for the first time, and laid down the eggs in the nest, in the presence of her mate.

58. In due time, by the inconceivable powers of the Lord, well-formed fledgelings with delicate body covered with soft down, were (by natural process) born out of the eggs.

59. The pair of parent birds who were so affectionate to their off-spring nourished their young ones and felt happy as they heard their chirping and sweet indistinct warbling.

60. The parents were greatly rejoiced at the soft touch of their wings, charming movements, sweet cooings and their approaching to meet them.

61. Deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā potency, the hearts of those dull-witted birds were closely knit together by love and they reared their young ones (with anxious care).

62. On one occasion, the pair of parent-birds went out into the forest in search of food for their young ones. They wandered for a long time into the jungle.

63. By fateful chance, a fowler who went about in the forest, happened to see those young birds. He spread out his net and caught them, as they moved about their nest.

64. Both the male and female doves were always anxious to nourish their little ones, and they had gone out (in search of food) and returned when they gathered some.

65. Seeing that her young ones are caught in the net and crying, the female dove was overwhelmed with grief and rushed at them screaming.

66. Ensnared in the bonds of ever-increasing affection through the deluding Potency of the Lord, the mother-dove who saw her young ones caught in the net was bewildered and forgot herself, and was herself entangled therein.

67. Seeing his own young ones dearer to him than his own life and his own life-mate dear to him as his own self also caught up, the male dove was deeply distressed and bewailed sorrowfully :

68. "Alas ! Look at the calamity that has befallen me of scant merit and evil mind. I have been still unsatiated and have not accomplished any object in life. But my household life which is the source of three objects of life (*puruṣārthas*) is ruined.

69. My mate who was a match for me in all respects and agreeable in everything, looked upon her husband (me) as a deity. But (now) abandoning me in a desolate house, she is going to heaven with her good children.

70. Such as I am, bereaved of my wife and children, what interest have I to lead the miserable life of a helpless widower, in a deserted house?"

71. Even though he saw them (his mate and young ones) entangled in that net and struggling for life in the clutches of death, the poor, thoughtless dove flung himself in the snare.

72. Having caught the householder-dove, his female mate and young ones, the ruthless fowler was accomplished of his purpose and returned home.

73. In the same way, a householder of poor sense takes delight in conjugal life and with his mind perturbed, goes to

ruin along with the family (kith and kin) while trying to maintain it like the bird-dove in the above legend.

74. Birth in the human life is like an open gate to Liberation from Saṁsāra. He who, having obtained such a birth as a human being, is still attached to the life of a householder, is regarded by the wise as a person fallen from eminence to which he has climbed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

What the Avadhūta learnt from the Nine Preceptors from the Boa-Constrictor to Piṅgalā

The Brāhmaṇa continued :

1. Pleasure as well as pain engendered by the senses may be experienced in the celestial and internal regions by all embodied beings. A wise man, therefore, should not hanker after them, O King.

2. Like a boa-constrictor lying without any effort or activity, a sage should subsist himself on whatever food (providentially) comes to him (without any effort), irrespective of its taste (whether extremely delicious or distasteful) or of the quantity obtained (whether much or little).

3. If no food comes to the lot of a sage who vows to live only on the food that Providence sends to him, he should not exert for it, but like his (preceptor)—huge serpent, should lie down for days together without food but should not strive for it.

4. Though endowed with a body full of physical strength, mental energy and soundness of sense-organs, the sage should lie down remaining actionless yet sleepless. He should not strive to do anything for food, though he may possess powers of his sense-organs.

5. Like the limitless, unfathomable, unperturbable deep sea of clear translucent water, the sage should be quiet, absorbed in meditation, unviolable, inscrutable, unaffected by time, space, etc. and unperturbed by passions.

6. Just as a sea does not overflow its limit when rivers in floods fall into it, nor does it dry up with the drying up of rivers, the sage should not feel elated when his desires are fulfilled nor be depressed at disappointments, but should be completely devoted to Nārāyaṇa (and not pay attention to worldly objects).

7. On seeing a women, a veritable deluding potency of God, a person who has control over his senses is fascinated with her alluring gestures and movements and like a moth flying into the fire, falls into dark hell.[1]

8. With his mind enticed by women, (wearing) gold ornaments, rich dress, and other things created by the deluding Potency of the Lord (Māyā), the infatuated person, losing his discrimination, regards them for his enjoyment and ruins himself like a moth in the fire.

9. Without causing any trouble to any householder, a sage should accept food only in small quantities and that too, barely sufficient for the maintenance of his body. In this respect he should follow the course of a bee.

10. Just as a bee collects honey from flowers big or small, a skilful and clever person should assimilate the essence of the *Śāstras* great and small.

11. A recluse should not accept alms with a view to storing (a part of) it, for the evening or for the next day. He should use no other vessel than his palms (for accepting food) and his stomach (as storage). He ought not to be a hoarder like the bee.

12. A recluse should not lay by any food for the evening or for the morrow. If he were to do so like a bee, he will perish along with his store.

13. A mendicant should not touch, even with his foot, a young woman (doll made of wood), for he will be bound

1. ŚR. quotes a famous verse which describes how a moth, a black-bee, an elephant, a deer and a fish fall a victim severally to the objects of senses like a form, scent, touch, sound and taste and the five symbolic preceptors from this verse onwards are meant to teach detachment from objects of senses. The verse quoted is as follows :

pataṅga-mātaṅga-kuraṅga-bhṛṅga-mīnā hatāḥ pañcabhir eva pañca/
ekaḥ pramādī sa katham na hanyate, yaḥ sevate pañcabhir eva pañca"

(with passion) like an elephant fettered while touching a female elephant!

14. A wise person should never try to contact a woman (of another person) for he should know that she is his veritable death, just as an elephant is killed by more powerful tuskers.

15. Wealth hoarded by greedy misers painstakingly is neither enjoyed by them nor it is given in charities but it is enjoyed by another powerful person (knowing the location of the treasure) and that also by still another even as a gatherer of honey knows the place of the honeycomb (the store of honey) by external indications and misappropriates it.

16. Just as a honey-gatherer (is the first enjoyer of honey collected by bees), a recluse is the first to enjoy the fruit (i.e. food prepared by householders) of the wealth amassed by the householders with great pains and which they expect to enjoy.

17. From the deer which got ensnared by being beguiled with the music (musical notes) of the hunter, an ascetic living in a forest should learn the lesson that he should not listen to vulgar songs (creating erotic passions). (He should rather listen to songs about the Lord).

18. It was while enjoying the vulgar dance, instrumental music and songs of young women that Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, the son of a female deer (from sage Vibhāṇḍaka) became a toy in the hands of those women.

19. A person being tempted by alluring tastes through his uncontrolled tongue, loses his reasoning capacity and meets his end like a thoughtless fish allured by baits.

20. By observing fast wise persons quickly bring under control all their senses except the tongue (the sense of taste) which grows all the more powerful during famishment.

21. Even if a person has controlled all other senses (except the tongue), he cannot really be said to have subdued them, till he has conquered the sense of taste. When the sense of taste is subdued, all the senses become controlled.

22. Formerly, in the city of Videha (i.e Mithilā), there lived a courtesan called Piṅgalā. Please listen to what I have learnt from her O Prince.

23. On one occasion, the public woman adorned herself to exhibit her charms to the utmost, at the proper time, and waited outside the door with the intention of enticing a paramour to a rendezous.

24. O prominent Person ! As she saw men passing by the way, she, being covetous for money, thought them to be wealthy patrons coming to pay her as her paramours.

25. When the passers-by came and went their way (ignoring her), the woman, who earned her living by prostitution, indulged in the (false) hope that some other wealthy man would turn up and could approach her with a rich fee.

26. In this way, her inordinate hopes being thwarted, she lost her sleep. She kept on standing at the door, going in and out till it was past midnight.

27. Due to frustration of her hopes of earning money, her mouth parched up, and she became dejected at heart. But the despondency caused by her anxiety engendered a sense of real happiness in her.

28. Now listen from me the song of the woman whose mind was utterly frustrated and disgusted : "Complete indifference to worldly objects is like unto a sword in a man's hand to cut asunder the cords of desire."

29. Dear King, just as a man without any spiritual knowledge cannot give up his sense of "mineness", a person in whose mind the sense of complete dispassion (for worldly objects) has not dawned, will not be able to rid himself of the ties to the body.

Piṅgalā said :

30. Alas ! Look at the extent of delusion of mine who have not controlled my mind and senses. Thoughtless as I am, I covet the fulfilment of my desire even from a worthless paramour.

31. Ignoring this eternally proximate paramour (viz. the Indwelling Soul), capable of giving real delight and bestower of sumptuous wealth on me, I, in my infatuation, resorted to a contemptible fellow who is incapable of fulfilling my desires and who confers nothing but misery, fear, grief and delusion.

32. Alas ! I have uselessly put my soul to affliction by leading the life of a public woman—the most reproachable trade. By selling myself to a miserly pitiable woman-addict I expected to get wealth and pleasure.

33. What person other than myself would seek (for enjoyment) the male body which is like a house, the framework (like beams and rafters) of which is made of bones, covered with skin, hair and nails, provided with nine doors dissipating filth and full of dirty excretion and urine.

34. In the whole city of Videha (Mithilā), I am perhaps the only foolish and wicked woman who expect to get pleasure (from persons) other than this Acyuta who confers his own self to devotees.

35. He is the beloved-most friend, protector and the very Self of all embodied beings. I shall submit myself to him and enjoy myself with him like goddess Lakṣmī.

36. To what extent can men, subject to birth and death, and gods, who are overtaken by Time, give pleasures to their wives (for all pleasures have a beginning and an end).

37. It appears that Lord Viṣṇu has been pleased with me for some unknown act of mine (in my past life). Hence this dispassion which ultimately leads to happiness has been engendered in my heart, full of evil desires.

38. But for the grace of the Lord the afflictions of an unlucky woman like me would not have caused this feeling of disgust and renunciation which enables a person to cut asunder all attachment, and attains (mental) peace (and spiritual bliss).

39. Respectfully receiving on my head, the blessings (and the grace) of the Lord, I shall rid myself of vulgar desires caused by low associations, and seek shelter in the Supreme Lord.

40. Contented and subsisting on whatever comes to me by the will of Providence, I shall, with full faith in the Lord who is my own Self, enjoy myself with him as my beloved.

41. Who else is capable of protecting a person who has fallen in the deep well of *Saṁsāra*, and whose eyes (power of discrimination) are blinded by objects of senses and whose

person is swallowed by the serpent (boa-constrictor) in the form of Time.

42. When a person observes that this world is practically devoured by the serpent in the form of Time, he becomes alert and is disgusted with all worldly objects. He realizes that his *Ātman* is the protector of his Self.

The Brāhmaṇa (Avadhūta) said :

43. Coming to this firm conclusion and having thus cut off the evil libidinous craving for paramours, she was established in serenity and took her seat on the bed.

44. Certainly (the state of being haunted by) hope is the greatest misery and freedom from hope is the happiest state, just as when Piṅgalā gave up all hope for a paramour, she enjoyed a happy sleep.

CHAPTER NINE

The Discourse of the Avadhūta Concluded

(Lessons from the remaining seven preceptors)

The Brāhmaṇa continued :

1. Acquisition of whatever persons crave most to possess is certainly the cause of misery. He who realizes this and (wishing to overcome his propensity for possession) becomes a complete 'Have-not', attains infinite happiness.

2. More powerful birds of prey which had got no piece of flesh, attacked and pecked the he-osprey who possessed one. But by dropping that flesh, it (the he-osprey) got relief and happiness.

3. I am not affected by honour or dishonour. I have no anxiety for my house, wife and children (as I have none). Like a child, I range over the world at will, sporting in the bliss of *Ātman* and delighted within my own Soul.

4. (O king, in this world) only two (types of) persons are free from anxiety and are immersed in the Supreme bliss—

one is an innocent ignorant child and the other is one who has transcended the *guṇas*.

5. In a certain place, a maiden herself had to receive the guests who had come to see her (for selecting her as a bride) while her relatives (parents etc.) had gone out somewhere.

6. While she was pounding alone (secretly) paddy for entertaining them with food, the bangles of shell in her wrists began to give out loud jingling sound.

7. The intelligent girl felt it shameful (to disclose that the bride had to do such work), broke the bangles one by one till only two remained on each of her wrists.

8. Even the pair of bangles created a noise as she pounded (the paddy). She, therefore broke one from each pair (with the result that) no sound was produced from the remaining one.

9. O vanquisher of enemies, I learnt this lesson from her, while I was roaming over the world with the desire of knowing the true nature of the world.

10. If many persons live together there will be quarrels; if two live together there is a talk. Hence a person should wander alone without any companion like the single bangle on the wrist of the girl.

11. Having achieved firmness of the sitting posture and controlled the breath, a person should concentrate his mind (like an archer on his target and by means of renunciation and Yogic practice, he should vigilantly keep his mind steady.

12. The mind, when concentrated in him, sheds off gradually the particles of *karma*-dust. With the development of *Sattva guṇa*, he shakes off the *Rājasic* and *Tāmasic* tendencies and enters into *Nirvāṇa*, like a fire (automatically) extinguished (when the fuel is completely burnt). (Such a stage is known as *asamprajñāta samādhi*).

13. In that stage, a person whose mind is completely absorbed in the meditation of his Self, does not remain conscious of anything inside, or outside just as the manufacturer of shafts was so much absorbed in his work of making arrows that he was not aware of the procession of the king passing by his smithy.

14. Like a serpent a sage, therefore, should go about alone, (avoiding company of others), have no house, should always be vigilant (in his spiritual practice) and take shelter in caves[1]. He should see to it that he is not marked out by his behaviour (just as the poisonousness or non-poisonousness of a serpent is not discernible from his trail). He should be sparing of words and lead a solitary life.

15. In the case of man who himself is mortal, the attempt to build a house (and maintenance of a family, etc. implied in it) is fraught with great troubles and is fruitless ultimately. But a serpent enters into a house prepared by others (such as an ant-hill or a hole prepared by a mouse) and lives happily. A sage should emulate his example and not bother about constructing a residence.

16. Like a spider withdrawing its web spun out and spread over by it, the Almighty Lord Nārāyaṇa through his potency of time, withdraws, at the end of the Kalpa, this universe which he has created through his Māyā Potency.

17. The Supreme Lord (then) remains alone, one without a second[2] (i.e. devoid of any differentiation) himself self-supported (self-born). He was the support of all the universe. When he has reduced all his powers like *sattva, rajas and tamas* to the state of equilibrium with his own force called time, he exists as the First (Ancient-most, unborn) Person, the controller of *Pradhāna* (wherein all the *Guṇas* are merged) and of *Puruṣa* (that is of Matter and Spirit).

18. He is the highest goal to be attained by god Brahmā and other liberated Souls. He is designated (by *Śrutis*) as *Kevala* (Absolute, unconditioned). He is (as it were) a vast reservoir of absolute bliss unconditioned by any limitations.

19.* By his Potency (called time) which needs no other

1. VJ gives better interpretation : 'He should thoroughly and uninterruptedly be absorbed in the meditation of the Lord abiding in the cave of his heart'.

* VJ : He is not conditioned by a gross, physical body. He is the *Antaryāmin* (Inner controller) of Kāla (Time). At his own free will, he manifests himself through Time and agitates Māyā i.e. *Prakṛti* which is under his control and makes her prone to creation. He creates through *Prakṛti*, the thread (*Sūtra*) or (*Prāṇa*) and god Brahmā.

assistance, he agitated his Māyā constituted of three *guṇas* and (through this agitated Māyā) created the *Sūtra* (thread) or the principle called *Mahat*, O vanquisher of enemies (like lust, anger, etc. Hence, you need not be afraid of the power of this *Sūtra* or *Mahat*).

20.* They have declared the *Sūtra* to be the manifestation of three *guṇas* which evolves this universe of multifarious aspects. It is in the *Sūtra* that the universe is woven. It is due to *Sūtra* (in the form of vital breath that a person wanders through the cycle of births and deaths[1].

21. Just as a spider extends through its mouth the cobweb from its heart, sports with it and again swallows it, so does the Supreme Ruler evolve, protect and withdraw the universe.

22. It may be out of love, hatred or fear, but on whatever object an embodied being concentrates his mind entirely, he attains to the semblance of that object.

23. The larva (captured and) confined in its (captor's) nest by the wasp, O King, continuously broods over it (through fear), and without losing its original body, it assumes (i.e. is transformed into) the semblance of the wasp.

24. In this manner, from these several preceptors I learnt this wisdom. Now listen as I shall explain to you the wisdom I learnt from my body, O king.

25. My body has been my preceptor as it causes in me dispassion and (engenders in me) discrimination. It creates dispassion as it is subject to birth and death and is in the (final analysis) the source of ever-increasing afflictions. It promotes discrimination, as through it I comprehend correctly the fundamental principles of this universe. I, however, have arrived at the conclusion that this body belongs to others (parents who gave birth to it—or birds and beasts of prey who may eat it).

*. They saw that the three *guṇas* are evolved out of *Māyā*. It is in the *Māyā* or *Prakṛti* that the universe is woven and *Jiva* gets involved in *Saṁsāra* as it is invested with *Prakṛti*—VJ.

1. Cf. *Vāyur vai Gautama sūtram, vāyunā vai sūtreṇā'yaṁ ca lokaḥ, paraś ca lokaḥ sarvāṇi ca bhūtāni sandṛbdhāni| —Brhad. Up.* 3.7.2

Realizing this, I roam about without entertaining any attachment to the body.

26. It is with the desire of securing pleasure and comforts for this body that a person, with great strain to himself maintains his wife, children, earns money, raises cattle, and keeps servants, houses and relatives. But in the end (at the time of death), like a tree leaving its seed behind for the growth of another tree, it perishes providing for (his re-birth in) another body.

27. The tongue drags a person in one direction to satisfy his taste with tasty eatables; thirst, to another; the organ of generation, still to another direction for sexual intercourse; the senses of touch, hearing and stomach severally to different directions; the nose (sense of smell) still to a different direction (to enjoy perfumes); his quick eyesight, to another and all his organs of action in their own respective directions. In this way, like co-wives pulling (lit. tearing up) the lord of their house (in their own direction), the senses and organs tear up a person.

28. Having created, with his inherent power, the birthless Māyā, various kinds of bodies (i.e. species) such as those of plants and trees, reptiles, mammals, birds, biting insects (like mosquitos), fish (and other acquatic animals), he remained unsatisfied. But when God created the human being with an intellectual capacity capable of realizing the *Brahman* or *Supreme Being*, He became delighted.*

29. Having secured, at the end of many transmigrations, birth in this very rare human body which, though transient, is capable of attaining the highest object in life, viz. *Mokṣa* (liberation), a wise person should endeavour at the earliest, to attain the *summum bonum*, before his body had not fallen a prey to death. For, objects of senses can, however, be enjoyed everywhere in all species.

30. In this manner, with the sense of dispassion developed and with the light of spiritual wisdom dawned in me, I wander over the earth, free from all attachments and egotism.

31. Knowledge obtained from one preceptor may not be

*Cf. *Aitareya Up.* 2.3ff

stable, convincing and comprehensive[1]. This *Brahman* is verily one without a second, but it is sung variously by different sages.

The Lord said :

32. In this manner, the Brāhmaṇa, of deep knowledge, replied all the questions of Yadu and took his leave of Yadu. He was duly respected and prayed by the king. With pleasure, the Brāhmaṇa wended his way.

33. Having carefully listened to the philosophical exposition of the Avadhūta, Yadu, the ancestor of our ancestors, became completely free from all types of attachment and looked upon all as equals.

CHAPTER TEN

How the Jiva is Ensnared in Saṁsāra

The Lord said :

1. Alertly observant of the righteous duties (prescribed in the Pāñcarātra and other Vaiṣṇavite systems) taught by me, completely dependent on me, one should, without entertaining any desire (for the fruits of his actions), observe the course of duties prescribed for one's respective social class (*varṇa*), stage of life (*āśrama*) and family traditions[2].

2. With his mind purified (by the observance of his prescribed duties—*dharma*), he should (always) note how all the

1. Here ŚR clarifies that Upaniṣadic sages like Śvetaketu and Bhṛgu did not have more than one spiritual preceptor. But the spiritual guidance received by them pertained to the identity of Brahman & the Ātman. Here the 'knowledge' means clarifications of minor doubts which can be resolved by logical reasoning; for this a number of 'preceptors' or 'examples' are useful.

2. EK. classifies *Karma* into four categories : *nitya* (to be performed daily), *naimittika* (occasional), *Kāmya* (performed for fulfilment of desire) and *Prāyaścitta* (expiatory). All these should be dedicated to the Lord. EB, 10.46-66.

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endeavours of embodied beings, who, believing objects of sense pleasures to be real[1], are addicted to them and are frustrated, leading them to the contrary results.

3. Just as the objects seen in the dream-state, or the hallucinations of a day-dreamer have no existence in reality and are futile (as they present both desirable and undesirable things unrelated to the main objective of human life), similarly, the notion of difference (in relation to *Ātman* as a celestial being, human being) caused by *Guṇas* is illusory or meaningless.[2]

4. A person who is solely devoted to me should perform disinterestedly[3] the obligatory (e.g. *Sandhyā, pañcamahāyajñas* and occasional (e.g. *Śrāddha* for ancestors) types of acts but should abstain from acts (to be performed for the fruits thereof)[4]. But a person who has entered into the investigation of the nature of the Soul or god need not respect and follow the injunctions of the Vedas, prompting the performance of (sacrificial and other) acts.

5. One who has exclusively devoted himself to me should continuously practice the five vows (such as non-violence, truth, possessionlessness) known as *Yama* and occasionally vows (such as penance, charity, silence) called *Niyama*. He should wait upon his spiritual preceptor, who is full of serenity, has realized me (as his Self) and is devoted to me.

6. Such a disciple should be free from pride, envy; he should be alert, watchful, free from attachment. He should be

1. *tattva-jñānena* (i) Realizing and contemplating the real nature of his soul and the Supreme Soul—VR.

(ii) Definitely ascertaining the means of attaining *Puruṣārthas* (objects of human life)—VJ.

2. VJ. takes a contrary view : Just as dream-visions....and fancies of day-dreamers are different from reality and hence fruitless, *similarly the notion of one-ness or identity is baseless* as it is the apprehension of the faculties of the mind, but not of the essential powers of the self.

3. VJ defines *Nivṛtta Karma* as that done with a correct understanding of Paramātman and done without any desire for return :

niṣkāmaṁ jñānapūrvaṁ ca nivṛttam iti co'cyate

4. ŚR. quotes a Smṛti text as authority. It means : 'A person desirous of Liberation from *saṁsāra* should not turn to *kāmya* (promising fruits in return) and *niṣiddha* (prohibited) *karmas* but only the daily obligatory (*nitya*) and occasional types of acts (*karmas*)'.

patient, thoroughly devoted to the preceptor, keen on knowing the truth; he should not try to find fault with others and should not waste of his words unnecessarily.

7. He should be indifferent and unattached to his wife, children, house, lands, relatives, property, etc.[1] He should realize that all his purpose is common to all.

8. The Soul is distinct from both the subtle and the gross bodies.[2] He is the seer (the witness) and self-illuminating even as the fire which illumines and burns is different from the fuel that is burnt and lighted up.

9. Just as a fire which has entered into the wood and is burning it, assumes the qualities i e. states of that piece of wood such as coming into existence, going out of existence, its smallness and bigness and its varieties of forms (but is itself distinct from the fuel), so does the *Ātman* which is distinct from the body, assume the states of the body[3] (Though he has no birth, death, growth, size, forms, etc.)

10. For what is called the body is created out of the (three) *guṇas* of (the Māyā of) Lord Puruṣottama and the *saṁsāra* (the cycle of birth and deaths) is the consequence of the false identification of the Soul with the body. It is only through the real knowledge of the (distinctness between the body and the) *Ātman* that this misapprehension of *saṁsāra* is removed.[4]

11. This being the case, by means of deep investigation

1. ŚR. explains that as *Ātmā* abides in all bodies and thus all share the same purpose, viz. happiness, etc., there is no propriety of claiming them exclusively as his own. This leads to dispassion.

2. VJ. : The individual Soul and the Supreme Soul are different and distinct *interse* from the body and other products of non-intelligent *Prakṛti*.

3. VJ : This is the view of the ignorant who identify the individual Soul and the Supreme Soul.

4. EK. compares the soul involved in *Saṁsāra* to a king who dreams that he is a beggar. When in the morning, the family priest comes and wakes him up he realizes that he is a king and not a beggar as he regarded himself to be so long. The spiritual preceptor is the priest and the *Jīva* involved in *Saṁsāra* is the dreaming King. When instead of *aham* (I), he realized *So'ham* (I am He—Brahman) then the misapprehension of *Saṁsāra* is dispelled.

(into reality), a person should properly realize that the absolute, transcendental soul abiding in the product (viz. his body) is different from the body, and then gradually dispel the misapprehension that this phenomenal world is real.

12. The spiritual preceptor is the supporting (lower) piece of wood and the pupil is the supported (upper) piece. Instruction is the process of friction (or joining together of these pieces), and the knowledge is the fire that brings happiness[1]

13. This highly purified[2] intellect (of the capable disciple) (when sharpened by the spiritually capable teacher) drives off the *Māyā* which is caused by *Guṇas*. Burning down (i.e. dispelling) *guṇas* (objects of senses and senses) and the universe that is created by them, this intellect too, automatically disappears like fire, when the fuel is completely consumed.

14-16*. If you believe in the multiplicity of these agents or doers of *Karmas* and the enjoyers of the (consequent) pleasures and pains, and in the eternity and separateness of the world, the Time, The *Śāstras* and individual Souls (as the mīmāṁsakas do), if you hold that all objects have a continuity (or eternity) while they undergo constant change,

1. An echo of *Tait. Upa.* :
ācāryaḥ pūrva-rūpam/antevāsī uttara-rūpam/
vidyā sandhiḥ/pravacanaṁ sandhānam/
—*Tait. Upa.* 1.3.2.

According to VJ, this knowledge burns down the grass in the form of the notion of identity between *Jīva* and *Brahm* ..
(*Jīvasya Brahma—bhāva—buddhi—tṛṇa—dahanam/*)

2. *Vaiṣṇavī*—pertaining to Viṣṇu who terminates the *Saṁsāra* characterised by pleasure and pain—VJ.

* VJ : (The gist only) The distinction between all *jīvas* is natural, and according to their mutual difference, they are invested with different bodies and the character of their knowledge differs naturally. *Jīvas* of the highest order are eternal, and from the point of their body, they are said to be born; they enjoy only happiness while the second and third may experience a mixture of happiness and misery or only misery.

VR : Though the *Pravṛtti Karma* may be the means of achieving *Puruṣārthas*, all embodied beings are subjected to the six states of body (such as birth, youth, death and the consequent miseries) according to the species in which they are born, due to the influence of Time and its division.

and that the intelligence becomes changed according to the forms of different objects perceived by it, O Uddhava, even if this be the case, due to frequent (forced) associations (of the Soul) with different bodies and due to the force of the division of Time, all embodied souls are repeatedly subjected to the different states of births, deaths, etc.

17. Even here (from your argument) it becomes obvious that there is absence of free will in the case of doers of actions and there is no choice for the experiencers of pleasures and pains. What happiness can there be to one who is dependent (and at the mercy of others) ?

18*. Not an iota of real happiness exists for those embodied souls who are learned (and expert in the technique of performing Vedic *Karmas*; nor is misery the lot of the ignorant; Hence, the sense of pride (of knowing the correct technique of performance of *Karma*) is vain and futile.

19. Even though some people happen to know the means of obtaining happiness and averting miseries (and the principle of Free Will be accepted), even such knowers are ignorant of the means of counter-acting (successfully) the power of Death.

20. What achievement of object or a desire can give happiness when Death is near him ? No object can give pleasure to a victim who is being led to the place of execution.

21. The heavenly happiness promised by Vedas is also vitiated with envy, jealousy, termination and decay, as in the case of pleasure experienced on the earth. And there are many impediments and chances of failure in the accomplishment of desires as in the case of Agriculture.

22. Even if a religious act is properly performed without any impediment in its successful conclusion, listen to the nature of the celestial position attained by him.

*. VR : Experts in the technique of performance of *Karmas* find it very difficult to collect materials, etc. at the time of performance of the *Karmas* and are nervous due to the transient nature of its fruits. *Or* Even great gods like Brahmā do not enjoy unmixed happiness, as they are aware of the end of the tenure of their office. But fools entertain futile egotism about it.

VJ :-Even the wise, being attached to their bodies, have no real happiness. What need be said of the ignorant proud persons ?

23. Having worshipped gods (like Indra, Varuṇa, etc.) by performance of sacrifices in this world, the sacrificer goes to the celestial world. He enjoys like a god heavenly pleasures that he has earned through his meritorious acts.

24. In a lustrous celestial car (provided with all luxuries) earned by his meritorious acts, he, wearing a rich, attractive dress, sports with the celestial damsels while being glorified by Gandharvas in song.

25. While sporting with the heavenly nymphs in a celestial car which is adorned with small jingling bells, and which goes according to the will of the occupant, he is so absorbed in celestial pleasures that he is not aware of his impending fall.

26. He heartily enjoys himself in the heaven so long as the fund of his merits is not exhausted. But when the balance of merits is exhausted, he is pushed down by Time and he falls down reluctantly.

27. If, due to the association with unrighteous people, a person takes delight in impiety or loses control over his senses, being passionate and libidinous, he becomes miserly, avaricious and addicted to women and heartlessly injurious to living beings.

28. He kills animals in violation of *Śāstric* injunctions and worships the hosts of goblins and ghosts therewith. Such a person inevitably falls into various hells and ultimately enters the hell of terrible darkness (i.e. is born as an immobile).

29. What happiness can there be to a mortal person who, in the present birth (as a human being) perpetrates deeds that result in miseries and in consequence of which acts, he has to assume another body ?

30. Regions and their rulers whose span of life extends to the end of a Kalpa (432 million years) are afraid of me. Even god Brahmā whose life is of two Parārdha years fears Me.

31. *Guṇas* i.e. senses and organs create (i.e. are the cause of) *Karmas*; a *guṇa* (like *Sattva* etc.) motivates the senses to actions. This *Jiva*, being endowed with sense-organs, enjoys the fruits of his acts.

32. So long as the unbalanced condition of *guṇas* prevails, manifoldness (and difference) will be projected on *Ātman* (which, as a matter of fact, is one). As long as the (apparent)

multiplicity in the Soul remains, the state of dependence (of the *Jiva*) shall persist.

33. So long as the dependent state of the *Jiva* continues, there will be fear from God. Hence, those who take resort to *guṇas* become overcome with grief and delusion.

34. When there is an imbalance in the three *guṇas* of Māyā (and there is agitation of the *guṇas*), ignorant people call me by various names such as Time (*Kāla*), Soul (*Ātman*), scriptures (*Āgama*), the World (*Loka*), the Nature (*Svabhāva*] and *Dharma*.

Uddhava asked :

35. How is it that the Ātman, though associated with and present in the *guṇas* of the body, is not bound by them? Or if he be independent, how does he get involved in them? (What is the correct position in the matter) O Lord.

36. By what characteristics is a bound or liberated Soul be recognised? How does he behave? With whom is he found sporting or wandering ? What things does he enjoy or cast away ? How does he lie or sit or go about ?

37. O Acyuta ! You are the foremost among those who solve problems. I am really confused. How can the same *Ātman* be both eternally bound and ever-free ? Be pleased to explain this problem to me.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Characteristics of Bondage and Liberation and of Devotion

The glorious Lord said:

1.* The characterisation that 'I am bound' or 'I am liberated' is determined with reference to *guṇas*, and it has no

* ŚR : *OR*: The statement that 'The individual soul is bound or liberated' is made on the basis of its being subject to or free from the predispositions of *guṇas* and it does not refer to its real nature. The *guṇas* are

relation to my essential nature. But *guṇas* have their roots in Māyā. Hence, there is neither liberation nor bondage to me. This is my decision (with reference to this notion of bondage)

2.* Grief and infatuation, pleasure and pain, and the condition of the body (viz. birth and death and change of body) are the work of Māyā (and are not real, but are wrongly attributed to the Soul). Just as a dream is only an unreal appearance (*vivarta*) of the mind (or intellect), so is *Saṃsāra* illusory, unreal.

3. O Uddhava ! Please understand that knowledge and ignorance are my potencies which are in existence since the time immemorial, and both are the creations of my *Māyā*. These potencies bring about bondage and release in the case of embodied beings.

under my control. As I am their controller, liberation or bondage are not applicable to me.

VR and SS: (Sudarśana Sūri) emphasize that the bondage and liberation positively affect the *Jīva* (individual) and *not* the Supreme Soul or God.

VJ. The statement 'Bound' or 'Liberated' refers only to *Jīva* who is affected by the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* which is under my control. Hence the notion of bondage and liberation is not applicable to me.

SD. When the Jīva which is bound by *guṇas* resorts to me, he is liberated. Cf. BG.7.14.

* Both SS & VR hold that what is 'non-eternal' (*anitya*) is 'unessential' (*avāstava*) but it is *not* false or unreal (*mithyā*). Hence grief, etc. caused by Māyā or *Prakṛti* under my control are related like a dream to a *jīva. The dream and Saṃsāra both are real but not eternal conditions of the jīva,* and they have an end. Hence, *Saṃsāra* is not the essential state of *jīva*. The main thrust of the argument is: *Svapnaprapañcasyāvāstavatvaṁ nāmānityatvam eva na tu mithyātvam*. Both SS & VR quote *Bṛhad. Up*. 4.310 as the authority for their stance (*na tatra rathā na ratha-yogāḥ, etc.*)

VJ: Grief, pleasure etc. are experienced in a dream due to ignorance that it is dream. Similarly, due to the ignorance of his own essential nature, *jīva* suffers in Saṁsāra. *Saṁsāra* is not false (*mithyā*) and is indestructible but it can be warded off: *saṁsṛtiḥ satyapi na vāstavī pratihantum aśakyā—svapnadṛṣṭāntena saṁsārasya na mithyātvam ucyate*. This quotation is used by SD & BP.

VC. It is due to the condition (*upādhi*) of *avidyā* that the *jīva* accepts and authorises to himself (and experiences) sorrow, delusion etc. in the subtle body. They are not a part of *jīva's* essential nature. They are caused by *avidyā* and hence, *mithyā* (*saṁsṛtir na vāstavī*. . *Śokamohādīnāṁ māyā-sṛṣṭatvena satyatve'pi*. . *jīve avidyākalpitatvān mithyātvam*.

4.* O highly intelligent Uddhava ! Though I, as *ātman*, am one, it is in relation to *Jīva* (who is my reflection and as such *Aṃśa*—a particle—of mine) that the eternal bondage exists due to *Avidyā* (ignorance), and the other state i. e. emancipation from *Saṁsāra* comes to take place through *vidyā* (knowledge).

5.** I shall now explain to you the distinction between one in bondage (namely the individual Soul or *Jīva*) and the other who stands altogether emancipated (*viz. Ātman*). They are characterized by two opposite sets of qualities though both are seen abiding in one and the same individual.

6.*** These are two fine-winged birds (viz. the *Jīva* and *Śiva* the Indwelling Self both of whom are distinct from the body[1]. They are (inseparable) companions and kindred in (their being spiritual in) nature. Through Divine will (*Māyā*), they share the same abode on the tree[2] (viz. the body, their habitat). One of them (the *Jīva*) eats the fruit of the

* VR. states that though bondage exists from eternity it is terminable by spiritual knowledge. VJ. holds that the *jīva* and *paramātman* are two distinct entities. The *Jīva* is subject to bondage and liberation and is under the control of *paramātman*.

** VR & VJ. believe that both *jīva* who is subject to bondage, and *Paramātman* who is independent, omniscient abide in the same body, though the latter is not subject to bondage.

*** According to VR. the two wings of *Jīva* are righteous and unrighteous acts (*dharmādharmau*) while that of the other bird, *Paramātman*, are absolute defect-less-ness and absolute excellences. The 'nest' of the *Jīva* and *Paramātman* is in the heart of the tree (the body). The *pippal*-fruits are the objects of senses such as sound, form, etc.

VJ. quotes his authorities and asserts that the other bird—the Lord—enjoys happiness only but never experiences what is bad or evil.

EK. explains that *jīva* is called a bird as it flies from tree to tree (occupies one body or birth after another). The existence of the other bird and the terms *sadṛśau* and *sakhāyau* refute atheism and establish the existence of God.

EB. 11.159-184.

1. Cf. *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā*
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte|
tayor ekaḥ pippalaṁ svādvatti
anaśnan anyo' bhicākaśīti ||
—*Muṇḍaka* 3.1.1-*Śvetāśva* 4.6

2. Cf. *Kaṭha* 6.1 & *BG.* 15.1.

Pippala tree (i.e. experiences pleasure or pain as the fruit of the previous *karmas* to be enjoyed while in the body. The other (viz. *Śiva* or *Iśvara*) does not partake anything of it, (i. e. is above pleasure and pain, *karmas*, etc.), yet is more powerful (in spiritual wisdom).

7. (Out of the two) the bird who does not eat the fruit of the *Pippala* tree (i.e. does not enjoy the fruits of *karmas*) knows himself as well as the other. But not so the eater of the *Pippala* fruits (*Jīva*, the enjoyer of the fruits of his *karma*). He is entangled in Nescience and has been in bondage since eternity; while the other (*Śiva* or God) being full of (spiritual) knowledge, is eternally free.

8. Even though a *Jīva*, endowed with correct knowledge (i.e. a liberated Soul) happens to abide in a body (due to his past *karmas*), is not conditioned by (and attached to his) body like a person who is awakened from his dream, remains unattached to his body in the dream. On the contrary, a person with the wrong notion of his being identical with his body, when as a matter of fact, he is not conditioned by it, becomes to confined to it like a dreaming person who feels bound within the dream-body, when really he is un-connected with it.[1]

9. A person possessing spiritual wisdom should remain unaffected (by love, hate etc.) without feeling that he is involved in the act, when the objects of senses which are the products of *guṇas* (like form, taste, smell) are apprehended by senses which are also modifications of *guṇas*.[2]

10.* An ignorant *Jīva*, abiding in this body which is under the conrol of his Fate or past acts, regards himself to be the doer of an act, which is actually being done by his sense-organs which are the products of *guṇas*, and remains confined

1. GD.: The verse states the *differentia* between a bound (*baddha*) and a liberated Soul.

2. *tattva-vittu mahābāho guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ|*
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta iti matvā na sajjate||
—*BG.* III.28

VJ.: The ignorant *Jīva*, who abides in the body under the control of the Lord, regards himself as the doer of actions in which he is dependent on the Lord, and gets confined to the body.

in it (due to his) (false) notion of being the agent of that act).

11-12. Understanding this, a man of spiritual wisdom (engaged in activities like) lying in bed, occupying a seat, taking a walk or performing ablutions and in (the activities of the cognitive and conative sense-organs such as) sight, touch, smell eating food, hearing, etc, does not get bound like an ignorant person. He allows his senses to enjoy their objects. Though he abides in the physical body (which being a modification of *Prakṛti* is) called *Prakṛti*, he is not contaminated by it like the sky (which pervades everything but is not contaminated by anything), the Sun (which, though reflected in the water or mirror is untouched by the reflecting media), or the air (which as the vital air-*prāṇa* moves through all parts of the body and still is unconcerned with it, and which as a wind, moves in any direction without being fixed or attached anywhere)[1]

13. All the (varieties of) doubts of such persons are cut asunder with the sword of his clear, penetrating insight sharpened by his total renunciation. He discards the sense of diversity like a person, awakened (to reality) from a dream state, does about (scenes in) dreams.

14. Even though a *Jiva* is abiding in the body, if the functions of his life (breathing), senses, mind and intellect are free from purposeful thought or motivation, he is never fettered by the attributes - the *guṇas* - of the body (involving pleasure and pain).[2]

15. He is a spiritually wise (and liberated) person who remains unaffected even when his body is troubled by cruel

1. ŚR.: Verses 11 to 13 explain Uddhava's question about the way of behaviour of a true Bhāgavata. But ŚR's explanation is on a lower plane on verse 12.

EK. says that these verses treat the behaviour of the absolutely liberated person. EK. draws a highly idealistic picture in which he poetically describes in details (from *ovis* 263 to 393) how in every action, a liberated soul, being ever absorbed in the bliss of Brahman, is a part of his spiritual life, where the triad of act-action-actor is non-existent. In all these acts, even his sexual intercourse is shown in its spiritual light.

No annotator of the Bh. P. has risen to the staggering spiritual height of EK. in his com. on these three verses.

2. This verse explains Uddhava's question 'how a liberated person behaves.'

beast or wicked persons or is by chance respectfully worshipped with due attentions somewhere by some persons.[1]

16. Being devoid of attributes good or bad (or being above the sense of good or evil), a sage looks upon all with an equal eye. He does not praise him who does a good turn to him; nor does he blame him who does or says something evil about him.

17. A sage should not do, speak or contemplate good or evil (about anyone or anything). (Detached from the worldly way of life) a sage should revel in (the bliss of) his own Self. Assuming such a way of life, he should move about like a dull person.

18. A person who has plunged deeply in the verbal revelation of the Brahman (i. e. is well-versed in the interpretation of the Vedas or Vedic philology), but is not so in the realization of the Supreme Brahman (by engaging himself in meditation, etc. prescribed for it), gets labour (on the Vedic studies) as the fruit (of his verbal knowledge of the Veda and not the realization of the Supreme Brahman), like a man who keeps a cow which has ceased to be a cow (and is incapable of yielding milk).

19. Dear Uddhava ! A person who maintains a cow that has been milked to (the period of) dryness (and no longer yields any milk), a faithless wife[2], a body under the control of another person (for support), wayward children, wealth not utilised on the worthy (cause or recepients) and speech not glorifying me or my name, is visited by misery after misery.

20. A wise man should not cultivate barren (i. e. wasteful) speech which does not contain glorification of my hallowing acts of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe or the sportive incarnations taken (by me) at the prayer of the world (or popular incarnations like Rāma, kṛṣṇa, etc.).

1. Verses 15-17 reply Uddhava's query "What are the characteristics of a liberated person?"

ŚR.: quotes *Yājñavalkya*: A sage is not angry against a person who pricks him with a thorn nor is pleased with one who anoints him with sandal. He treats both of them equally.

2. ŚR. interprets *asatī* as *Kāmaśūnyā*—a frigid or an old wife. EK adds quarrelsomeness and insubordination to lack of character in explaining *asatī*.

21. Having thus removed by dint of critical investigation (on the lines described in the above verses), the wrong notion[1] of seeing diversity with reference to Ātman, and having resigned (with full concentration) one's thoroughly purified mind to me who am the all-pervading Lord, he should completely withdraw himself from all activities.[2] (Mere scholarship in religious works is not enough.)

22. If you are not able to concentrate the mind firmly in the Brahman, carry out your duties resigning all acts to me, without expecting any fruit in return (from them).

23-24. Listening with faith and devotion[3] extremely auspicious stories about me which purify the world, singing them (to others as in a *kīrtana*) and contemplating on them and enacting my *Avatāra* and deeds performed by me (during the *kīrtana*[4]) and observing faithfully the duties pertaining to the three *puruṣārthas* (viz. *dharma*-righteousness, *artha*—wealth and *kāma*—enjoyment of pleasures) with a view to please me[5] and entirely depending on me, one develops unswerving devotion in me who am Eternal, O Uddhava.

25. It is through devotion developed in association with saintly persons that he becomes my real votary. Verily such a

1. VJ. enumerates the following wrong notions according to the Dvaita school: (1) Identity between the Jiva and Lord, (2) The one-ness of soul —all jivas make one existence, (3) The gross world is not real.

2. VR: One should abstain from *Pravṛtti mārga* which leads the *jīva* from one life to another.

3. EK. details here how to avoid the four types of obstructions while listening to and contemplating about the name and deeds of the Lord. He describes the three types of devotional love (viz. *Sāttvika, Rājasa* and *Tāmasa*) generated in the audience. He however, emphasizes the importance of the fourth type which transcends these three and makes the listener forget himself completely—absorbed in the meditation of the Lord like 'a crystal of salt fallen into the sea'.

—*EB.* 11.706-25.

4. EK. describes how to represent these by giving examples of lifting of Govardhana, etc. *ibid.* 735-37.

5. EK. To real devotees the Lord is their *dharma, artha* and *kāma*. He automatically—without conscious or deliberate intention—resigns all his acts to the Lord. The real votary is endowed with spiritual wisdom and all his acts are *per se* dedicated to the Lord. This real Bhāgavata devotion is called *saṁviti* in Vedānta and *Śakti* in *Śaivism*.

—*EB.* 11.748-774.

devotee easily attains to my exalted state (or *Vaikuṇṭha*) as pointed out by the righteous.

Uddhava submitted:

26. O Lord of hallowing glory ! What kind of person is regarded as a saint (*Sādhu*) by you? (What are his characteristics?) What type of devotion is respectfully appreciated by pious devotees (like Nārada) and would be useful to attain to you?

27. O Ruler of gods like Brahmā ! The Controller of the world ! Be pleased to explain this to me who have prostrated myself before you and am full of loving devotion to you and have sought your shelter, O Lord of the world.

28. You are the Supreme Reality (*The Brahman*) untainted and unattached like the highest sky, transcendental to *Prakṛti*.[1] It is at your own free will[2] that you have assumed a distinct finite personality and have descended (on the earth).

The Lord replied:

29. Such a sage is compassionate; he never envies or harms any creature; is full of fortitude; firm and strong in truthfulness; of pure mind (untainted by jealousy, etc.); equipoised in pleasure and pain (unaffected by joy and sorrow under the above conditions); obliging unto all.

30. His mind is never perturbed by desires; his senses are fully under control; he is gentle-hearted; of pure (perfectly moral) conduct; devoid of all possessions; free from desires (or evil activities), moderate in eating and drinking; serene in mind; firm in his own *dharma*, seeking asylum in me and contemplative by nature.

1. This shows that the Lord is distinct from the non-sentient *Prakṛti* and sentient *jīva*—VR.

2. Who has assumed a finite form due to intense desire of His devotees—ŚR. EK. elaborates this. But to attribute 'Will' or the pressure of the wishes and the prayers on the Supreme Brahman is rather strange, if the pure *Upaniṣadic* concept of Brahman is accepted. In works on Bhakti (as in the present case), however, God is humanised (Translator.)

31. He is ever alert and vigilant; of deep mind (remaining undisturbed under exciting circumstances); full of grit (in the face of danger); free from six worries[1] or bodily defects (viz. hunger and thirst, grief and infatuation, old age and death); Though himself indifferent to worldly honour, pays respect (to the worthy); possesses aptitude and willingness to impart knowledge; a sincere friend; merciful in behaviour and endowed with spiritual knowledge.

32. He is the best of saints who (finding them to be distractions and obstructions in meditating on me or concluding definitely that everything will be obtained through devotion to me or becoming ineligible to perform *karmas* due to his unflinching firm devotion) neglects his duties though they are prescribed by me (in the *Veda*) and even though he knows full well the merits accruing from performing those duties and the evil consequences of disobeying them; and (thus in preference to his prescribed duties) is engaged in my worship.

33. Realizing me or (if unrealized) contemplating on me as unlimited by time and space, as the Inner Soul abiding in all and essentially characterized by 'Is'-ness, (existence) knowledge and bliss those who worship me exclusively, are definitely regarded by me as the best of devotees.

34.* To behold, to touch, to embrace and to worshiy my idols or other representations (like *Śāligrāma* and others) and my devotees, render personal service to them, to eulogise me, to extol and chant my deeds and excellences with utmost humbleness;

35. To listen to my stories with deep faith and devotion, to meditate upon me constantly, to offer to me all that one acquires, to dedicate oneself to me entirely for my service, O Uddhava;

36. To recite (and describe) my incarnations and deeds, to participate joyously in my festivities (like *Janmāṣṭamī*—the birth anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa), to celebrate my festivals

1. ŚR. quotes the following defects about which people worry: *Kṣut-pipāse, śoka-mohau, jarā-mṛtyū ṣaḍ-ūrmayaḥ|*

* —Verses 34-41 describe the characteristics of devotion—ŚR.

in my temple with musical entertainments such as vocal and instrumental music and dancing and *purāṇa* recitation and discussion.

37. To go in procession for pilgrimage (to places sacred to me) on all annual festivals[1] and to offer me flowers, sandal paste and (vegetarian) food, to get initiated in the *Vedic* and *Tāntric* way of worshipping me and to observe vows sacred to me (like observance of fast on the *Ekādaśī* day).

38. Devout enthusiasm in installing my image (in temples), individual and cooperative endeavour to lay out flower-gardens, orchards, playgrounds, and construction of temples and towns:

39. To render service in my house (temple) like a sincere servant by sweeping and washing, plastering with cowdung the floor and decorating it with ornamental drawings figures without expecting anything in return for this service;

40. One should be free from pride (about the service rendered to God) and should be free from hypocrisy. One should not even mention what good one has done. One should not use for one's private purpose anything that is offered to me, including the light of the lamp.[2]

41. Whatever is desiredmost to oneself in the world or whatever is dearest to one's heart should be dedicated to me. Such offering results in infinite and everlasting good.

42. O blessed Uddhava! The Sun, Fire, the Brāhmaṇa, the cows, devotees of Viṣṇu, the sky, the air, water, earth, one's own heart and all the creatures are 'the places' (objects as media) of my worship (through which worship should be offered to me).

1. Thousands of people in Maharashtra go in group-processions to Pandharpur on the *ekādaśī* (the 11th day in the bright half) of Āṣāḍha and Kārttika, and hundreds of them on other *ekādaśī* days.

2. ŚR. clarifies that this restriction is limited to the movable and immovable things (such as dress, pots, ornaments, etc.) presented to the Lord and not to eatables, flowers so offered. On the contrary, he insists that some portion of the eatables should be accepted as *prasāda*. He quotes a *Smṛti* which states that other gods and our ancestors should be offered a remnant of the food, etc. offered to Viṣṇu.

Viṣṇor niveditānnena yaṣṭavyaṁ devatāntaram|
pitṛbhyaś caiva tad deyaṁ tadānantyāya kalpate|

43. A person should worship me in the Sun by praising the Sun with hymns from the three Vedas, in the (sacrificial) Fire, with offering oblations to it, in prominent (deserving) Brāhmaṇas, with warm hospitality and in cows with offering of grass, etc.

44. (One should worship me) in the votary of Viṣṇu with the fraternal affection,[1] in the heart and the sky, through deep undisturbed contemplation, in the air, with the knowledge that I am the chief vital power (*mokhya-prāṇa*); in water with water mixed with flowers sesamum seed, rice, etc.).

45. (A man should worship me) in the earth (levelled, squared and consecrated for sacrifice[2]) with the mystic syllable of Mantras, in one's own body with all the comforts (permitted by *śāstras*) and one should worship me in all the creatures as their In-dwelling Soul, by looking upon all beings as equals (impartially without any love or hatred towards anyone.)

46. In these 'places' of worship, one should contemplate with concentrated mind, my form with four arms wielding in each the conch, (*Pāñcajanya*), the discus (*Sudarśana*) the mace (*Kaumodaki*) and a lotus (respectively) and with a serene and gracious countenance.

47. He who, with a concentrated mind, worships me in this way, by performing sacrifices and by constructing tanks and other amenities to the public, develops pious devotion unto me and my constant remembrance will be awakened through service unto saints.

48. Generally, there is no other expedient (to God-realization) except the path of devotion generated in association with saintly people, for I am the chief support and refuge of the pious saints.

1. EK.: No caste-distinction should be considered about the devotees of Viṣṇu. Devotion and not caste is the criterion here. *EB.* 11. 1395-1408.

2. EK. says that the raised plot of earth should be like a cow and Śeṣa or Ananta, the supporter of the earth is to be worshipped. *EB.* 11. 1429-33.

49. Now, after this, listen to the top-most secret which deserves to be closely guarded[1] which, however, I am divulging to you as you are my servant (devotee), well-wisher and a friend, O scion of the Yadu race.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Importance of Association with Saints:
The Performance and Renunciation of Prescribed Karmas.

The Lord said:

1-2. Neither the path of Yoga (consisting of eight stages like postures—*āsanas*, breath-control—*prāṇāyāma*, etc.), nor the philosophy of Sāṅkhya (or the knowledge of twentyfour categories and the realization of *Puruṣa* being different from *Prakṛti*), nor the path of Dharma (consisting of non-violence, truth etc.), nor the recitation and study of the Vedas, nor penance (like the observances of vows like *Kṛchra*, (*Cāndrāyaṇa*), nor adoption of Sannyāsa (or renunciation) nor performance of sacrifices nor constructions of works of public amenities (like digging of wells, laying out gardens, construction of free lodging houses-*dharma-śālās*, etc.) nor religious gifts and donations, nor self-denying vows (such as fasting on the *Ekādaśi* day), nor *yajña* i.e. worship of gods), nor the internal repetition of mystic *mantras* nor ablutions in sacred waters nor the observance of rules of bodily and mental purity and discipline (*Niyama*) nor the vows of self-control[2] capture me in the heart of the devotee as does the association with saints which exterminates all attachments.

1. Out of the paths of knowledge and devotion, the path of devotion is superior and association with saints helps to accomplish this. The paths of knowledge and Yoga may or may not lead to liberation from *saṁsāra* as they are dependent. Association with saints is self-dependent and efficacious to enable one to cross the *saṁsāra* with certainty—ŚR.

2. EK.: Twelve vows of *Yama* and *Niyama* each.

3-6 It is through their association with saints that a number of demons (Daityas or Diti's sons), evil spirits (*Yātudhānas*), beasts, birds, Gandharvas (celestial musicians), Apsaras (celestial dancing girls), serpents, Siddhas, semidivine beings like Cāraṇas, Yakṣas and Vidyādharas, out of human beings persons of Vaiśya and Śūdra communities (merchants, peasants, cowherds and labourers), women and outcastes and other beings* dominated by *Rājasika* and *Tāmasa* nature, have attained to my region (*Vaikuṇṭha*) in various yugas, O sinless Uddhava.

Many (daityas and asuras like Vṛtra, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ, Prahlāda, the son of Kayādhū, Vṛṣaparva, Bali, Bāṇa, Maya and Bibhīṣaṇa; subhuman beings like) Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān, the bear and the elephant-king (of the well-known legend *Gajendra-mokṣa*); (birds like) Jaṭāyu (who gave his life for rescuing Sītā from Rāvaṇa);[1] Vaiśyas like Tulādhāra[2] and outcasts like the hunter Dharma-vyādha[3]; women like the hunch-backed Trivakrā, Gopīs of Vraja and the wives of Brāhmaṇa-sacrificers (described in the Skandha) and many others have attained to my place.

7. Those (above-mentioned) persons had not studied the Vedas; nor did they serve and sit at the feet of great scholars (for Vedic studies); they did not observe vow or perform austere penance.[4] But they attained to me, thanks to the association with pious saints.[5]

*. To this list EK. adds Guhaka and Jarā Vyādha who pierced Kṛṣṇa with an arrow.

GS. clarifies who was the saint associated with each of the individuals mentioned here: Thus the pairs of the demon and the associating saints were Prahlāda and Nārada; Bali and Prahlāda; Bāṇa and god Mahādeva; Bibhīṣaṇa and Hanumān.

1. *Vide* Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa (Araṇyakāṇḍa *sargas* 14,50,51, 67, 68).

2. A *vaiśya* of Kāśi. He imparted spiritual knowledge to sage jājali—(*MBH. Śānti*, chs. 261 and 262.)

3. Vyādha from Mithilā. He preached *dharma* to Kauśika, a Brahmin (*MBH. Vana*, chs. 207-216).

4. All these ways do not lead to *Mokṣa* and are inferior to *sat-saṅga* (association with saints).

5. VJ. states that Godhead is attained by them not without means—the means being *satsaṅga*.

8-9. It is only through the force of intensely loving devotion[1] (to me), that Gopīs, cows, trees, beasts and other dullwitted persons, serpents like Kāliya (of Vṛndāvana) became accomplished of their purpose and easily attained to me who am inaccessible to those who endeavour to realize me through Yoga, Sāṅkhya, liberal donations, observance of vows, austerities, performance of sacrifices, expounding of the sacred books, study of the Vedas and turning into a recluse *sannyāsin*).

10. When I was taken away along with Balarāma to Mathurā, by Akrūra, the son of śvaphalka, the Gopīs whose hearts were deeply attached to me through intense devotion, felt excrusiating pangs of separation from me, as they had none else (in view) who could give them spiritual bliss.[2]

11. Those various nights which they passed like half a second (lit. half the winking time of the eye-lids) while I was available for company (in *Rāsa* dance and various other sports) at Vṛndāvana, were, after separation from me, felt by them as long as a *kalpa* (432 million years of mortals).

12. Just as sages lost in meditation are not conscious of (their bodies and the world consisting of) names and forms, or even as rivers after entering into the sea (lose their identity of name and from and become one with the sea), the Gopīs

1. With VR. God should be the object of intense passion—be it love or hatred and it leads to *mokṣa*

(*bhāvo'tra kāma-bhayadveṣādi-rūpā'bhiprāyu-viśeṣa-paraḥ..tasya kaivalyaṁ nāma paratvam utkṛṣṭatvam iti yāvat*).

But VJ refutes it. According to VJ.. Devotion is the highest form of love. The word *Kevalena* excludes hate or other feelings and other courses for attaining to God. *Kevalena viśeṣaṇāt na dveṣa-yuktā bhaktir mukti-sādhanam* —VJ.. Even before realisation by Śāstric knowledge the dullwitted were devotees.

2. EK. in commenting on verses 10-13 loses himself in poetic ecstasy in describing the spiritual love of Gopis and Lord Kṛṣṇa's response to them. In the beautiful description of *Rāsalīlā* and other sports, there is nothing earthy—on a lower sexual plane. Though, the Gopis were ignorant they felt the force of Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme nature and the Love divine. Their intense devotion and pure love were beyond the capacity of a man to requite and elevate them to their blessed state. There was nothing sexy about the Gopis. As EK. puts it, their desire for Kṛṣṇa wiped out all sexual desire from them (12.153-157). The whole passage (*EB*. 12.124-214) deserves to be read from the original.

whose hearts fastened with exclusive love and devotion to me, became totally unconscious of this (i. e. their own person, their close relatives like husbands and sons and this world as well as that (which was at a distance i.e. even the next world).

13. Ignorant of my essential supreme nature, the Gopa women were enamoured of me whom they regarded not only their lover but a paramour.[1] Hundreds and thousands of such women in this way attained to the Supreme Brahman by contact with me. (It is through contact with the good that Gopīs came to know me to be the Supreme Person and attained Mokṣa).

14-15. Hence, O Uddhava, (transcending everything) ignore Vedic injunctions and prohibitions, renounce both *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti* types of *karmas*, and give up what is learnt and what is to be learnt. With exclusive devotion to me seek shelter in me only who am the Soul of all embodied beings. Protected by me, you will have no fear from any quarter i.e. you will attain *Mokṣa*)

Uddhava submitted[2]:

16. Even though I have been attentively listening to your speech, O Lord of experts in yoga, the doubt in my mind is not resolved and my mind is puzzled.

1. VJ. explains 'jāra' as one who wears out (erases) *saṁsāra*.

EK. explains that Kṛṣṇa did not go to any Gopī's house but as soon as a Gopī felt passion for Kṛṣṇa, he immediately satisfied it (mentally?). Just as when a piece of stone touches the *Vairāgara*, the stone is instantly transformed into a diamond, the (mental) contact wtth Kṛṣṇa transformed Gopis into *Bhaktas* and all were absorbed in *Brahman*. Association with the good is so efficacious.

—*EB*. 12. 191-214.

2. Uddhava's doubt is natural. Kṛṣna started with the advice of doing the *Karmas* prescribed by him in the Vedas and *Pañcarātra Āgama*. Now he asks to renounce all *Karmas*, Vedic injunctions and interdictions. The first doubt is whether the soul is the agent of an act; and secondly whether prescribed *karmas* should be performed or renounced—ŚR.

*17. This is that perceptible Supreme Lord who infuses life in all and who manifests himself wthin the nerve-centres or plexuses (*cakras*) known as *Mūlādhāra* and others (existing in the internal parts of the human body). With the *prāṇa* impregnated with *nāda* (called *parā* speech), he enters the 'cave' (known as *ādhāra cakra*, located near the anus). He proceeds (ahead) assuming the subtle mental form (known as *paśyanti*, and *Madhyamā* forms of speech in the spiritul plexuses called *Maṇipūra* and *Viśuddhi* located at the navel[1] and at the throat[2] respectively. He reveals Himself in the mouth in the from of short and long notes, accents (such as *udātta*, *anudātta* and *svarita*) and articulate sounds (like the velars, palatals, dentals, etc.). This is the grossest speech-form (called *Vaikhari*) of the Vedas and its branches.[3]

**18. Just as fire which exists in the subtle unmanifest form as heat in the atmosphere (the sky), when churned with force and helped by the wind manifests itself as a spark (which

*. EK. was an expert *yogi*. He took this opportunity to explain the five main and five subsidiary varieties of *prāṇa* (the vital air), their places and functions. He further explains the details of the six *cakras*, the 'unbeaten'—everexisting sound, the development of speech from the subtle (*parā*) stage to its gross (*Vaikharī*) stage. He goes out of way and explains the progress of the Yogi from the *Ājñā cakra to the sahasrāra*—the final stage in Yoga. (*EB*. 12.311-352). He adopts reflection theory (*bimba-pratibimbavāda*) and assumption of the body by the Soul is called 'entry into the cave' (293)

1. *tad ūrdhve nābhi-deśe tu Maṇipūram mahāprabham /*
maṇivad bhinnam tat padmam Maṇipūram tathocyate//

A Tantra-work quoted in *ŚKD* (*Śabda-Kalpa-druma* vol.III P.576)

2. *ŚKD* Vol.IV p.436. It is the source of all the 16 vowels. Both the *Tantra* work and *Tantra-sāra* are quoted here.

3. SR. quotes *catvāri vāk parimitā padāni* etc. from RV.1. 164.45 (also AV. 9.10.27) which states that the first three forms of speech being hidden in the cave are not known to men. It is the 4th form—*Vaikharī*—whereby they communicate. In explanation of the above *Śruti*, ŚR. quotes a verse from a hymn to the Sun (*Sūrya-Stuti*) from *Sāmba pañcāśikā*. Both of them are quoted by GS. VD and others.

**. VR.: The function of the organ of speech is under my control (*vāgindriya-vyāpārasya..ātmāyattatām cāha*) VJ. Vedic speech is the medium of my manifestation (*viśeṣeṇa Vedādikam mama vyakti-sthānam/*)

is the middle form). When it is oblated by offerings of ghee (and other sacrificial objects) it flares up ablaze (in gross form), similarly, I (who am unmanifest) manifest myself in the form of (Vedic) speech.

19. (Just as the articulate speech is my manifestation) manual activity, locomotion, evacuation of the bowels, urination, functions of the cognitive and conative organs (such as perception of smell, taste, sight, touch and audition), the determination in mind, cognition or discriminative knowledge identification of body and the Soul (the ego), *Sūtra* (or *Pradhāna*), the modifications of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*[1] (the whole of the universe)—all are my manifestation.

*20. This life-giving Principle—*Īśvara* designated as *jīva*-was certainly manifest, eternal and one without a second (in the beginning). He is the shelter of the three *guṇas—sattva, rajas* and *tamas* (or he assumed three *guṇas*). He is the source (creator) of the lotus in the form of the universe. In course of time, due to the development of the powers of speech and other organs (by embracing *Māyā*) he appears as many just as a seed sown in fertile soil sprouts forth in different shapes (like the different-shaped parts of the tree grown out of that seed).

1. VJ. interprets some terms differently. Thus *Saṅkalpa*=the mind, *Vijñāna*=Intellect (*buddhi*), *Abhimāna*=a particular working of the mind, *Sūtra—Vāyu*, modifications like *Sattva-tamas*=the egg of the universe and other things.

*. VR.: This (*jīva*) is certainly atomic, essentially unchangeable, eternal and one by nature. He is dependent on three *guṇas* (*guṇa-traya vaśyaḥ*) and is subjected to birth in the universe which is the product of water. In the course of time, his power is depleted due to the notion of ego, identification of the body with the soul etc. and appears many in the form of a god or a human being, etc., just as seeds sown in soils (of different constituents) appear different according to the components of the soil.

VJ.: Next to me and Lakṣmī, Brahmā who was born out of lotus, was the first *Jīva* or the possessor of three attributes—knowledge, bliss and power. He is subtle, the first-born. He created the principles from Ego (*ahaṁkāra*) to *Pṛthvī* (the earth) and entered into them without diminishing his powers. To the knowers of the Truth, he appears in many forms to control his creation just as rice and other needs grow forth in many sprouts.

21. Just as a piece of cloth exists in the expanse of the threads (of which it is woven), it is in this (*Ātman* or God) in whom the entire universe is woven warp and woof (i. e. God pervades the universe internally and externally. But just as Threads can exist in the absence of cloth—for example before weaving,—God can pre-exist and post-exist the universe, but the universe cannot exist independent of God). This tree of *saṃsāra* is so old that it has no beginning. It has an inherent tendency to *karmas* (actions). It puts forth flowers and fruits in the form of enjoyment and liberation from *saṃsāra*. (Understanding this nature of *saṃsāra*, one should give up *karmas* or activities with attachment).

*22. This tree (of *saṁsāra*) has two seeds—merit (*puṇya*) and sin (*pāpa*), hundred (s) of roots (viz. innumerable cravings). The three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) are its three stalks. The five elemens (*mahābhūtas*) are its main branches, which exude five kinds of juice (sap, viz. sound, taste, touch and such other five objects of enjoyment of the five cognitive senses). It has eleven subsidiary branches in the form of five cognitive and five conative sense-organs and the internal organ (viz., the mind). Two fine-winged birds (viz. the *tri-doṣas* or humours of the body such as wind, bile and phlegm). It bears two fruits, viz. pleasure and pain. It extends right upto the solar region (The *Yogis* who make their way through the sphere of the Sun transcend *saṁsāra*.

23. (Persons attached to *saṁsāra* are the avaracious) vultures which frequent the villages and being greedy eat but one fruit (viz. misery—Even the merit leading to the heaven results in misery and hence is of the nature of misery. The other birds (recluses who have renounced *saṁsāra* are full of discrimination and stay away in forests. They are the swans—(*Haṁsas*-a higher order among recluses) who eat of the other fruit (of eternal bliss. He who realizes through the service and grace of

*. VJ. attributes different significance to different numbers in this verse: Thus the two seeds of the universe are Brahmā and Sarasvati. Rudra Indra and Candra, the presiding deities over the Ego, Intellect and the Mind are the three stalks. The birds are two classes of people—the followers of *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*, the three barks are the three *guṇas*. The two fruits are the *karmas* leading to *saṁsāra* and those leading to *Mokṣa* (Liberation).

spiritual preceptors that it is the One Supreme Soul who appears in multifarious forms through his Māyā power (out of his desire to be many), has really understood the (essence of the) Vedas.

24. In this way by propitiating and serving the spiritua preceptor and through exclusive devotion unto me, and with the keen-edged axe of spiritual knowledge, cut asunder the subtle body environing the *jīva* (which causes rebirth). Remaining perfectly vigilant, a (spiritually) wise person should attain to *Ātman*. It is after this (attainment to *Ātman*) that you should abandon even the weapon called Vidyā (with which you cut off the subtle body of the *jīva*.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Spiritual Knowledge Imparted by the Divine Swan

The Lord said :

1. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are the attributes of the Intellect (*Buddhi* called here as *Prakṛti*) and not of the Self. Therefore by (re-inforcing the attribute) *Sattva*, one should overcome (the tendencies of) the other two (viz. *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and then by developing *Sattva* (in the form of perfect tranquility) one should subdue *Sattva* (characterised by virtues like truthfulness, etc.)

2. When *Sattva* becomes dominant, it develops in Man *dharma* which is characterised by devotion to me. *Sattva* develops by use of *Sāttvika* things and then leads to *dharma* which is of the nature of Devotion to God.

3. Righteousness characterised by devotion to me is the best form of virtue. It enhances the potency of *Sattva* which eliminates *Rajas* and *Tamas*. When these two are weeded out, unrighteousness which has its roots in these two is automatically exterminated.

4*. Scriptures, water, progeny, sacred places, time, acts, birth, meditation, mantras and purificatory rites—these ten factors are the determinants in promoting a *guṇa*.

5. (Out of these) whatever is approved of as *Sāttvika* by persons expert in *Śāstras* and of mature judgement is (reliably) *Sāttvika*; (the acts, etc.) that they censure is *Tāmasa* and that about which they are indifferent is *Rājasa*.

6. For the purpose of development of *Sattva guṇa*, one should use *Sāttvika* things.[1] *Sattva guṇa* leads to righteousness from which spiritual wisdom arises and it (goes on developing till it) results in the attainment of Self realization which eliminates ignorance and *guṇas* whereby the gross and subtle bodies come into being.[2]

7. Just as forest-conflagration caused by the friction of bamboos gets extinguished after completely burning down the bamboo forest, in the same manner this body which is the pro-

* BP. enumerates these on the basis of ŚR's explanation of the 6th verse but has given it a sectarian Vaiṣṇavite turn to the list as follows:

(1) Scriptures e.g. Vedas and Āgamas like Pāñcarātra, (2) Sacred waters like those of holy rivers like the Gaṅgā, (3) *Prajā*—saintly people (4) Lonely place (proper for meditation), (5) Time—like *Brāhma Muhūrta* (roughly 4 a.m. to 6 a.m.); (6) acts done without any attachment or expectation in return; (7) birth-life after the thread ceremony or the initiation for a sacrifice (8) Meditation on Viṣṇu; (9) Mantra (sacred formula about Viṣṇu such as *Om namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*); (10) rites—*Vaiṣṇavite ones* such as branding god's names on one's person, wearing Vaiṣṇavite mark of sandal, etc. on the forehead.

1. ŚR. enumerates them as follows: (1) Scriptures leading to renunciation of *Saṁsāra*, and not heretic texts or those of the path of *Pravṛtti* (*Karma-mārga*); (2) Sacred waters and not scented water or wine; (3) Recluses or saints who have renounced their household and *saṁsāra*; (4) Brāhma-*muhūrta* for meditation ; (5) Daily religious duties not acts with a desire (for heaven) or black magic; (6) Birth i.e. initiation into the Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva path but not those of Śāktas, (7) meditation of god Viṣṇu; (8) *Mantra* like *OM* (9) Purificatory rites pertaining to one's mind.

2. To the argument that knowledge arises by listening to the 'great sentence' (*that art thou*) and hence the development of *Sattva* or *Dharma* are superfluous; ŚR. explains that spiritual Knowledge increases to that

duct of the unequal forces of *guṇas* ceases to be by the mutual friction and destruction of the *guṇas*.

Uddhava said :

8. How is it that people indulge into enjoyment of sense-objects like a dog or a mule or a goat, even though most of the mortals generally know that enjoyment of such objects is the source of calamities.

The Lord replied :

9. The perverted notion[1] of I-ness (identifying the body with the soul) springs up in the heart of a deluded person with such a force that the terrible *rajas* takes (complete) possession of the mind though (originally) it (the mind) is born of *Sattva*.

10. In the mind of a person bedevilled by the *Rajas*, arises first the notion of enjoyability of an object and then the special enjoyable features (and thoughts about the ways and means of attaining them) are thoroughly rooted in it. Ultimately owing to constant thinking on the excellent aspects of the objects, an irresistible passion for them is engendered in the mind of men of such perverted notion.

11. Being completely diluted (and swept off) by the vehemence of the *Rajas*, he loses his control over his senses and organs and being at the mercy of his carnal desires, rushes into acts even though he clearly foresees their painful consequences.

12. Although a man of knowledge and wisdom may get his intellect distracted and overpowered by *Rajas* and *Tamas*, he should assiduously and with alertness control his mind and realizing the evil consequences (of the enjoyment of such objects) should not be attached to them.

13. Having achieved steadiness or bodily posture and control over the breath, one should, at the proper fixed time, gradually concentrate his mind on Me with vigilance and without feeling despondent (in case of distractions).

much extent to which one realises the one-ness of *Jīva* and God and ignorance causing the bondage of the subtle and gross body recedes.

1. That one is an independent agent of an action—VJ.

14. The means whereby the mind can be withdrawn from all other objects and can be easily and properly concentrated in me has been proclaimed by me through my disciples like Sanaka and others.

Uddhava submitted :

15. I wish to know the form you assumed when you imparted the knowledge of this *Yoga* to Sanaka and others (as they were earliest in creation and as such much anterior to you who are born at the fag end of Dvāpara.

The Lord replied :

16. Sanaka and others, the mind-born sons of god Brahmā asked their father about the subtle and the ultimate stage of yoga[1] (or the knowledge or realization of the Lord).

Sanaka and others submitted

17. O Lord ! The mind naturally gets attached (and enters) the objects of enjoyment, while the objects (so enjoyed) enter into the mind (by implanting themselves as latencies). How can a person wishing to transcend them both in order to get himself liberated from *Saṁsāra* divorce them mutually ?

The Lord said :

18. At this submission of the problem, the great self-created god Brahmā, the Creator of all beings, contemplated deeply over it, but as his mind was engrossed in the activity of creation, he could not pin-point the root of the question.

19. With the desire of knowing the solution of the problem (lit. going to the other end of the question) god Brahmadeva concentrated his mind on me Assuming the form of a swan[2] I presented myself near him.

1. About the subtle process of Yoga and the nature of the Soul (or the Lord)—EK.

2. Just as a swan has the capability to separate milk from water (if a mixture of the two is presented to it), the Lord went there to show them the process of separating the object of senses from the mind—ŚR.

20. Seeing me, they approached me and bowed my feet, with god Brahmā as their leader, they enquired of me (through Brahmā) 'Who are You ?'

21. When I was thus accosted by the sages who were eager to know the truth, please listen attentively from me, O Uddhava, what I explained to them.

22*. If there be non-difference or non-multiplicity in the reality (i. e. the real entity) of the Soul (and if you are putting the question with reference to the Soul), how can such a question arise, O Brāhmaṇas, and on what basis can I reply (as due to one-ness of Soul, I cease to be a distinct entity).

23 ** (If your question is relating to this physical body of mine it is equally meaningless). When, in reality (from the point of the constituents of the physical bodies of all beings) all beings are the same substance inasmuch as they are constituted of the same five gross elements. Hence the question "Who are you" is merely a verbal expression signifying nothing.[1]

24. Please grasp this firmly that whatever is perceived by mind, expressed by speech or apprehended by sight or by any other sense is Me and nothing else but Myself

25.*** The mind enters (gets enmeshed) in the objects of senses and the objects (permanently) imprint (their latencies)

*(i) The question "Who are you" is untenable as both sentient and non-sentient entities and the Paramātman are one. For I am the Inner-Controller of you all—The questioners.

evam praṣṭṛ-ṇāṁ yuṣmākam apyaham antarāmte'tyuktam bhavati)

—VR.

(ii) If in your view, the reality about Paramātman be one (not-many) how can the question "Who are you" be tenable ? If you presume manyness of the reality, the use of the singular number to many is untenable.

(*anekasmin bahutva-saṁkhyā-viśiṣṭe vastuni ekatvasaṅkhyā-viśiṣṭatvena vaktum anupapannatvāt*)

—VJ.

** All the five categories of beings viz., gods, human beings, manes (*pitṛs*), Gandharvas and Asuras are inferior to Hiraṇyagarbha and are not fit to be worshipped and as such are equals. Owing to this uniqueness of mine whom god Brahmā and others worship, this question is superfluous

—VJ.

1. *vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyam—Chāndogya Up.* 6.1-4

*** Both *guṇas* (objects of senses) and the mind get burnt by the fire of knowledge—VJ.

on the mind and both the objects and the mind constitute the body of the *jīva* whose soul is I myself, O my (grand) sons.[1]

26.* Realizing my one-ness with him, the *jīva* should renounce (and free himself from the bonds of) both the mind which gets involved into sense-objects by constantly indulging into them and the sense-objects born of the mind which leave their imprints on it. (in the form of reminiscences).

27. Wakefulness, the dream-state and deep sleep are the three states of the mind caused by the (dominance of) three *guṇas*,[2] the *jīva*, being the witness of these states, is conclusively determined to be distinct from them.

28.** As this bondage is superimposed on the *Ātman* by *Buddhi* (mind or intellect) and is thus the cause of *saṁsāra* (involvement in the cycle of births and deaths) and as this (wrongly) attributes the functions of *guṇas* to *Ātman*, one should firmly establish oneself in me who, as the fourth state, transcend those three states (and thus give up this bondage). And hereby the mind and the sense objects get (automatically) divorced.

29. Comprehending thoroughly that bondage is caused to the Soul due to Ahaṁkāra (false identification of the body with the Soul) and that it compromises the original blissful nature of the Soul, and is thus the cause of misery, he should abhor it. He should (then) establish himself (through meditation) in the fourth state, viz. Lord Vāsudeva and give up all thoughts about sense objects (and be free from the fear of *saṁsāra*.

30. So long as the notion regarding the reality of diver-

1. The combination of the objects of senses and the mind which constitutes the body is an adjunct or the limiting condition superimposed on *jīva* which is essentially *Brahman*—ŚR.

*. It is by contemplation of my essential nature that both are divorced from each other. *madrūpe cintyamāne sati..cittaṁ guṇāṁstyajati guṇāś cittaṁ tyajanti*—VR.

2. VR quotes an authority which attributes wakefulness to *sattva*, the dream-state to *rajas* and deep sleep to *tamas*.

** (The gist only) *Paramātman* is not affected by the three states (viz. wakefulness, dream and deep sleep). When the *jīva* who is a part of *Paramātman's* body becomes firmly established in him, he transcends these three states and works out the divorce between the objects (*guṇas*) and the mind—VR.

sity[1] (in the world) is not completely removed by means of various reasonings, the man is (as good as) asleep (i. e. ignorant)[2] though he be awake i. e. deligent in performing *karmas*, like unto a dreamer thinking himself awake while he is actually in a dream.

31. All objects other than the self (e. g. the physical body) being unreal, the differences created by them (for example difference in *varṇas*, castes and *Āśramas*—stages in human life), the goals promised (e. g. godhood in the heaven) and their causes (viz. acts prescribed in the *Vedas* for attaining these goals) are all unreal and non-existent like scenes in a dream.

32.* He who, while in the waking state, experiences through all his cognitive and conative sense-organs the external objects which are transient and changing every moment, who, while in the dream state, enjoys mentally objects similar (to those perceived in wakeful condition) and who, in deep sleep, withdraws them all, is one and the same, the controller of all sense-organs and the witness of the three states (of wakefulness, dream and deep slumber), as he (being the common factor in these states), remembers them all.

33. Having reasoned thus logically and arrived at the definite conclusion that these three stages of the mind (describ-

1. *nānārthadhīḥ*—(i) VR: Failure to understand the difference between the body and the soul or intelligent being leading to the misconception of difference as god, man, etc.

(ii) VJ.: The mistaken notion that the *jīva* is not different from Hari and Hari has become many and the *jīva* is an independent agent. He quotes as his authority (without naming).

bhinnasya tveka-bhāvena tathaikasya ca bhedataḥ /
Jñānaṁ nānārtha-dhīḥ proktā //

2. *ajña*—One who cannot see the reality correctly as it is (*asamyag-darśī*)

* VJ : Lord Hari, present in the right eye, and known as *Viśva*, shows to *jīva* (who is ever dependent on him) various momentary things in the wakeful state. Viṣṇu is present in the throat and is the controller of senses and is called *Taijasa*. He shows in the dream state all objects similar to those in wakeful condition and their imprints are in the heart. In the state of deep sleep, he is present in the heart and is called *Prājña*. He withdraws all senses, gives the bliss of sleep to the *jīva*. As noted by *Smṛtis* as well as *Śrutis*, Hari, the Supreme Lord, is the Ruler of senses and the witness of the three stages of wakefulness, dream and deep slumber. Hence to regard *Paramātman* and *jīva* as identical is a mistake.

ed above) are caused by the (three) *gunas* (of Māyā) and are superimposed on me (as *jīva*) by my own deluding potency, and having cut asunder the Ego (*Ahaṁkāra*), the root and receptacle of all doubts (about the identity of *Paramātman* and the *jīva*) the plurality of *jīvas*, etc.) with the sharp sword of knowledge whetted by inference (arrived at by logical concomitance and discontinuation), by precepts of the saints (as well by śruti texts (*Brahma Sūtras* and *Upaniṣads*), a person should contemplate me as abiding in his heart.

34.* One should realize that this (phenomenal world) is simply an illusion, only a play or work of the mind, which is just apparent and evanescent, extremely unsteady like the illusion of a circle described by a revolving fire-brand. He should see through it that consciousness, though one, appears as many and that threefold difference in states brought about by the projection of the three *guṇas* is nothing but Māyā (illusion).

35. Having withdrawn his eye (thoughts) from that (visible world, his body, etc.), he should rid himself of all thirsts (the *eṣaṇās*—desire for money, reputations, etc.) and remain inactive and silent. Thus becoming desireless, he should remain absorbed in the bliss of self-realisation, If, in spite of this, the body, etc. is perceived (when not in meditation) for sheer physical needs such as due to hunger, thirst, calls of nature), it, having been once discarded as unreal (and something other than the *Ātman*), will not (be powerful enough to) create any misapprehension or illusion (and disturb one's meditation), although the memory or the impressions of the body or of the phenomenal world may remain till the death of one's body.

36. A person who has attained perfection in spiritual wisdom (and is absorbed in the bliss of the Soul) is not conscious whether his transient body is in the sitting posture or standing, even though by means of that very body he has realiz-

*. VJ. (Only the difference in interpretation noted) One should realize that *Paramātman* becomes many under different conditions is a wrong notion. To regard *Vijñāna* or blissful Brahman as different in different forms is a mis-apprehension. It is the wrong notion projected by the three *guṇas*, sins and other conditions.

(*Sattvādibhis tribhir guṇais tat-sargais tat-kāryaiḥ pāpādibhiḥ kṛtaḥ paryāpta-vikalpo mithyājñānam iti śeṣaḥ*)

ed the essential nature of his *Ātman*. He is unaware if his body comes or goes to any place according to his *Karma* or the will of the Lord, just as a man dead drunk with wine is not conscious whether his garment is on his person or has fallen off.

37. So long as the fund of merits and demerits (*Karmas*) which has brought the body into being, is not exhausted, this body (along with its vital principle and sense-organs) definitely continues to survive, as it is under the control of the Providence. But a person who has mastered all the stages of Yoga till the final stage called *Samādhi* (Perfect concentration and absorption in the *Ātman*) and has realized Reality, does not resort to the dreamlike unreal world (his body, relation, property, etc) any more than an awakened person to the objects in the dream.

38. What has been expounded by me now to you, O, Brāhmaṇas, is the secret essence of the paths of Sāṅkhya and Yoga. Please know me to be Yajña, Lord Viṣṇu himself who has come here with the object of teaching (and explaining) to you (the secret of) the righteous path.

39. I am the ultimate goal of the paths of Sāṅkhya and Yoga, of virtue (both in its theoretical and practical aspects), of prowess, of prosperity, of glory and of selfcontrol, O the best of Brāhmaṇas.

40. All excellent attributes like impartiality, non-attachment which are not caused by the qualities like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, find an asylum in me who am devoid of ordinary qualities and above wants, the friend (of all beings), nay the very Soul of them all.

41. In this way, sages like Sanaka and others got their doubts explained by me. Having worshipped me with intense devotion, they extolled me in hymns and praise.

42. Duly worshipped by them and celebrated in hymns by the great sages, I returned to my own region while Brahmā and other sages were just witnessing.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Path of Devotion and the Method of Meditation

Uddhava said :

1. Expert expositors of Vedas state that there are many courses leading to the final emancipation of the Soul. Are they important in their own way depending on the adopter or is one of them prominent (in preference to the rest), O Kṛṣṇa ?

2. The path of Devotion which is self-dependent (or disinterested) has been taught by you, O Lord. By following it, all attachment is warded off and the mind establishes itself in you.

The Lord replied :

3. In due course of time, this word of Mine which came to be designated as the *Veda* became extinct at the time of Deluge. At the beginning of Creation (of the universe), I communicated it to god Brahmā. It consisted of the *dharma* (the righteous duty) of devoting one's mind to me exclusively.

4. The Lore was taught by Brahmā to his eldest son (Svāyambhuva) Manu. From him (Manu) the seven Brāhmaṇa sages, Bhṛgu and others, learnt it.

5-6. From those fathers (of creation) their progeny, gods, Dānavas (demons), Guhyakas (Yakṣas) human beings, Siddhas Gandharvas, Cāraṇas, Kindevas (secondary deities), Kinnaras Nāgas (serpents), Rākṣasas (Ogres), Kiṁpuruṣas (sub-human species with man-like appearance) and others learnt it. But being born with the dominance of different proportion of) attributes like *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* they were of varied natural proclivities.

7. The natural tendencies which distinguish the different species from one another, differentiate their understanding as well. It is according to the nature of these that different and varied verbal expression (and interpretation of the *Vedas*) severally flow out.

8. It is in this manner that due to a variety in their natures, there is a diversity of understanding owing to hereditary and traditional interpretations (even though they them-

selves have not studied the Vedas) while others accept anti-Vedic heretic views.

9. Men whose minds are deluded by my *Māyā* enunciate various means of achieving the highest good according to their past acts (*Karmas*) and tastes.

10. Some (i. e. *Mīmāṃsakas*) hold that performance of (sacrifices and other) acts prescribed in the Vedas leads to the *summum bonum*; others (viz. poets and writers on rhetorics) regard (good) renown as the highest blessing. Sages like Vātsyāyana regard sexual enjoyment as the highest blessing; Yogīs advocate truthfulness, self-control and quiescence (as leading to the highest goal). Realists (like politicians) say that affluence, executive power as the highest purpose in life; some regard performance of sacrifices, worship of deities, austerities, gifts, self-denial (like the vows *yama* and *niyama*) as the highest goal in life while materialists advocate liberality and enjoyment as the highest goal.

11. All these (above-mentioned) regions are the culminations of their acts and as such they have a beginning and an end (i. e. are temporary). They give rise to grief, end up in ignorance, afford trivial pleasures and are full of grief and anxiety (even while they are being enjoyed).

12. O gentle Uddhava ! How can the (incomparable) happiness be enjoyed by people who have given themselves to sensual pleasure—the happiness which is shared with me by persons who have given up attachment to all things without expecting anything in return, and have dedicated their mind to me.

13. All quarters are blissful unto him who owns nothing in this world, is self-controlled, serene in mind, regards all as equals and finds perfect delight in me.

14. He who has dedicated his heart to me does not hanker after the highest post (of god Brahmā) or the position of the rulership over gods or sovereignty over men or lordship over the subterranean regions or the mystic power of yoga or the Final Emancipation (*Mokṣa*) from which there is no return to *Saṃsāra*. He wishes to have nothing else but me.

15. Neither god Brahmā (who is born from me) nor Śaṅkara nor Saṅkarṣaṇa (my brother Balarāma) nor my

Consort, goddess Śrī, nay not even my Soul is so dear to me as (a devotee like) you.

16. I always follow the foot-steps of a sage who expects nothing (in return for his penance or service), is tranquil, free from the feeling of enmity, looking all with an equal eye (regarding all impartially as equals), so that I can get myself[1] purified

17. Others cannot comprehend (much less realize), the immeasurable extent of the pure blissful state of mine which is unsullied by desires but which is enjoyed by the ego-less exalted souls who are perfect 'have-nots' (possessing nothing), and whose hearts are not attached to anything but are exclusively devoted to me; whose minds are tranquil, full of kindness to all beings, and whose hearts are untouched by desires.

18. My devotee, who (in the primary stage), may not have control over his senses, will be disturbed by (the attraction of) the objects of senses, but is not generally overpowered by them due to his intense growing devotion.

19. Just as fire which is ablaze with flames reduces fuel to ashes, similarly devotion concentrated on me, burns down all the sins, O Uddhava.

20. Neither the path of Yoga nor that of Sāṅkhya or Dharma (righteous duties prescribed by Veda) or the study of the Vedas or performance of austerities or renunciation lead a person attain to me as does the intensive and well-advanced devotion.

21. I, the very beloved soul of saints, am realized through unswerving devotion and faith. Exclusive devotion established in me purifies even outcastes like the *cāṇḍālas* from their lowly birth.

22. Neither Dharma (righteousness even though) coupled with truthfulness and mercy nor knowledge reinforced by austerities can thoroughly purify of sins a person who is devoid of devotion.

23. How can the heart be cleansed of impurities without the development of Devotion ? And can intense devotion be

1. ŚR.: So that I can purify all the worlds which abide in me.

indicated if the hairs do not stand (out of devotional love), and the heart melted with intense emotion (for god) and the tears of joy trickled down (the cheeks).

24. He is really overwhelmed with intense devotion whose voice is choked with emotion and oral expression is faltering, whose heart melts (through his love for the Lord), who laments frequently (at his separation from the Lord) and laughs at time (with the sweet memory of the Lord's mercy). Throwing away all bashfulness (or unmindful of social etiquettes), he sings loudly and dances—such a person endowed with my devotion purifies the world.

25. Just as gold, when heated in fire, sheds off its dross and attains its pure state, so also the Soul rids himself of his impurities (and imprints of previous *karmas*) in heart through (intense) devotion to me and immediately gets absorbed in me. (lit. resorts to me).

26. The more the heart (of a person) gets purified by constantly) listening to and glorifying my sanctifying storties (and repeating my name), the more it is able to visualize the subtle thing (viz. *Paramātman*), just as the eye can perceive minute objects (or underground treasures) when medicinal (or mystically charged) collyrium is applied to it

27. (Just as) the mind of a person constantly brooding over objects of senses gets attached to them, the mind of a person who is constantly meditating on me becomes absorbed in me.

28. Therefore giving up all thoughts of unreal worthless worldly objects as imaginary things or cravings in a dream you should purify your mind with exclusive devotion unto me and firmly concentrate it on me.

29. Avoiding from a distance association with women and those associated with women[1] (and those who cherish the misleading notion of one's identity with the Lord), a person should subdue his mind and sit in a comfortable secure solitary place and contemplate on me shedding off all sluggishness.

30. No such trouble or bondage would take place in association with others as a person would suffer in the company of women or those who are addicted to women.

1. and works like Vātsyāyana's *Kāma-sūtra* (ŚR)

Uddhava submitted:

31. May you be pleased, O Lord of Lotus-eyes to enlighten me on the methodology of meditation—in what manner, in what form and as what, a person desirous of Liberation should contemplate you.

The Lord explained:

32-33. Seated on a level seat (which is neither too high nor too low and is covered with a soft blanket (keeping) one's body erect, in a comfortable bodily posture (not necessarily a particular yogic posture like Padmāsana), placing the palms (open) on the laps and fixing one's gaze on the tip of the nose (for mental concentration), one should cleanse the path of vital breath (the respiratory system) by the process of *Prāṇāyāma*—slow inhalation (with the left nostril) called *Pūraka*, retention of breath known as *Kumbhaka* and slow exhalation of *Recaka* (with the right nostril) and in the reverse order, one should slowly practice it (*prāṇāyāma*) retaining all the while control over the senses (technically known as *pratyāhāra*).

34. One should propel with one's breath the sacred sound Oṁ which, like a fine thread of lotus, is uninterruptedly jingling like a bell in the heart and then invest it with a nasal sound.[1]

35. In this way, he should invest his breath with *Praṇava* (Oṁ) and practise the breath-control ten times, at three times (morning, noon and the evening). Thus, he will attain control over his breath within a month.

36. He should contemplate that the heart that lies in the interior of his body like a lotus-bud drooping down with its stalk upwards (like the flower of a plantain tree) has blossomed with its eight petals and pericarp turned upwards and opened.

37. He should conceive that the son, the moon and the fire are placed one over the other in the pericarp (of that lotus). He should contemplate in that fire, my form so auspicious to meditate upon.

38. He should visualize my form as symmetrical, graciously gentle, with a charming countenance and four long beautiful arms, extremely graceful with a shapely neck, beautiful cheeks and bright smiles.

39. (He should contemplate my form as having) dazzling alligator-shaped ear-rings beautifying my symmetrical ears, wearing garments of cloth of gold, in complexion dark-blue like clouds, and bearing on (the right and left side of my bosom the Śrī-vatsa mark and the abode of the goddess Śrī.

40. (He should conceive my form as) embellished with a conch (*Pāñcajanya*), a discus (*Sudarśana*) a mace (*Kaumodakī*) a lotus and a garland of forest-flowers (*Vanamālā*), with feet embellished with shining anklets and surrounded with halo of effulgent Kaustubha gem.

41. (He should meditate on my form as) adorned with a resplendent crown, bracelets, a girdle and armlets, beautiful in every part of the body, fascinating to the heart and with beautiful countenance and eye shedding grace (on the devotees) and very comely and delicate. One should concentrate one's mind on all the parts of my form.

42. Having withdrawn one's senses from their objects, a wise person should, with the help of his intellect, the controller of the chariot in the form of one's body, direct it, concentrating on me completely.

43. After withdrawing the mind so spread over the whole of my personality, one should (try to) concentrate on one limb only. He should now no more think of other limbs but should contemplate on my countenance beaming with smiles.

44. Withdrawing his mind which is thus fixed up there

(on my face), he should (now) concentrate it on the sky (i.e. my form which is the ultimate cause of all). (Lastly) diverting his mind from that, he should establish himself in me, the Absolute Brahman, and should not think of anything else (merging all the distinction between the subject, object and the process of thinking).

45. When one has thus established his mind (and intellect in me, he visualises me in his own self and his self in me the Universal Soul, just as (an individual) light is merged with the elemental light.

46. The mind of a *yogi* who concentrates his mind in this extremely intensive course of meditation, will, in no time, attain to the state of *nirvāṇa* (perfect serenity and bliss) and the misapprehension regarding substance, knowledge and action (or the triad of the Seer, Seeing and the Seen or the three types of miseries resulting from Fate, beings or forces of nature) completely disappears.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Super-normal Powers Attained by Yoga

The glorious Lord continued:

1. Super-normal powers (*Siddhis*) attend upon a *yogin* who has subdued his senses, is devoted to me, has attained breath-control and has concentrated his mind on me.

Uddhava said:

2. By what (type of) concentration and by what methodology, what kind of super-normal power can be mastered? How many such mystic powers are there, O Acyuta ? You are the bestower of such powers to *Yogins* (and You alone know it).

The Lord explained:

3. Eighteen kinds of super-normal powers and (the same number of corresponding modes of) concentrations (for

attaining these *Siddhis*) have been proclaimed by those who are thoroughly proficient in Yoga. Out of them, eight are found in their perfection in me[1] (and are found to a lesser extent in those who have attained similarity of form to me) while the remaining ten are acquired by the increasing dominance of *sattva-guṇa.*

4. Atomization, levitation and magnification are the three super-normal powers pertaining to the physical body of the *Yogin.* The power called *prāpti* means the ability to act through the senses of others by establishing contacts with deities presiding over those senses (and thus a Yogi can control all beings); *Prākāmya* is the power to enjoy all things (in the heaven) described in the *śāstras* and those hidden under the earth as well as objects in the visible world. *Īśitā* 'Ruling capacity' is the ability to use Māyā (and other lower powers) for attaining one's desire.

5. *Vaśitā* (self-control) is non-attachment to objects of sensuous enjoyment[2] and the eighth super normal power is the ability to enjoy fully whatever pleasure one wishes (and hence it is called *Kāmāvasāyitā*). O gentle Uddhava, these eight powers are considered to be inherent in me[3] (to the highest degree).

6. Immunity from changes of this body (such as hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, old age and death), ability to see and hear from any distance, power of reaching bodily to one's desired destination with the speed of the mind, ability to assume any form (at will), capacity to enter the body of any other person (leaving one's own body in a secure place).

1. VR.: They are useful in attaining to me while the other ten are conducive to the enjoyment of objects in this world and lead to *saṁsāra* again.

EK.: They are attainable in their perfection only to those who have established themselves in me but they, being absorbed in me and unaware even of their body, are indifferent to them. The remaining ten manifest and present themselves to a person full of pure *sattva.* —*EB.* 15. 38-41.

2. Whereby one attains my characteristics—EK.

3. It is only one of these super-normal powers, that the aspirant after me can hope to get after utmost efforts—EK.

7. (Ability) to cast off one's body at will, (capacity) to see (and participate) in the sports of gods with celestial nymphs, the accomplishment of one's desired objects and ability to exercise authority without any obstruction or insubordinate.

(These ten are the minor mystical powers).

8. Ability to know the past, present and the future, mastery over and capacity to remain unaffected by the pairs of opposites (like heat and cold, pleasure and pain, etc.), capacity to read the minds of others, the power to neutralise the effects of the fire, the water, the poison and such other things and to suffer no defeat (in any undertaking).

9. These super-normal powers which are accomplished through specific Yogic concentrations have been specially mentioned by me. Now learn from me what type of mystic power is attained by which type of concentration and its procedure.

10. He who concentrates his mind (which also is subtle like an atom) on me as abiding in the subtle form of elements (*tanmātrās*) and adores me as a subtle element attains the power of atomizing his body.

11. Focusing his mind on me and contemplating me, the all-pervading Supreme Soul as ensouling the principle called *Mahat* and extending the mind to that dimension, attains the super-normal power of 'magnification' and concentrating the mind on me as abiding in any of the *bhūtas* (gross elements) he possesses the all-pervasiveness of that particular element.

12*. Having (concentratedly) devoted his mind on me as abiding in the atoms of the gross elements, (and meditating upon me as the subtlest of subtle division of Time) the *Yogin* attains the power of subtleness.

13. Having thoroughly concentrated his mind on me wholly as abiding in the Sāttvika type of Ego (*Ahaṁkāra*) and regarding me as the indwelling Soul of all the sense-organs, the *yogin* attains the mystic power called *Prāpti* (enabling him to function through the senses of others).

* VJ. Attaching his heart on me as the pervader of the most subtle division of time and the subtle-most atoms of the elements the *Yogin* attains the power of subtleness.

14. He who establishes his mind on me as abiding in the Sūtra (in its all-contacting aspect)[1] attains the mystic power of the highest order called *Prākāśya*[2] possessed by me as ensouling me in the *Mahat tattva* which is born of the *Avyakta*.

15. He who concentrates his mind on me as Viṣṇu (the pervader of universe), the Controller of the Māyā consisting of three *guṇas* and the Indweller of Time attains the mystic power of impelling all bodies and the individual souls.

16. The Yogin who focuses his mind on me as Nārāyaṇa, the Fourth Principle,[3] one specifically designated by the term 'Bhagavān'[4] attains the same characteristics as mine and becomes the master of power called *Vaśitā* (absolute non-attachment to everything though he controls them all).

17. The Yogī who concentrates his pure mind on me as the attributeless Brahman, attains Supreme Spiritual joy

1. VR. explains that although the *Mahat* is mentioned in the previous verse (No. 11) there the emphasis is on its physical aspects while here the *Sūtra* aspect of the *Mahat* connecting it with all things, is implied. VJ. interprets that the *Sūtra* is the chief vital breath (*mukhya prāṇa*) which pervades the *Mahat*.

2. According to VJ. *Prākāśya* is the supreme capacity to know the Vedas and everything else (*sarva-vedādi-jñāna-śraiṣṭhyāpādakam prākāśyam*) and it is obtained through the favour of Prāṇa, Bhāratī and Mahāviṣṇu:

Sarve guṇās tu Prāṇasya Paramātma-prasādataḥ/
prāṇa-Viṣṇoḥ prasādena bhāratyāḥ sampraklrtitāḥ//

EK. states that with this Supernormal power (when gifted by the Lord) the yogi is capable of creating crores of Brahmāṇḍas (*EB.* 15.85-86) But ŚR specifically asserts that the yogi never gets the power of creating the universe:

na tu viśva-sṛṣṭyādi-kartṛtva-Lakṣaṇam/

1. There have been different opinions about the previous three stages transcended before attaining the fourth: The following are the 1st three stages:

ŚR.: (1) *Virāṭ* (2) *Hiraṇyagarbha* and (3) *Kāraṇa*

EK.: (1) Jīva (2) Śiva and (3) Prakṛti

(2) Wakefulness (*jāgratī*), dream state (*svapna*) and deep sleep (*Suṣupti*)

2. ŚR quotes the famous verse which enumerates the six excellences of the Lord, viz. absolute mastery over the universe, perfect righteousness, highest glory, affluence, perfect knowledge and complete dispassion.

aiśvaryasya samagrasya, dharmasya, yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ/
jñāna-vairāgyayoścaiva ṣaṇṇāṁ bhaga itīraṇā//

and bliss when all desires cease altogether (Hence it is called *Kāmāvasāyitā*).

18. He who fixes his mind on me, the Lord of Śvetadvīpa, who am absolutely pure (uninfluenced by *Rajas*, and *Tamas*), and the very Dharma incarnate, attains whiteness (i.e. absolute purity untainted by *guṇas*), and becomes free from the six waves or changes (viz. hunger and thirst, old age and death, delusion and grief which affect all beings).

19. This swan (i.e. the individual soul) who mentally meditates on the (ever-abiding "unstruck" spiritual) sound in me who am the Soul of the sky (and the cosmic vital breath as well), attains the supernormal power of hearing (from any distance), the sounds of all beings (as all words or utterances repose in the sky.)

20. With his eye-sight united with the Sun and the Sun with eye and meditating on me in the solar-ocular union becomes endowed with a subtle vision and can view everything in the universe (This is the *dūra-darśana siddhi*).

21*. When the mind and the body along with the vital breath are properly established in me,[1] (one attains the miraculous power called *mano-java* and) due to the efficacy of this method of meditation. The body is transported (with the speed of the mind) wherever the mind goes (This is the "dūragamana-siddhi"—potency to go anywhere at will).

22. When a Yogī utilises his mind as the material cause and desires to assume whatever form he likes, he can transform himself that way at his sweet will, as he depends on the power of contemplating on me (who am of inconceivable potency and of innumerable forms).

23. If a person accomplished in the power of entering another person's body has perfectly controlled his vital airs and senses desires to enter the body of another person, he should contemplate that he has occupied that body. Leaving his own (previous) body (along with the chief vital air—*prāṇa* and the astral body he should enter the external cosmic air and thus enter in the form of air (through the nostrils of that

*. When, in contemplation, the mind and vital breath along with the body are correctly established in me—VR.

body) into the new body as a six-legged black-bee does (from one flower to another). (This power is known as *para-kāyā-praveśa* (entrance into another person's body).

24. (Controlling the downward movement of the vital breath) by blocking the rectum with one's heels and pushing up (by slow degrees), the vital air (through *suṣumnā nāḍi*) through the heart, chest, throat and the crown of the head, he should then propel it through the aperture in the crown of the head (which is called *Brahmarandhra*) directing it to its destination—The *parabrahman* (or any other state he wishes to have)—and cast off his physical body.

25. If a Yogi is desirous to enjoy sportive life in heaven, he should contemplate on the pure *Sattva* in me. And celestial damsels of *sāttvika* nature attend upon him with their celestial cars.

26. A person who establishes his mind in me who am reality and is absolutely devoted to me, attains and enjoys the objects of his desires to have at a particular time and in the specific manner, according to his will.

27*. He who is established in my state who am the ordainer of all and quite independent, shall never meet reverses anywhere and his order will be like my commandment (which can never be thwarted). (This is the potency of inviolable commandment—*apratihatājñā*.

28. The yogin whose mind has become (absolutely) pure by devotion to me and who is conversant with the way of concentrating his mind on me (who am the creator, protector and destroyer of the Universe), attains the knowledge of the past, present and future along with that of the birth and the death (of himself and the world as well as the mind of others).

29. The sage whose mind reposes in contemplation on me (who am above the pair of opposites like heat and cold), gets his physical body seasoned with yoga and is not adversely affected by fire and other (troubles from water, wind, cold,

*. He who has devoutly and with firm faith meditated upon me as the Supreme Commander and Ruler of all, will never have his order thwarted from any quarter.

arms, etc.), just as aquatic animals are not affected by water. (This power is called *advandvatā* or 'transcendence over opposites' which leads to *avaṣṭambha siddhi* or power of neutralisation of the harmful forces).

30. He who meditates (with a concentrated mind) on the various forms and incarnations of mine (exhibiting various powers and) adorned with the *śrī-vatsa* mark and my missiles (like Sudarśana, etc.) and accompanied with my banner (with the emblem of Garuḍa), umbrella and chowries, would never be vanquished.

31. All the supernormal powers detailed above attend upon the sage who propitiates me according to the appropriate methods of concentration (described in the above-mentioned verses).

32. What super-normal power can be difficult to accomplish in the case of a sage who, having controlled his senses, subdued his mind and mastered breath-control, firmly concentrates his mind on me ?

33. But in the case of persons who practise the excellent course of yoga in order to realize me through my grace, the wise call these *siddhis* as impediments, as they involve waste of time (in God-realization).

34. Whatever super-normal powers are accomplished through birth (e.g. power of aviation to birds or gods), medicinal plants, penance, and utterance of *mantras*,[1] are all obtained through yoga, but one cannot attain the highest fruit of yoga (viz. emancipation from *saṁsāra*) through these other means.

35. Being the source and the Lord of all these supernormal powers, I am their controller. Equally I am the master of *yoga* (paths of union with God), of *Sāṅkhya* (the path of knowledge leading God-realization), of *Dharma* (righteous duties as ordained by the Vedas), and even of the exponents of *Brahma* (or the Veda).

1. *janmauṣadhimantra-tapaḥ-samādhijāḥ siddhayaḥ.*

—PYS.4.1.

36. I am the Soul of all embodied beings, their Inner Controller who pervades them (even externally), though I myself am unenclosed. Just as the (five) elements permeate living beings in the world from inside and outside, so I pervade them all and still retain my independent existence.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

*Description of Viṣṇu's Glorious Manifestations**

Uddhava said:

1. You are the veritable Supreme *Brahman* having neither the beginning nor end. You are unobscured (by *Māyā* or its products). You are the Maker of creation, protection and destruction of all beings.

2. Although you are very difficult to be cognised by persons who have not controlled their minds, O Lord, persons who have understood the real import of the Vedas propitiate you (by contemplating on you in the proper manner), in your real form as abiding in all beings high or low.

3. Pray, be pleased to narrate to me the various objects or beings (in which you have manifested yourself and[1]), by devoutly contemplating on you through which the great sages (of yore) have attained final beatitude.

4. You are the creator and Protector of beings. As their Inner Controller, you abide in them without being manifest to them. Being deluded by your Māyā, the beings cannot see you who, however, perceive them all.

* If the previous chapter bears comparison with the *Vibhūti-pāda* of the *Yogasūtras* by Patañjali, this chapter is an echo of chapter X of the BG. called *Vibhūti-yoga*. A number of verses and parts of verses being common both to this text and the BG., verses are not quoted in Footnotes to conserve space.

1. And the procedure of contemplating on you in those several objects and beings—VJ.

5. O Lord of infinite glories ! Be pleased to describe unto me whatever glorious forms of yours have been vested by you with special powers and have been manifested on the earth, in the heavens, in the subterranean regions and in all the quarters. I bow to your lotus feet which are the abode of all sacred places.

The glorious Lord said:

6. O Uddhava ! You are the excellent one among persons who make (intelligent) queries (with proper understanding). A question similar to this very question was put to me by Arjuna who was eager to fight with the enemies, at Kurukṣetra.[1]

7. Knowing that killing one's kinsfolk for the purpose of obtaining a kingdom is both censurable and irreligious, he, like a common man, came to believe (falsely) that he would be the killer and the other soul would be killed by him and he desisted from fighting.

8. At that time that tiger-like (Valiant) hero who was made to realize (the correct philosophical position in the matter) by logical reasoning, spoke to me in the same manner at the battle-front, as you did now.

9. I am the (Indwelling) Soul, a friend and the Ruler of all these beings, O Uddhava. In fact I constitute all beings; I am the Creator, Protector and Destroyer of these beings.

10. I am the motive force among the mobile; I am the Time-Spirit (Kāla) among those that bring other things under control. I am the state of equipoise of the *guṇas* and I constitute the property natural in things possessing properties.

11. I am the *sūtra*, the first evolute of *Prakṛti*—the active aspect in the products of *guṇas*; I am the greatness or the principle called *Mahat* among things with large dimensions. Among the subtlest of things, I am the vital Principle and among the invincibles, I am the mind.

12. Of the Vedas, I am god Brahmā (Hiraṇyagarbha who is the first teacher of the Vedas); of *mantras*, I am the

1. Strictly speaking Vinaśana designates the spot in Kurukṣetra where the Sarasvatī disappeared (*MBH. Vana* 82.111) but here the battlefield of Kurukṣetra in general is implied.

Praṇava (*Oṁ*) constituted of the three syllabus (A U M); of the sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet, I am (the first sound) *A*; of all the metres, I am the Gāyatrī metre (consisting of three feet).

13. I am Indra out of all celestials and the fire-god among all the Vasus. Of the Sun-gods, I am Viṣṇu and out of the (eleven) Rudras, I am Lord Śiva.

14. Out of Brāhmaṇa sages, I am Bhṛgu and out of royal sages I am Manu (the progenitor of the human race). I am Nārada out of celestial sages, and the wish-yielding cow, Havirdhānī amongst cows.

15. Out of masters of super-normal powers (*siddhas*), I am Kapila; out of birds, I am Garuḍa, I am Dakṣa out of Prajāpatis (The lords presiding over creation) and am Aryamā out of the manes or departed ancestors.

16. O Uddhava ! Know that I am Prahlāda, the king of Asuras among the demons (Daityas). Out of constellations and medicinal plants, I am Soma, and I am Kubera out of Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.

17. Know me to be Airāvata (the elephant of Indra) among mighty elephants and Varuṇa, the Lord of acquatic animals. Know me to be the Sun among the heavenly luminous bodies emitting heat and light and the Lord of the terrestrial globe among human beings.

18. Out of horses, I am Uccaiḥśravas and gold out of (excavated) metals; out of deities dispensing justice and punishment. I am Yama (the god of Death) and out of serpents know that I am Vāsuki.

19. I am Lord Ananta (Śeṣa) out of the serpent-kings and a lion (lord of beasts) among animals with horns and fangs. Know me to be the fourth Āśrama, (*sannyāsa*) among the *Āśramas* (stages of life) and the first Varṇa (Brāhmaṇas) among the classes in society.

20. I am the Gaṅgā among sacred rivers and streams and the sea among all the reservoirs of water. I am the bow among weapons and god Śiva, the slayer of Tripura, among archers.

21. Among all abodes, I am mount Meru (the abode of gods) and of all steep and inaccessible places, I am the

Himālayas. Out of trees, I am the *Pippal* tree and I am barley of all the (food yielding) plants.

22. Out of all sacrificial priests, I am Vasiṣṭha, and Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) among the experts in the Vedas. Out of all the leaders of armies, know me to be Skanda and god Brahmā of all persons who show people the right path

23. Out of all sacrificial performances, I am *Brahma-yajña*[1] (the recitation and teaching of Vedas) and non-violence (even by word) out of all sacred vows. Out of all purifying agents like air, fire, sun, water and speech (*vāk*), I am the purifying power—the sanctifier of all purifying agencies).

24. Out of the (eight) steps or limbs of yoga, I am the absorption of the Self (in *Brahma*) or *Samādhi*. I am political wisdom among those who are ambitious of conquests; among the scientific systems of thought, I am the scientific thought system that distinguishes between the matter and spirit (*ātman* and *anātman*). I am the insoluble doubt in the quest of the theories of perception of knowledge (known as *Khyāti*[2] as *akhyāti* of *Mimāṁsakas*, *Śūnyakhyāti* of Buddhists, *asat-khyāti* of Naiyāyikas, etc.).

25. I am Śatarūpā (the first woman, Svāyambhuva Manu's wife) out of women, and Svāyambhuva Manu (the progenitor of the human race) out of men. Out of sages, I am Nārāyaṇa and (Sanat—) Kumāra among the observers of celebacy.

26. Of all the duties of righteousness, I am Sannyāsa[3] (the assurance of protection against fear); of all causes conducive to security, I am the thought concentrated within (on the self). Of all the means of retaining secrets, I am sweet

1. Which satisfies gods, sages, manes, living beings and the universe —EK

2. There are five *Khyātis*, each espoused by a different school of thought. They are enumerated below:

ātma-khyātir asatkhyātir akhyātiḥ khyātir anyathā/
tathā 'nirvacana-khyātir ityetat khyāti-pañcakam//
vijñāna-Śūnyamīmāṁsā-tarkādvaita-vidāṁ matam.

3. Resigning all desire for the reward of all actions to the Lord (*anabhisaṁhita-phalo dharmaḥ*)—VR.

speech and silence. Of all couples, I am god Brahmā (who divided his person in man and woman).

27. Of all the divisions of Time,[1] I am *Saṁvatsara* (a year) and of all seasons, I am the spring (consisting of the months of Caitra and Vaiśākha). Out of the months (of a year), I am Mārgaśīrṣa and out of all constellations of stars, I am Abhijit (that forms the last part of the asterism Uttarāṣāḍhā and the first of Śrāvaṇa).

28. Out of *yugas*, I am the Kṛta Age and of all intelligent bold thinkers,[2] I am Asita and Devala. I am Dvaipāyana (son of Parāśara and Satyavatī) among all the classifiers of the Vedas. Of wise politicians, I am the self-controlled Śukra.

29. Among all the divine persons possessing the knowledge of creation and destruction of the universe and the individual and the spiritual wisdom and nescience[3], I am Vāsudeva while among the supreme devotees of the Lord, I am you (Uddhava).[4] Of all the *Kimpuruṣas* (demi-gods similar to monkeys) I am Hanumān, while among all the Vidyādharas I am Sudarśana.[5]

30. I am the ruby out of all precious stones; I am the lotus-bud of all delicate and lovely objects. Of the grass of the *darbha*-type I am *Kuśa*. Out of all oblations to fire, I am butter made from cow's milk.

31. I am the wealth of the industrialists and businessmen (or those who strive to make money). Among all the gamblers, I am fraudulence. I am fortitude among the endurant persons and the energy among the energetic strivers.

1. Of all those who are vigilant (ŚR.)

2. Persons with fortitude to undergo pair of opposites like pleasure and pain—VR.

3. ŚR. gives the definition of Bhagavān as follows:

utpattiṁ pralayaṁ caiva bhūtānām agatiṁ gatim/
Vetti vidyām avidyāṁ ca sa vācyo bhagavān iti//

but VR and VJ. follow the usual description of being endowed with six excellences like *jñāna, aiśvarya*, etc.

4. With VJ. the seniority of the best devotees is as follows: Bhima, Draupadi, Balarāma, Arjuna and lastly Uddhava.

5. vide Supra X. 34.12-18.

32. I am (physical and mental) virility and might among the strong and I am desireless action (of devoted service) among the Sātvatas (the votaries of the Lord). I am the first Supreme manifestation (viz. Vāsudeva) among all the nine manifestations[1] (Vyūhas of the Lord worshipped by followers of the Pāñcarātra Āgama.

33. Out of Gandharvas, I am Viśvāvasu and am Pūrvacitti[2] out of celestial damsels. I am stability among the mountains and the property of scent of the earth.

34. I am the taste among water (liquids). I am the Sun among the bright luminaries; I am the lustre of the Sun, the moon and the stars. I am the sound (the essential characteristic) of the sky.

35. Of all those who are friendly to Brāhmaṇas, I am Bali and I am Arjuna among the warriors. I constitute the creation, sustenance and destruction of all the beings or elements).

36. I am the functions of the sense-organs such as locomotion, expression, excretion, receiving and enjoyment as well as touching, tasting, hearing and smelling. I am the sense of all senses (i.e. the inherent power to perform these functions).

37. I constitute the seven principles which are of the nature of both the cause and the effect, viz. the subtle elements—*tanmātrās*—of earth, air, sky, water, fire and Ego (*Ahaṅkāra*) and *Mahat*; I am also the (sixteen) modifications (which are only the effects and not cause, viz. five gross elements, ten cognitive and conative sense-organs and the mind), the individual soul (who is above causal relation) and the Unmanifest (*Prakṛti* which is only the cause of all) and (the

1. GD. enumerates them as follows: Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Nārāyaṇa, Hayagriva, Varāha, Nṛiṁha and Vāmana

VR. (as can be deduced from his predecessor SS) is off the mark to enumerate the usual ten Avatāras of Viṣṇu, deleting Kalki from the list.

VJ.'s list as usual is unique.

2. *vide Supra* V. 2. 3-19.

three modifications of *Prakṛti*, viz.) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas[1] as well as the Transcendental Supreme Brahman.[2]

38. I form the aggregate of these (Twentyfive principles) the knowledge (of their characteristics) as well as the consequent realization of the definite Truth. Nothing exists without my presence anywhere, as I am both the Supreme Ruler as well as individual soul, the modifications (of Prakṛti) or *guṇas* as well as the products of these *guṇas*.[3]

39. The (impossible task of) taking a count of all atoms can be done by me in course of time, but the reckoning of all my manifestations is impossible as millions and millions of universes are continuously being created by me.

40. Wherever there is majesty, affluence and celebrity, authority, modesty, liberality or beauty, fortune, capability, forbearance and precise knowledge of the Truth, there exists my part-manifestation (*aṁśa*).

41. All these manifestations of mine have been briefly described to you. But these are nothing but freaks of imagination (like the unreal sky-flower) which are only verbally expressed.[4]

42. (Hence) control your speech; rest ain your mind, practise breath-control, subdue your sense-organs, bring your intellect under control by your (*sāttvika*) intellect so that you will not be liable to return to the path of Saṁsāra.

43. The recluse (striver on the spiritual path) who does not strictly control his speech and mind with his reasoning power, finds that his sacred vows, austere penance and liberality in gifts leak away like water from an unbaked jar.

1. ŚR. quotes the following *Sāṅkhya Kārikā* by Īśvara Kṛṣṇa bringing out the implication of this verse:

mūla-prakṛtir avikṛti-mahadādyāḥ Prakṛti-vikṛtayaḥ sapta|
ṣoḍaśakaś ca vikāraḥ, na prakṛtir na vikṛtiḥ Puruṣaḥ||

2. *Param*—But I am distinct from them as I am the controller of those principles—VJ.

3. I constitute the duality known as God and the individual soul, the *guṇas* and their products, the Inner Controller of the body as well as the body—ŚR.

4. They are produced directly by my will power and are conveyed by the Vedas—

(*mat-saṅkalpa-mātra-janyāḥ vācā vedena*)—VR.

44. Therefore, devoting himself solely and unflinchingly to me and with his intellect full of devotion to me, he should control his mind, speech and breath. It is then alone that he attains Liberation from *Saṁsāra*—which is the end of the journey.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Sacred Duties of a Celibate and a Householder

Uddhava said:

1. Formerly (in the previous *Kalpa*), You have proclaimed the righteous course (*Dharma*) which was chiefly characterised by Devotion to you. It was conducive to the well-being of persons eligible to follow (the duties prescribed by Vedas) for the (four) classes of Society (*varṇas*) and the (four) stages of life (*Āśramas*), but also to all human beings in general.[1]

2. O Lotus-eyed Lord ! It behoves you to kindly explain in details the prescribed course of duties (ordained for everyone) by observing which Devotion (*Bhakti*) may be developed in men.

3. O mighty-armed Lord of Lakṣmī ! It is reported that in times of yore, you assumed that form of a divine swan[2] and taught this righteous course of a supreme and blissful nature to god Brahmā, O Lord.

4. But, as a pretty long time has elapsed since it was proclaimed by you, it does not at present survive (in human memory) in this mortal world, O slayer of enemies.

1. *dvipadāmapi*— This implies that men who do not belong to any *varṇa* or *āśrama* (are beyond the pale of Hinduism) may be benefited by developing devotion to the Supreme Self—VJ.

2. *vide Supra* XI.13

5. There is no person other than you who can propound, practise or defend the *Dharma* in this world, O immortal Lord. Nor was there any in the assembly of god Brahmā which (the presiding deities of) arts and lores attend in a personal form.

6. O Slayer of Madhu ! When this terrestrial globe is left by you who are the founder, protector and expounder (of this *Dharma*) who is there to teach this (practically) inexistent course of righteousness, O Lord?

7. Therefore, O Lord who know all the *dharmas*, be pleased to expound to me the righteous course characterised by (and leading to) devotion to you, its nature and its procedure as advisedly prescribed to each of us.

Śrī Śuka said:

8. Thus solicited by the most prominent of his servants (devotee), the glorious Lord Hari was highly pleased and propounded the eternal course of righteous duties conducive to the welfare of mortal beings.

The Lord said:

9. Your query is intimately concerned with and conducive to *dharma*, inasmuch as it leads to the highest good of men who observe the duties prescribed for (their respective) *Āśrama* (stage of life) and *Varṇa* (class in society). Please listen to its exposition, O Uddhava.

10. In the beginning (of this *Kalpa*), in the *Kṛta* Age, there was only one class among men[1] and that class was known as *Haṁsa*. By their very Birth, people accomplished all their objects in life (by propitiating me and doing nothing else except my devotion). Hence that age came to be known as *Kṛta*.

1. EK: The society was class-less as there was no division of men in four classes. No recitation of Vedas of different branches and no *Karmas* were prescribed for observance. The one-class society was called *Haṁsa* as all men were always engaged in the uninterrupted *japa* of *so'ham* (their identity with *Brahman*) *EB*. 17.63-64.

11 In that first Age, *Praṇava* i. e. Oṁ constituted the (entire compilation) of the Vedic text (which thus contained no prescriptions and interdictions).

12. At the beginning of the *Tretā* Age (after the *Kṛta-yuga*) the three-fold Vedic lore (consisting of the *Ṛgveda*, *Sāma-veda* and *Yajurveda*) was manifested from my heart through my breath, O blessed Uddhava. Out of that trinity of Vedas, I (who am of the nature of sacrifice) became of threefold (sacrificial) functions (viz. those of *Hotṛ*, *Udgātṛ* and *Adhvaryu*).

13. From the Person of the cosmic Man, the classes of society (*varṇas*) viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra sprang (respectively) from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet (of the Cosmic Person). And they were severally characterised by their own righteous duties and conduct.

14. The order of householder originated from my loins, and that of life-long celibates from my heart, the order of forest-dwelling hermits from my chest and the order of *Sannyāsins* from the crown of my head.

15. The natures of persons belonging to the different classes and orders of society follow the source of the limbs (of the Cosmic Man) from which they are evolved. The lower the limb (as source of evolution), the lower the nature of activities, the higher the member of the body (as the source), the nobler the activities.

16. Control over the mind, restraint over senses, austerities, (physical and mental) purity, contentment, forbearance, straightforwardness, devotion to me, mercifulness and truthfulness are the natural qualities of Brāhmaṇas.

17. Majesty, strength, courage, valour, endurance, liberlity, industriousness, firmness, friendliness to Brāhmaṇas—these are natural qualities of Kṣattriyas.

18. Faith (in Vedas and preceptors), firm adherence to liberality, absence of hypocrisy, rendering service to Brāhmaṇas dissatisfaction with amassed wealth (urge to acquire more)—these are the characteristics of the Vaiśyas.

19. Rendering sincere service to twice-born castes (Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas and Vaiśyas), cows and gods and satisfaction with what one gets therein are the natural characteristics of Śūdras.

20. Absence of cleanliness, falsehood, thieving, heterodoxy or want of faith, quarrelsomeness (without a proper cause) strong lust and violent anger and inordinate covetiousness—these are found in the nature of the lowest castes.

21. Non-violence (in thought, word and deed) truthfulness, abstention from taking what is not given, freedom from lust, anger and greed, desire to work for the happiness and welfare of all beings—these constitute the righteous duties of all classes of society.

22. Having undergone purificatory rites since his conception and having obtained the second birth through the investiture of the sacred thread (*upanayana*), the twice-born boy should control his senses and reside in the house of his preceptor and recite the Vedas, study the interpretation thereof as per instructions of the preceptor.

23. (During celibacy) he should wear a girdle of the sacred (*Muñja*) grass (round his waist), a deer-skin, and have a staff, a string of beads, the sacred thread and a jar of water (made of gourd) and matted locks of hair; he should not brush his teeth nor use clothes washed at a laundry). He should not use a painted seat but should hold sacred grass in his hands (as a symbol of Purity and humble approach to the teacher).

24. He should observe silence at the time of bath, taking meals, offering oblations to the sacred fire, repeating sacred syllables (*japa*) and at the time of excretion. He should not pare his nails nor remove the hair from the armpits and secret parts of his body.

25. He should observe strict celibacy and should not voluntarily allow his semen to escape. In case of involuntary escape (as in wet-dreams), he should take bath, perform breath control and repeat the Gāyatrī *mantra*.

26. Pure of body and with concentrated mind, he should silently repeat the Gāyatrī *mantra* (while performing *sandhyā*) both in the morning and in the evening[1] and should worship the Fire god (by offering oblations), the Sun-god (by performing *sandhyā*) and other gods and wait upon the preceptor

1— Silence need not necessarily be observed during the *sandhyā*-performance at noon—ŚR. EK.

(who initiated him with the *Gāyatri-mantra*), the cows, Brāhmaṇas, elderly men.

27. He should look upon his preceptor as myself (god himself) and should never disrespect him in any way. He should not peep into his weak points considering him an ordinary mortal, for the preceptor represents all gods in himself.

28. He should offer to his preceptor whatever alms and anything else he gets, both in the morning and in the evening. Observing self-control, he should use only what is permitted by his teacher.

29. While rendering service to the preceptor, he (the pupil) should wait upon him with humility (as one of his subordinates), (following him) when he goes out, (resting vigilantly) while he sleeps,[1] (shampooing his feet) when he sits to rest, standing nearby with folded palms when he sits.

30. Behaving himself in this manner and observing strictly his vow of celibacy, he should live in the preceptor's house without indulging into pleasure, till his course of studies is completed.

31. If he is desirous of attaining *Maharloka* and the *Brahmaloka* (or god Brahmā's region where Vedas attend in person as stated in verse 5 above), he should adopt the vow of life-long celibacy and dedicate his person[2] to his preceptor for advanced course of studies.

32. Resplendent with Vedic lustre and cleansed of all sins, he should entertain the notion of non-difference (with the universe) and worship me, the Supreme Lord in the sacrificial fire, the preceptor, himself and in all beings.

33. A person who is not a householder (i.e. a celibate or a recluse) should scrupulously avoid (lustful) look, touch, conversation of jokes and such other contacts with women. Nay he should avoid the sight to a sexual intercourse of animals.

34-35. (Physical and mental) purity, *Ācamana* (sipping water before beginning a sacred rite, etc.) bathing, offering

1. When the teacher is in bed, the pupil should not be there but rest vigilantly somewhere nearby to be able to attend if called.—EB. 17.320.

2. With a view to repay the debt of the preceptor—ŚR.

twilight-prayers (to the sun both in the morning and in the evening), straight-forwardness, visiting sacred places, repeating (silently) sacred syllables (*mantras*), abstention from touching the untouchable, from eating the forbidden articles of food and from speaking with the un-speechworthy, firm faith that I abide in all beings and control over the mind, speech and the body—This rule of discipline[1] is enjoined to all stages of life (*Āśrama*), O delight of your family.

36. In this way, the life-long celibate (Brāhmaṇa) who has burnt down all the seeds of *Karmas* by his rigorously austere penance, and had become absolutely pure and is devoted to me becomes resplendent like fire.

37. If a celibate student who has completed the study and investigation of the *Śāstras* (according to his need in life), wishes to enter the next stage of life viz. that of a householder, he should pay the educational fees to his preceptor and with the permission of his preceptor, he should take the bath (for terminating his celibate stage, technically known as the *Samāvartana saṃskāra*).

38. He should enter the house (i. e. householder's stage of life, if sexually inclined) or the forest (i. e. the life of a *Vānaprastha*, if he desires to purify his mind). If that excellent Brāhmaṇa is already of pure heart, he should renounce the world (and become a *sannyāsin*). Or (if he so pleases) he may pass from one stage of life to another but never in the reverse order e. g. from *Sannyāsa* to *Vānaprastha*[2] etc. (The *āśramic* order is not binding on my devotees).

39. A person wishing to enter the householder's stage should espouse a befitting girl, with no defect (in heredity, habits or character), junior to him in age and belonging to his own caste (class, *varṇas*.)

(It is only after marrying the girl of his own caste

1. EK takes the last two, viz. Faith in the immanence of *Brahman* in all beings and control over mind, speech and the body as common to all *Varṇas* and *Āśramas*.

2. Unless a person is absolutely devoted to me, the *āśramic* order is binding on him. This rule is not binding on my devotees (ŚR).

if he be sexually unsatisfied) he should take a girl from a class in the prescribed serial order.[1]

40. (The duties of) performance of sacrifices, Vedic study and conferring charitable gifts are binding on all twice-born classes (viz. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣattriya and Vaiśya) but acceptance of gifts, teaching of Vedas and (actual) performance of sacrifices are the (additional) duties of Brāhmaṇas.

41. A Brāhmaṇa who considers that acceptance of gifts from others is detrimental to his austerities, Brahmanical (i. e. spiritual) power and glory, should live by the other two means of livelihood (viz. teaching the Vedas and acting as a sacrificial priest). He who feels these two vocations as detracting (to his spiritual position or power,) should live by gleaning grains of corn from the field (when the owner has taken away the produce).

42. This body of a Brāhmaṇa is not certainly meant for trivial enjoyments. It is intended for undergoing distress and austere penance in this world, and infinite bliss (of *Mokṣa*) after death.

43. He whose mind is content with (what he gets by) gleaning grains of corn (from the fields after the owner had reaped and taken home the food-grains and from the market-place when the market day is over) and who observes the pure and noble duty of offering hospitality to guests and has dedicated his heart to me and is not much addicted to his house (though himself a householder) attains to eternal spiritual peace.

44. Like unto a boat saving a man drowning into a sea, I promptly save from calamities those persons who redeem a Brāhmaṇa devoted to me or as a matter of that anyone who has dedicated himself to me but is undergoing hardships.

45. Like a father protecting his children from difficulties a king should defend his subjects against all calamities. Just as a king-elephant lifts out (of mire) other elephants of his group and comes out of it by dint of his own power, the wise and courageous king should (after redeeming his subject) extricate himself out of the difficulty by his own efforts.

1. ŚR. quotes a *Smṛti* which allows the *anuloma* order in marriage: Thus a Brāhmaṇa can marry a girl from Kṣattriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra classes; a Kṣattriya from Vaiśya and Śūdra *varṇas* and a Śūdra can marry only a Śūdra girl.

46. A king who discharges his duties in this manner, shakes off in this very life, whatever inauspiciousness and evil (that has clung to him), by the merit accruing to him by his just rule over his kingdom and in a celestial car brilliant like the sun, he goes to heaven and enjoys heavenly pleasures in the company of Indra (king of gods).

47. In times of adversity, a Brāhmaṇa should take to the commercial profession and should surmount the difficult times by selling non-prohibited articles.[1] If, however, he still gets into difficulties (by suffering a loss in his business), he should make his way through that emergency by taking to the sword,[2] but he should never resort to a dog's way of life (by undertaking lower jobs).

48. During distress, a Kṣattriya should adopt the profession of a Vaiśya or live by hunting or should take to livelihood of a Brāhmaṇa (by accepting a teaching job, but he should never take to the life of a Śūdra.

49. Under adverse circumstance, a person from Vaiśya community should follow the vocations of a Śūdra-artisans like mat-weaving. But once he had overcome the difficulty, he should not hanker after the censurable calling (recommended by *Dharmaśāstra* to the lower strata of society).

50. A house-holder should according to his financial position, look upon gods, sages, manes and other beings as my embodiments and every day worship them by offering oblations in sacrificial fires uttering the word *svāhā* at every oblation to a particular deity in the case of gods. Study and recitation of Vedas (technically known as *Brahma-yajña*, meant for sages), oblations (of water known as *Tarpaṇa* and *Śrāddha* for departed ancestors) accompanied with the pronunciations of the word *svadhā*, offering of food (*bali*) to living beings and serving of food to guests (known as *Manuṣya-yajña*.

1. A Brāhmaṇa is not allowed to sell articles like salt, wine etc. (by *Dharmaśāstra*)—ŚR. To this list EK adds—Ghee, oil, sesamum, cotton (*EB.* 17.457).

2. *Gautamasmṛti* regards a soldier's profession superior to that of a merchant but soldierly profession involves *himsā* (injury to life). Hence the Lord's preference to the Vaiśya way of life—ŚR.

51. Without causing any hardship to his dependants (wife, children, servant, etc.), one should perform sacrifices as per proper rites and formalities with the wealth got without any efforts (as by legal inheritance) or with money earned by following one's profession or with the wealth obtained by fair means.

52. One should not entertain attachment to the members of one's family. Even though one be a householder, he should not be negligent in his devotion to God. An intelligent person should realize that the unseen enjoyments in heaven (promised by the *Pūrva Mimāṁsā*) are as momentary as the visible world.

53. Companionship and association with one's sons, wives, kith and kin is momentary like the get-together of travellers (for drinking water-). With the change of one's body (in the next birth), they part company like a dream that disappears with the sleep.

54. Having thus realized the truth after deep thought, and staying in his house (unconcerned) like a stranger or a guest, he, being devoid of the notion of 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness' (with reference to his body, relatives and property) is not bound by (and attached to) his household property and leads the life of one liberated while alive.[1]

55. Having propitiated me alone through devout worship in the form of performance of duties prescribed for a house-holder, my devotee may continue to stay at home (as a house-holder) or live in a forest as an anchorite (*Vānaprastha*) or become a recluse (*sannyāsin*) if he has got children (and a continuation of his race).

56. But he whose heart is deeply attached to his household and eagerly pines for getting money and children and is obsessed with sex, is a man of poor understanding. Such a fool is bound with the notions of 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'

57. "Alas! My parents are aged. My wife and my young children—all of them have no protector without me!

1. SD. 'free from desires and attachment'

EK. 'Is automatically liberated even as a householder' VR, VJ, BP read *yukta* for *mukta* and interpret as 'one who has concentrated his mind in [illegible] (*samāhita*).

How can those helpless and miserable persons live without me?"

58. With his heart thus overwhelmed and distracted with anxious attachment to his house, this dull-witted fellow remains dissatisfied and dies while brooding over them and enters the blinding darkness (of hell after death).

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Duties of Hermits (Vānaprastha) and Sannyāsins

The glorious Lord continued:

1. A person desirous of entering the Vānaprastha (the third stage of) life should either entrust his wife to the care of his sons or take her with him. He should spend the third quarter of his life (upto the age of seventyfive years) in a forest.

2. He should live on bulbous and other roots, fruits which are regarded as pure and which grow in forests. For clothing he should wear bark-garments, mats of grass and leaves and deer-skins.

3. He should allow to grow the hair on his head, beard, nails and dirt (dust) on his body. He should not brush his teeth. He should dip his body in water (like a pestle, without cleansing his body) three times (morning, noon and evening) a day and sleep on bare ground (without using even grass or leaves to cover it).

4. In summer, he should perform (what is technically known as) *Pañcāgni sādhana* i.e. exposure of the body to the heat of fire from four quarters while the fifth fire, viz. the sun is scorching from the sky. In the rainy-season, he should observe the vow of *Abhrāvakāśa* i.e. drenching the body in heavy showers and in the winter he should stay immersed in the water upto the neck (and observe the *udaka-vāsa vrata*). He should perform penance following the above way of life.

5. He may eat what is baked on the fire or fruits, etc. ripened in course of time. He may subsist on what is pounded in a mortar or crushed with a stone or powdered with his teeth as mortar and pestle.

6. He should, with his own effort, procure whatever is required for his subsistence. Though he has full knowledge of his environments, of the season, and of his own capacity, he should not use it for storing (food, fruits, etc.) for some other occasion.[1] Nor should he accept what is offered by others.

7. He should perform the prescribed periodic sacrificial duties with oblations of the forest produce and *Puroḍāśa* (prepared out of them). But under no circumstances should a Vānaprastha worship me with animal sacrifices as laid down in the Śruti texts.

8. Maintenance of sacred fire and regular offering of oblations to it (*Agnihotra*), performance of half-monthly sacrifices on the New Moon day (*Darśa*) and the Full Moon Day (*Pūrṇamāsa*) and the seasonal sacrifices performed at the beginning of the months of Kārttika, Phālguna and Āsāḍha (which mark the beginnings of the main seasons in India), have been prescribed for a Vānaprastha by Vedic teachers.

9. The sage who becomes spread over by a web of (protruding) veins (i.e. is reduced to a skeleton for want of flesh) by performing penance as described above, propitiates me who am the embodiment of *Tapas* (austerities) and comes to me passing through the region of sages (via *Mahar-loka*, etc.)

10. Who else can be more foolish than the person who dissipates for fulfilling flimsy desires such as great penance performed with enormous troubles and capable of securing him *Mokṣa*?

11*. When, shaking with decrepitude, he becomes incapable of observing the duties prescribed (for the *Vānaprastha*

1. *labdhe nave nave'nnādye purāṇaṁ tu parityajet|*

—BH.P.VII. 12. 19.

* ŚR. explains: A *Vānaprastha* who continues to perform penance to the end of his life attains *Mokṣa*. If at the end of the *Vānaprastha* period,

stage), he should withdraw within himself the three sacred fires (viz. *Āhavanīya*, *Gārhapatya* and *Dakṣiṇa* which he is maintaining for *Agnihotra*) and concentrating his mind on me, he should enter fire.

12. When a genuine feeling of renunciation is generated towards the worlds or to even higher blissful regions obtained by merits) as no better than the hell (full of tortures and miseries), he should withdraw (as per procedure laid down in *śāstras*) all the (three) fires within himself and enter the order of *sannyāsins*.

13. Having worshipped me as per *Śāstric* instructions,[1] and having gifted everything what one has to the sacrificial priest, one should deposit the three sacred fires within his own Inner Self (*antar-yāmin*) and he should enter the order of sannyāsa completely free from any longings.

14. In the way of a Brāhmaṇa who is bent on renouncing the world as a *sannyāsin*, gods create impediments in the form of his wife and others (for dissuading him from *sannyāsa*), as they are afraid that he would supersede them, and attain *Brahman*.

15. If a sage entering the order of *sannyāsa* requires any clothing other than his loin-cloth (*kaupīna*), he should take only that much as is sufficient to cover his private parts. Except in case of emergency or critical plight (such as serious illness), he should not have anything that he has renounced (at the time of becoming a *sannyāsin*) with the exception of a staff (symbolic of his being a *sannyāsin* and a water-jar (made of gourd) .

16. A *sannyāsin* should place his foot forward only when the ground is purified by eyes (that is, it is scanned and found free from living beings and thus there would be no violence to life in stepping over that spot). He should drink water puri-

renunciation is generated in his mind (even dimly), he is eligible to become a *Sannyāsin*. But in case of premature incapatiation (if he becomes incapable of observing his vows before the end of that stage), the above self consignment to fire is recommended.

1. A *Vānaprastha* should perform the *Prājāpatya* sacrifice and also eight *śrāddhas* before becoming a *Sannyāsin*—ŚR.

fied by straining it with a piece of cloth. He should utter a word after convincing himself that what is expressed thereby is true. He should adopt a course of conduct according to the dictates of his conscience.

17. Silence,[1] renunciation of acts (for fulfilling one's desires) and the control of breath, these are the internal controls of speech, body and mind. Dear Uddhava ! He who does not have these controls, is no *Sannyāsin* as one does not make a real *sannyāsin* with a bamboo-staff.

18. Avoiding the houses of the reproachful, one may go for alms to the houses of all the four *Varṇas*[2] (castes) among the Brāhmaṇas.[3] He should go to seven houses without giving pre-intimation and should be content with whatever one gets.[4]

19. He should go to some reservoir of water (a lake, a river, etc.) outside the village or town. After sipping water (as *Ācamana*) in silence, he should sanctify the food (sprinkling it with a few drops of water charged with twelve *Praṇavas*, should divide that food in four parts (alotting them to Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the Sun-god and living beings and immersing Viṣṇu's part into water and placing the one for living beings on the ground), he should finish the remaining holy food. (He should not store anything for the future).

1. EK.: Repetition of God's name of OṀ constitutes the control of speech. Breath control is the *daṇḍa* of the body and concentration in the *Brahman* is the control of the mind. —*EB*. 18.97-102.

2. EK. clarifies: Before the advent of the Kali age, this was the rule. But in the Kali age, Brāhmaṇas follow different non-Brāhmaṇa professions and vocations. So we have all the four *Varṇas* in the Brāhmaṇa community itself. In the Kali age a *sannyāsī* should limit himself to the houses of Brāhmaṇas only. The exception of a reproachful Brāhmaṇa is of course binding. —*EB*. 11. 104-113.

3. JG and VC. classify Brāhmaṇas as follows:

(1) Those who live on gifts (*dāna*) from others.

(2) Teachers of *Vedas* and *Śāstras*.

(3) Those who maintain themselves on fees received at sacrifices.

(4) Those who live upon foodgrains gleaned from fields and market places.

Thus the mode of living (*vṛttibheda*) is the criterion in deciding the *Varṇas* among Brāhmaṇas.

4. VR. advises that a recluse should beg in the houses of Brahmin—Brāhmaṇas first and then Brahmin-Kṣattriyas, etc.

20. With his senses and mind under control and perfectly unattached, he should wander all over the world without a companion, indulging in the recreation and bliss of his soul. Engrossed in his Self, he should view all with an equal eye.[1]

21. Staying in a lonely yet safe place and with his mind purified by devotion to me, the sage should deeply meditate upon the one-ness of the self and its identity with me.[2]

22. By application of his spiritual knowledge he should investigate into the nature of the bondage and liberation of the soul (and understand that) distraction of senses (to their objects of enjoyment) is the bondage and subjugation and control of senses is the *Mokṣa*.

23. Therefore, controlling the group of six enemies (i.e. passions like lust, anger, avarice, etc. *or* five senses *plus* the inner sense—the mind) the sage should renounce trifling pleasures of senses, enjoying thereby the great bliss within his Self. While contemplating on me, the sage should carry on his pilgrimage on the earth.

24. He should travel over the earth full of sacred lands, holy rivers, mountains, forests[3] and hermitages, entering cities, villages, cowherd settlements and caravansaries just for begging alms.

25. A *Sannyāsin* should frequently visit the hermitages of the *Vānaprasthas*. For (the food he gets is prepared out of foodgrains gleaned from cornfields and market places and) by such food from gleaned food-grains, his mind becomes quickly purified and free from delusion, and he attains liberation.

26. He should not look upon this (sweet food or other objects of pleasure) as real, for whatever is visible is bound to perish. With his mind detached to objects in this world or in the next, he should cease to work for gaining them (here or hereafter).

1. VR.: He should see that both sentients and non-sentients are a part of the body of the Lord.

2. VJ.: The sage should contemplate that the Lord is different from *Jīva* and that I am the Supreme Being established by the *Veda* (... *Śrutyā mayā siddham ātmānam ekam mukhyaṁ cintayed abhedena jīvenaikyaṁ na cintayet*) —

3. EK. gives a suggestive list of holy places.

27. He should, by logical reasoning, realize that all this world and this body constituted of mind, speech and vital breath is nothing but *Māyā* (Illusion) superimposed on the *Ātman*. He should renounce it and stabilising himself in his blissful self, he should never remember the world (or *saṁsāra*).

28. My devotee who is established in spiritual knowledge, unattached to the world and does not long for anything (including *Mokṣa*) should renounce not only the duties (and attachment) pertaining to his *āśrama* but even its external distinguishing marks. He should go on in his life without being governed by the *Śāstric* rules in the matter—(Not that he should give up purity, bathing, etc. but he should not be a subject to *Śāstric* injunctions).

29. Such a person, though full of wisdom, should behave like a child (with no sense of respect or disrespect). Though well-versed in a skill, he should assume dullness. Though deeply learned, he should show himself as insane (as he has to please nobody). Though master of Vedas (and faithful to their teaching) he should behave like an animal.

30. He should not take interest in discussion about Vedic interpretation (whether pertaining to sacrifices or rules of conduct). Nor should he be a non-believer in the Vedas or one expert in Logical reasoning. He should not be a participant in fruitless discussion.

31. Full of wisdom and fortitude, he should not be afraid of anybody. Nor should he frighten away the people. He should forbear harsh words nor should he insult anyone. For the sake of his body, he should not entertain enmity with anyone.

32. For the Supreme Soul is but one. He abides in all living beings as well as in one's own-self, just as the Moon (only one entity) is reflected in different vessels full of water. All beings even from the point of physical bodies are one, as they are made of the same gross elements. (Hence there is no propriety in cherishing enmity with anyone).

33. He should not become despondent, if sometimes he did not get alms; nor should he feel elated if he gets food in

time. Full of fortitude, he should realize that both these (getting alms or failing to get it) are in the hands of the Providence.

34. (This does not mean that one should not go out for alms). He should try to get alms for subsistence; for it is proper and essential to sustain life. It is by sustaining life that truth can be investigated. And it is by realization of the truth, that one gets Liberation from *Saṃsāra*.

35. A sage should accept whatever food comes to his lot by the will of the Providence—whether it be excellent or otherwise; similarly, he must accept whatever clothes and beds as may be offered to him.

36. Just as I carry on my activities as a sport, a man of spiritual wisdom should practise his habits of cleanliness, *ācamana* (sipping of water before taking food, etc.), bath, and not in compliance of the rule of the *Dharmaśāstra*. He should behave similarly in other matters.

37. He has no sense of difference in him any longer. Whatever such sense there might have been, has disappeared since his realization of me. Occasionally such a sense of perception may appear till the fall of his body, but thereafter he merges in me.

38. A person who is self-controlled and has become disgusted with objects of pleasure which (he knows) end up in misery, but is not enlightened in duties leading to my realization, should approach a sage as his preceptor.

39. Full of devout faith and with malice towards none, he should devotedly serve his teacher respecting him as if he is myself, till he realizes his *Brahman*.

40. But he who has not controlled the group of six enemies (viz. six passions like lust, anger, avarice, etc. *Or* his five senses and the mind) and whose mind the controller of his senses, has been deeply attached to objects of pleasures, is devoid of spiritual knowledge and dispassion and only makes his livelihood by the triple staff (the symbol of being a *Sannyāsin*).

41. Such a person is a violator of *Dharma*. He deceives gods (by denying them their sacrificial oblations which he would have offered as a house-holder), himself (by being deprived of household-comforts he would have got, had he not

been a *Sannyāsin*), me who abide in him (as he fails to realize me). His sins are not completely consumed and he loses his world as well as the next.

42. The essence of the righteous course of conduct of a recluse (*Sannyāsin*) is self-control and abstinence from violence; that of the *Vānaprastha* (the renouncer who stays in a forest) consists of performance of austerities (as prescribed for this stage of life in *Śāstras*) and (attainment of) spiritual knowledge that of a householder constitutes of the protection of beings, and performance of *pañca-mahā-yajñas* (offering of oblations to gods and ancestors, offering of food to preceptors, guests etc.) while that or a twice-born (a boy who has taken a new spiritual birth by the investiture of the sacred thread and has become a) *Brahmacārin*—a celibate student—is the service of his preceptor.

43. Celibacy (i.e. abstinence from contacts with one's wife on nights prohibited by *Śāstras*), penance, (mental and bodily) purity, contentment, friendliness to all creatures constitute the *Dharma* (the pious duties) of a householder—(Please note that a householder) who goes to his wife on the days (sanctioned by scriptures) is also a celibate person, while devotion to me is a sacred duty common to all (irrespective of their particular *Āśrama*).

44. A person who worships me by observing the pious duties (laid down for his particular *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*) as mentioned above without any expectation in return or (does not deviate to some other god or to some other purpose), and who sees me as abiding (as an *antaryāmin*) in all beings, attains to the (highest type of) Devotion[1] to me in a short while.

45. It is by such unswerving (life-long) devotion, O Uddhava, that the devotee attains to me, the Supreme Ruler of all worlds, the source of the creation and destruction of all,

1. EK.: This is the fourth stage of Devotion, 'The Supreme *Bhakti*' as compared with which all the four types of *Muktis* (types of liberation) are quite valueless—*EB*. 18.324-25.

and hence the cause of everything, the Brahman[1] himself (or the creator of the *Vedas*).

46. A person whose heart is purified by observing the pious duties prescribed for his particular social class (*Varṇa*) and stage in life (*Āśrama*) and who has understood my nature, attains both spiritual wisdom and my direct realization reaches me in a short time.

47. This is the righteous course of conduct of persons belonging to the four social classes (*Varṇa*) and their four stages of life (*Āśrama*). When this very course is reinforced by devotion to me, it becomes the supremely efficacious means of attaining the *summum bonum* (*Mokṣa*).

48. I have thus explained to you, O good Uddhava, whatever you had enquired of me. It is in this way that my devotee, while following the path of righteous duties (specified for his particular *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*), attains to me who am the Supreme (*Brahman*).

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Exposition of Spiritual Knowledge, its Realization and Yogic Disciplines

The Lord said :

1.* He who is endowed with Śāstric learning leading to direct *Ātmic* realization and has not to depend on logical reasoning, should understand that this world of difference (as well

1. ŚR.: The presiding Deity in Vaikuṇṭha. The devotee attains the *Mukti* called *Sāmīpya* (vicinity to the Lord)

EK.: The devotee attains to the fourth *Bhakti* called the Supreme Devotion, full of the highest bliss in which God and the devotee become one.

—*EB*. 18. 325-332.

* EK: When bodily activities ego-lessly take place and one is absorbed in spiritual bliss without enjoying sense-objects and one's knowledge is intuitive (not depending on logical reasoning) that is the stage of 'self-realization'. In that stage, knowledge and means to it, as well as contemplation—everything is 'lost', as there is neither bondage nor liberation as both of these are illusory products of Māyā.

—EB. 19.25.39

as the dialectic process of negating it) is the illusion caused by my Māyā and should ultimately consign this knowledge unto me (This is termed as *Vidvat-sannyāsa*).

2. None else but I am the beloved to the spiritually enlightened person. Only I am accepted (by him) as his objective (goal to be achieved) as well as the means of achieving it. I am the *Svarga* (i. e. worldly prosperity) as well as the *Mokṣa* (the state of final emancipation from *Saṁsāra*), to him. Nothing except me is dear to him.

3. Persons who are endowed with spiritual knowledge i. e. know the distinctness of *Ātman* from the body and *Prakṛti* and realization of the self (i. e. knowledge that *Paramātman* is both the goal and means to attain to Him) are able to cognise (and reach) my highest state. Such a knower bears me up with his spiritual enlightenment and hence he is the beloved-most to me.

4. The stage of (spiritual) perfection attained by even a single particle (or ray) of knowledge cannot be brought about and reached by performance of austerities, visits to sacred places and ablutions in holy waters, muttering of *mantras*, charities (e. g. donations of cows, gold, land), prescribed purificatory acts (according to *Śāstras*).

5. Hence, O Uddhava, securing *vijñāna* i. e. the bliss of one-ness with Paramātman by means of *jñāna* i. e. realization of the spiritual knowledge (of the identity of the *jīva* and *Paramātman* and being endowed with the knowledge (*Jñāna*) and its realization (*Vijñāna*, mentioned above), worship me devoutly.

6. It is reported that having worshipped me by means of the sacrifice in the form of *Jñāna* and *Vijñāna* (as explained above) in their heart, sages of yore have attained to spiritual perfection (i. e. absorption in me).

7.* The three-fold modification[1] (viz. those resulting from

* VJ. slightly differs:

Birth and other states of the body are transferred from the body to the *Jīva* (due to ignorance), though he is really unconcerned with them. The Lord being non-physical is not affected by them at all. Liberation is attainment to the Lord after casting off this psycho-physical organism.

ato nitya-nirduḥkhānandānubhavasya mama prāptir eva muktiḥ|

1. viz. the birth, existence and death of the body—EK.

the mind or self, caused by fate and by elements and living beings of which you are the substratum, is nothing but illusion (*Māyā*). It did not exist in the beginning or at the end but appears in the middle (just as the misapprehension of a serpent or a garland, in stead of the reality of its being a rope, does not exist before it is misapprehended or after the clarification of the reality). When birth and other states (viz. existence, growth, transformation, decay and death) affect this body of yours, what do they affect you who are the basis of these modifications. For (as in the case of misapprehension of a rope as a serpent) what exists before the beginning of the misapprehension (viz. the reality of a rope) and what remains after it (is cleared up viz. the existence of a rope) does exist in the middle also. (Just as the rope, the substratum of these changes, remains the same, unaffected by them, you are not touched by the six changes in the body from birth to death).

Uddhava said :

8. O Lord of the universe ! Be pleased to elucidate to me, in details, this ancient, extremely pure (and hallowing) traditional (convincing, spiritual) wisdom accompanied with renunciation and intuitive knowledge, in such a way (as will dispel my ignorance). O embodiment of the universe ! Please explain to me your path of Devotion (*Bhakti-Yoga*) which is sought after by the great (gods like Brahmā).

9. O Lord ! To a person troubled on all the sides by threefold afflictions (viz. those caused by fate, through bodily or mental disorders and caused by other beings or elements) and tormented with the scorching miseries in this terrible path of *Saṁsāra*, I do not see any other place of shelter except the umbrella of your pair of feet which (in addition to affording cool shade-protection from the miseries of *Saṁsāra*) shower nectar (of spiritual bliss)[1] on all sides.

10. O Supremely glorious Lord ! Be gracious to lift me up who have fallen in the dark abysmal hole of *Saṁsāra* wherein bitten by the serpent of Death, this person (I myself) is extremely thirsting after low pleasures of senses. Be kind to spri-

1. Bliss of liberation from *Saṁsāra*—VR.

kle me on all sides with your words leading me to the liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

The gloriovs Lord said :

11. Formerly, King Yudhiṣṭhira (who was friendly to all beings) asked this very question to Bhīṣma, the foremost among the observers of the path of righteousness, while all of us were in the audience.

12. After the termination of the internecine war among the Bharata clans (at Kurukṣetra), he was greatly purturbed and despondent on account of the death of his friends and relatives (in that war). After listening to a number of discourses on various points of Dharma (religion and righteousness), he asked him about the paths of righteousness leading to the emancipation from Saṃsāra.

13. I shall now recount to you those discourses which were full of precepts on spiritual wisdom, dispassion, *Ātmic* realization, faith and devotion, as I heard them from the lips of Bhīṣma.

14. It is my (considered) decision that that is the real *jñāna* (spiritual wisdom) by which one can perceive in all beings, the (twenty-eight principles consisting of the) nine (viz. *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa*, *mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* and the five *tan-mātrās* or subtle elements), the eleven (the five cognitive senses, five conative organs and the internal-organs or the mind), the five (gross elements viz. the earth, water, fire, air and the ether) and the three (guṇas viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and also that the *Paramātman* as permeating these all.

15. This is definitely the (real) *vijñāna*—that a person does not now perceive (as he did in the initial stage) the plurality of principles as being real or that the many principles are permeated (through and through) by the one *Para-Brahman* but that *Para-Brahman* is the only Reality (and the other principles, etc. are unreal). He should also see clearly that the origination, continuation and destruction are concerned only with entities which are constituted by three *guṇas* (and as such they are transitory and unreal).

16.* That alone is the Real Existence which continues to exist at the beginning, in the end as well as in the middle and persists while one evolute leads to another and remains unabsorbed in the process of involution (as the residue at the end).

17. The Vedic text, direct perception, tradition and inference—these are the four (authoritative) tools of knowledge. As plurality of phenomenal world is not supported by any of these authoritative instruments of knowledge, a (spiritually) wise person gives up the concept of plurality.

18. As all sacrificial and ritualistic acts (which lead to heavenly life) are the effects and hence subject to change (and transient), a wise person should perceive that all the eventual fruits of such acts including the position of god Brahmā are inauspicious and transitory like the visible ones.

19. I have already expounded to you the path of Devotion, as you cherished a liking for it. I shall expound to you once again the most effective method of the Bhakti-Yoga, O sinless Uddhava.

20-23. Sincere faith in the nectar-like stories about me, constant rehearsal of my glories, unswerving faith and devotion to my worship, singing hymns in my praise, deep reverence in rendering service to me, to prostrate before (touching the ground with eight parts of the body) for bowing me, rendering greater devotion to the worship of my devotees, the perception of my presence in all beings, directing all bodily activities for dedication to my service, to sing exclusively of my glories, to resign the mind to me, renunciation of all desires, to give up for my sake wealth, enjoyments and pleasures (if they come in the way of devotion to me) and dedication to me of the performances of sacrifices, charitable acts (donations, etc.), offering of oblations, repetition of mantras, observance of vows and austere penauce done for my sake—all these (definitely) lead to Devotion.

* VR: The true knowledge recognises the fact that existence is the essential nature of *Ātman* as he does not change with the change of the body (as a god, a man or a sub-human being) and remains at the end (even in *Mokṣa* where physical bodies do not exist).

24. O Uddhava ! It is by performing such acts (of devotion) by persons who have dedicated themselves to me completely, that real Devotion to me is engendered in them. What other objective in life (of such a devotee) remains unaccomplished ?

25. When the mind, full of the attribute called Sattva and hence perfectly tranquil, is resigned to me, the person (concerned) becomes endowed with righteous spiritual wisdom reinforced with dispassion and reaches the state of Iśvara.

26. When (on the contrary) the mind is dedicated to things other than I (viz. persons and objects in Saṁsāra), it goes astray with senses and getting stained by *Rajas* and attached to *asat* (*Tamas* or transitory objects) it becomes the reverse of above (i. e. becomes unrighteous, ignorant, full of passions, etc.)

27. That (act or course of conduct) which promotes devotion unto me is the real Dharma (righteousness) ; the perception of the one-ness of the Soul is spiritual wisdom; non-attachment to guṇas (the objects of senses) is the real dispassion; and possession of mystic powers (such as atomization, magnification, levitation and others is the state of Iśvara.

Uddhava said :

28. O vanquisher of enemies ! What are the different observances which are laid down as *Yama* (self-control) and what varieties of vows are prescribed as *Niyama* ? What is the nature of *Śama* (spiritual quiescence) ? What constitutes *Dama* (Self-restraint) ? O *Kṛṣṇa*, what is the definition of forbearance (*titikṣā*) and that of moral courage ? O Lord !

29. What is the nature of charity and of penance ? What is real bravery ? What is truthfulness ? What constitutes *Ṛta* (moral or divine Law) ? What is real renunciation ? What wealth is desirable ? What is a sacrificial performance and what is the nature of *Dakṣiṇā* (sacrificial fees to be offered to sacrificers)?

30. Where lies the real strength of manhood, O Lord of Lakṣmī? What is the real fortune or gain? O Keśava, what is the Supreme Love and the highest type of modesty (*Hrī*)?

What is the real adornment? What is the nature of pleasure and pain?

31. Who is (really) a learned man and who is a fool? What is the (correct) path? What amount to going astray? What is *Svarga* (celestial world) and what is a hell? Who should be regarded as a kinsman and what is a home?

32. Who is rich and who is poor? Who is pitiable and who is the master (controller)? Be pleased to elucidate to me the contraries of these, O Protector of the righteous.

The Glorious Lord replied:

33-35. Abstention from causing any injury to others, to speak to the point what is true yet agreeable, to abstain (even mentally) from appropriating what belongs to others, absolute-non-attachment, modesty, abstention for accumulating or storing anything in one's possessions, faith in *Śāstras* celibacy, firmness in *Dharma*, forbearance, fearlessness (or to afford protection from fear) (These twelve constitute the *yama* observances). Purification of the mind as well as of the body, repetition of a *mantra* or God's name, austerities, offering oblations (to gods) deep faith and reverence for *Śāstras*, hospitality, performance of my worship, visit to sacred places, working for the good of others, contentment and rendering service to preceptors. These are *Yamas* and *Niyamas*, twelve each in number, prescribed for the followers of the path of *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*. If these are observed, thy confer prosperity or emancipation (from *Saṃsāra*) as desired by the observers.

36. *Śama* is devoutly and firmly establishing one's intellect (or mind) in me; *Dama* is the control of senses; *Titikṣā* is to bear up quietly with afflictions; Fortitude (*Dhṛti*) is the complete control over the palate and the sex.

37. The highest type of charity is absention from harming other creatures; austerities consist of absention from desires (of enjoyment); heroism lies in conquering one's natural cravings and to look upon all as equal i.e. one-ness (i.e. Brahman) everywhere is truthfulness.

38. Wise persons say that sweet yet truthful speech is the *Ṛta* and non-attachment to one's actions is cleanliness and (not mere bodily cleanliness); renunciation is giving up the

notions of 'I' and 'mine' as well as desires of fruit here and hereafter (and not merely deserting one's home).

39. Righteousness or taking to the path of God-realization is the desirable wealth (and not money, cattle and properity). I am the sacrifice (and should be performed with this knowledge and not as a ritualistic performance). Spiritual enlightenment is real sacrificial fees *Dakṣiṇā* and not gold and other things offered as such); the real strength is the control of breath (which leads to the control of the mind).

40. Fortune is my divine state having the six attributes (such as rulership, piety, glory, affluence and others and not mere favour of luck); The highest gain is (sincere) devotion to me; learning consists in perceiving the underlying one-ness of the *Ātman* (and not mere erudition) and *Hrī* is the abstaining (with repulsion) from doing a prohibited act (and not the sense of shame after committing it).

41. *Śrī* (Adornment) lies in good qualities such as absence of desires (and not gold crown and other ornaments); happiness consists in transcending the sense of both pleasure and pain (and not mere enjoyment); Misery lies in craving after pleasures from fulfilment of desires (and not scorching from fire, etc.). He who knows the path of liberation from the bondage of Saṁsāra (or has the true knowledge of the nature of the bondage and emancipation) is a real *Paṇḍita.*

42. He is a fool who conceives that his body and its belongings constitute the *Ātman.* It is proclaimed that the true path is that which leads (the follower) to me (God-realization and the wrong path is the path of *Saṁsāra* (*Pravṛtti Mārga*) which causes the distraction of the mind. *Svarga* is the predominance of the *Sattva guṇa.*

43. Hell connotes the ascendancy and sway of the *Tamoguṇa,* O friend Uddhava ! The (spiritual) preceptor is one's (real) relative and that is me only. The human body is the house and one who is richly endowed with excellent qualities is a wealthy person.

44. He who is discontented is a destitute and he who has no control over his senses is a pitiable wretch. He is the master whose mind is not attached to *guṇas* (objects of senses),

while the reverse of this (i.e. the slave) is a person who is addicted to the pleasure of senses.

45. In this way, O Uddhava, all your queries have been clearly explained by me. What more need is there for a lengthy discussion ? The following is the criterion of deciding what is good and evil : It is evil to pry into the weak points and merits (of a thing) while the habit not to think of them both is good.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Elucidation of Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti Yogas

Uddhava said :

1. Injunctions and interdictions regarding specific acts are ordained by the *Vedas* which are commandments of you, the Supreme Ruler. And they consider the goodness and badness of acts with reference to the good and evil consequence of those acts. (This being the case, how is it that you say that it is evil to pry into the weak points and merits, while the habit not to think of them both is good (*Supra* 19.45).

2. It is the *Veda* which distinguishes between the order of merit of different castes or social classes and stages in life, of the merit-based gradation of persons born from the marriage of the high caste man with a lower caste woman and the lowcaste man with a higher caste woman. It points out the merits or otherwise of the material, venue, age and season (proper for performing sacrifices) as well as (the acts which lead to) heaven and hell.

3. How is it possible to follow your word (the *Veda*) which is characterised by expressions laying down injunctions and interdictions and which leads men to liberation from *Saṁsāra*, unless one has the power of discrimination between the good and the evil.

4. The *Veda*, a form of your word, serves as an eye to manes, gods and human beings, O Supreme Ruler. It helps them to get insight into the 'unseen' (i.e. the heavenly region or liberation from *Saṁsāra*) and the end and means of attaining them.

5. It is through the *Veda*, your own command, that the notion of distinction between the good and the evil, is derived and not independently by anybody's individual opinion or by nature. When that distinction (recognised by the *Veda*) is refuted by the *Veda* itself that (naturally) causes bewilderment.

The Lord replied :

6. With the desire of securing final beatitude (*Mokṣa*) to beings, three types of Yogas (courses of disciplines) have been expounded by me. They are the path of knowledge, path of (desireless) Action and path of Devotion (and they correspond to the *Brahma*, *Karma* and *Upāsanā* sections of the Śruti).

In no part of the *Veda*, any other means or path of liberation has been propounded.

7. Out of these paths the path of knowledge is meant for those recluses who are nauseated with ritualistic acts (and the ephemeral nature of the promised happiness accruing from them) and consequently have given up such *Karmas*. But the Path of *Karma* is prescribed for those who hanker after the fulfilment of their desires and are not disenchanted with such (ritualistic) acts.

8. The path of Devotion is conducive to the attainment of Liberation in the case of a person who by a lucky chance has come to cherish a devout faith in my stories (and in the efficacy of my name) etc. and who is neither disgusted with nor deeply attached to the performance of (prescribed religious) acts.[1]

One should continue to perform (prescribed religious) actions till he does not feel disgusted.

9. A person should continue to perform the religious acts prescribed for his particular caste and stage of life till he

1. VJ. believes that gods belong to this category.

(being disenchanted with the futility of the promised fruits from those *Karmas*) feels disgusted with them or till devout faith in listening to my stories (meditating upon me and such other form of *Bhakti*) is not engendered in him[1]

10. O Uddhava ! A person who follows the religious duties (prescribed for his particular class (*Varṇa*) and stage in life (*Āśrama*) and worships me through performance of sacrifices without cherishing any interest in the fruits thereof does not go to the heaven or hell unless he commits an act prohibited in *Śāstras* (either by commission or by omission).

11. If, while existing in this body (or the world), a person strictly follows the course of religious duties prescribed for him (i.e. for his particular caste and stage in life) and leads a sinless, pure life, he naturally gains pure knowledge or if he is lucky enough may find devotion engendered in him (as Devotion is superior to knowledge).

12-13. Both the inhabitants of the celestial world and the denizens of hell desire to be born (as human beings) in this world, as this life leads to the attainment of Liberation (from *Saṁsāra*) by means of the paths of knowledge and *Bhakti* which is not possible in the special bodies with which the heavenly or hellish beings are vested. A wise man should not long for heaven just as he would not desire for the infernal region. Nor should he desire to be reborn in this world, as it is due to the attachment to one's body that he blunders (and does not attain liberation).

14. Realizing this (speciality of the human body) and being aware that though this human body is capable of attaining *Mokṣa* (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*) it is after all mortal, a person should not be negligent and exert for attaining Liberation (lit. non-return to this world) before he is overtaken by death.

15. The bird (the individual soul) who has built its nest on the tree (viz. this body) which is being mercilessly hacked down by persons cruel like the god of death, feels happy in abandoning its nest and the tree, if it is not attached to it.

1. VJ. thinks that the Path of *Karma* is expounded in this verse as the performance of *Karmas* is a *must* till spiritual knowledge dawns or devotion is engendered in the mind. It is the *Karma-path* which purifies the mind and renders one eligible for the path of knowledge or devotion.

16. Likewise a person, knowing that life is being mercilessly hacked by day and night and trembling with fear discards all attachments and desires. And after realizing the Supreme Self he settles in the state of perfect bliss.

17. He is certainly a perpetrator of spiritual suicide who would not (even) attempt to get over the sea of worldly existence (*Saṃsāra*) even when he, by a lucky chance (through the grace of God), has easily obtained this excellent boat in the form of the human body which, the main spring of all good fruits[1], is extremely difficult to procure and which is not only equipped with all accessories (useful for all purposes) and piloted by the helmsman in the form of the spiritual preceptor, but also is propelled by me like a driving favourable wind.

18. When, on foreseeing (the evil consequences of attachment to the fruits of *Karmas*) a person gets disgusted with actions prescribed in the *Śāstras* (and meant for obtaining some ulterior motive as its fruit) and thus becomes unattached and indifferent (to the fruits of the *Karmas*), he should control his senses and, by constant practice of directing his mind to contemplation on the Self (*Ātman*), steady it in meditation (on the Self).

19. If, the mind, while being made to concentrate steadily (on the Self) begins to stray (towards objects of sense) immediately and thus becomes unsteady, the Yogī should be vigilant and try to bring it back under control by conciliatory method (by making some slight allowance to its inclination).

20. Exercising control over breath and subduing one's senses, he should not remain negligent about the vagrancy of his mind but watch it vigilantly and with his reasoning capacity reinforced with *Sattva*, he should bring his mind under control.

21. Like unto a horseman breaking an unmanageable horse by allowing its inclination in the beginning (and tightly bridling it just at the proper moment), the established method of repeatedly withdrawing the mind (by the above-mentioned conciliatory process) by knowing its natural inclination, is regarded to be (the proper path to) the highest *Yoga*.

1. The human body is called *Ādya* as it alone is eligible to realize *Brahman* and a being can attain god-head through this body only out of eighty four lakhs of species—EK.

22. With a thorough understanding of the (fundamental) principle of the Sâṅkhya system (of thought), he should contemplate the chain of causation in the evolution (from *Prakṛti* creating the *Mahat*—subtle elements—gross elements—his own body) and in the involution (the reverse of the above process from his body to *Prakṛti*) of all objects, till his mind becomes serene.

23. The mind of a person who is disgusted with the world (due to pondering over the evolution and involution given in the Sâṅkhya philosophy) and becomes renunciated and contemplates repeatedly the teaching of his preceptor, becomes free from all evil thoughts (such as identification of the body with the Self.)

24. It is by means of the path of *Yoga* like *Yama* (self-control) and others and by the knowledge gained by thorough investigation of the ultimate principles (viz. *Sat*—being and *a-sat* non-being) or[1] by worship and propitiation of my images or symbolic representations, that the mind should be made to contemplate on me, the Supreme Soul which is the only object.

25. If (per chance) a *Yogi* happens to commit an iniquity through mistake or lapse on his part, he should burn down that sin by the process of *Yoga* (like meditation of the Lord, repeating the Lord's name, etc.) but should never resort to other expiatory rites.

26. Firm devotion and strict observance of duties prescribed for one's own class in society (*Varṇa*) and stage in life (*Āśrama*) has been called a merit (the opposite of which is obviously demerit or sin). An action—an inborn tendency of living beings to do something—is impure by nature. A distinction between merit and demerit (or virtue and fault) has been drawn (with a view to make people avoid the wrong course). A restriction has been imposed on actions (*Karmas*), as it is intended that all attachment (to worldly objects) be given up.

27. When devout faith in my stories is awakened, a person becomes disenchanted with all the acts (religious rites, sacrifices, etc. enjoined by the *Vedas*). He knows that they (i.e. the rewards promised as a result of those *karmas*) are full

1. 'or' shows the independence of the path of Devotion—ŚR.

of miseries, but is not able to renounce them (due to a wavering state of mind).

28. Under such circumstances, he should cherish faith in me and with a firm resolution should worship me, full of love and devotion. Even while he continues to enjoy objects of pleasure (or has a longing for them), he should damn them as sources of misery.

29. A sage who constantly worships me according to the Path of Devotion expounded by me previously, finds that all the deep-rooted (and hence apparently in-eradicable) desires in his heart disappear, as I am established therein.

30. The very moment, I, the Soul of all, am realized, the knot (of *ahaṁkāra*) in the heart is snapped; all his doubts are cut asunder, and all his *Karmas* are exhausted.

31. Hence neither spiritual wisdom (*jñāna*) nor renunciation (*vairāgya*) is a general pre-condition for attaining the Final Beatitude (*mokṣa*) (in the Path of devotion) if the *Bhakti-Yogin* (the follower of the path of devotion) has intense devotion to me and has his mind firmly fixed in me.

32-33. What is secured by performing prescribed Vedic *Karmas* or by undergoing austere penance or by spiritual knowledge or from dispassion or by following the path of *Yoga* or by pious liberal donations as also by other means of attaining spiritual bliss—all this my devotee fully and easily realizes by the path of *Bhakti* whether it be *svarga* (Heaven) or *mokṣa* or even my abode.

34. But pious people who are wise and absolutely devoted to me desire nothing, even if absolute liberation from which there is no return to *Saṃsāra*, is conferred on them by me.

35. Desirelessness is, therefore, the highest and the most efficacious way to attain the *summum bonum*. Hence real devotion is engendered in him who longs for no blessings and solicits nothing.

36. Merit and sin resulting from the commission or omission of the enjoined or interdicted acts are not binding on those who are absolutely devoted to me, are even-minded and have realized me who am transcendental to reason.

37. In this way, those who follow these paths proclaimed by me, attain to the blessed abode of mine, which the learned know as the Supreme *Brahman*.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Criteria for determining the good and the evil

The Lord said:

1. Those persons who discard the path of devotion, spiritual knowledge and righteous (desireless) actions which have been expounded by me (and which lead to me), and seek trivial pleasures through fickle senses, continue to wander through various species in *saṁsāra*.

2. Firm adherence to the course of duties to which one is eligible (by *Śāstric* prescription) is described as virtue while the reverse of it (i.e. strayed devotion to another man's duties to which one is not eligible) is a fault. Such is the definite decision about them both (i.e. about virtue and fault)[1].

3.* Even if things (or acts) be similar, the decisions that it is pure or impure, virtue or fault, auspicious or inauspicious, are made for the guidance of investigation so that one may control one's inclination towards them.

4. O sinless Uddhava ! It is for the sake of distinguishing the righteous way from the unrighteous, what is pure and what is impure, has been decided for regulating the behaviour —what course of conduct is permissible for kings (under emergency some concession has to be given to a ruler for adopting the inauspicious or impure means or to an individual for

1. ŚR. clarifies that a virtue or a fault is not inherent in the act, but it is the eligibility of the doer which decides the matter.

* VR. Though the factors of an act (such as Time, Place, agent, *mantras* or the particular karma be the same, they present two different sides of eligibility. It is after investigation that one can decide whether it is good (leading to auspicious consequences) and bad (resulting in evil consequences).

the bare maintenance of his life but to store such impure substances is forbidden). Such a (sinless) course of conduct has been shown by me (in the form of *smṛti*-writers like Manu and others) for the guidance of those who are the bearers of the responsibility of showing the path of religion.

5-6. The elements, viz. earth, water, fire, air and sky, united with the Soul, constitute the causes of the bodies of all beings, from god Brahmā to an immobile. Even through the point of material bodies and the *Ātman* all creatures are constitutionally the same, it is, however, to enable these creatures to attain their respective objectives in life (viz. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*) that the Veda has given them diverse names and forms (about their respective *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*) and enjoined their respective code of conduct.

7. It is for regulating what work should be done or what act be prohibited that qualities like goodness or badness have been ordained by me with respect to time, place and other conditions, as well as with reference to substances or things (like rice) to be obtained, O pious-most Uddhava, (my object being to ensure the attainment of the fruits of Karma[1].

8. Out of countries, those tracts of land where black-antelopes are not found are unholy, and it is still more so, if people there-of cherish no devotion to Brāhmaṇas. Even if hallowed by the presence of black deer, the tract known as Sauvīra[2] (i.e. lacking in pious people) or Kīkaṭa[3] (Eastern Bihar, Bengal and Orissa and inhabited by the uncultured people or having the majority of Mlecchas or a barren place, is unholy.

1. *Karmaṇām niyamārtham phala-sādhanārtham* /—VJ.

2. Variously identified with upper sindh (VR and N.L. De) or northern Saurāṣṭra along the Gulf of Cutch (Rhys Davids.) ŚR. is led away by grammatical derivation.

3. It appears that in the old Smṛti period, these states were not completely Aryanised. Hence a visitor to them, except on purpose of a holy pilgrimage, had to expiate the sin of visiting it, by the rite of investing the sacred thread. VR quotes a *smṛti* text as follows :

Aṅga-Vaṅga-Kaliṅgeṣu Saurāṣṭra-Magadheṣu ca /
Tīrtha-yātrām vinā gatvā punaḥ saṁskāram arhati //

9. That period of time is regarded as auspicious or good which is proper for performing Vedic rites either due to adequate supply of materials (for that rite or sacrifice) or by its very nature (e.g. the early part of the day). But the time when the materials for the rite are not available or there are politically, unsettled conditions and earthquakes etc., or when the period is unfit for performance of religious rites (e.g. during the mourning period), that period of Time is considered to be bad or inauspicious.

10. The purity or impurity of a substance depends on the contacts with some other thing (e.g. washing with water purifies a thing, while if contacted with urine it becomes impure), or by the word (e.g. in case of doubt about purity, the decision of a learned Brāhmaṇa), or by purification (e.g. sprinkling flowers with water purifies them, but by smelling they lose their sanctity for worship), by passage of time[1], or by the bigness or smallness of size (e.g. a big lake cannot be polluted by the touch of a man of the depressed class but it is regarded 'polluted', if the tank is a small one.)

11 (The same thing becomes pure to one and impure to another). The purity or the impurity of a thing depends upon the physical strength or weakness[2] (Time of receiving) the information or knowledge[3] and affluence;[4] (certain things are pure or impure in relation to different places, states and other circumstances). Hence the incurrence of sin depends on the time and other circumstances[5].

1. ŚR. quotes a *Smṛti* which lays down :

Rainwater stored in reservoirs should be used for drinking but it should be avoided for the first three days. As for water stored at other times, one should wait for ten days after which it attains purity.

2. Eating food during the period of solar or lunar eclipse is prohibited as sinful to normal people but is permissible to the aged, sick or weak persons —ŚR.

3. If the birth of a child in the family is informed within ten days, the nearest kins have to observe a seclusion but the same information after ten days has no such binding effect.—ŚR.

4. To use soiled or old clothes is permissible to the poor, but a rich person incurs sin by using them—ŚR.

5. For example : It is sinful not to wear a gold ring at the time of performing *sandhyā* or other religious duties. But it is not sinful if they are

12. The purity of (food) grains, utensils of wood, bones (like ivory), textiles, liquids like oil, ghee, metals like gold and deer skins and earthen wares, bricks etc. is decided by Time, air, fire, earth and water either jointly or severally.

13. By applying which things an object smeared with an impure thing removes that impure coating, and foul smell and restores its normal state to it, is called the purifier.

14. A 'twice-born' person (even a Śūdra is to be included in this category) should purify himself by sanctifying acts and factors like bathing, giving charitable gifts, performance of penance, age (of eligibility for performing a certain act) physical power, initiatory rites like investiture of the sacred thread, performance of *sandhyā*, remembrance of the Lord and his name, and then proceed to perform his prescribed duty.

15. The purity of *Mantras* depends on correctly knowing its procedure and application from the proper preceptor. Resigning a *Karma* to me, is the purity of that act. Religious merit is acquired through the purity of above-mentioned six (viz. place, time, substance, agent, the sacred formula—the *mantra* and the righteous act performed). The opposite of it results from the absence of these circumstances.

16. (Intrinsically a thing or an act is neither good nor bad). Under some circumstance a merit turns out to be demerit. (Acceptance of help of a thing in emergency may be condoned but the same is a fault in normal condition), but by a quirk of fate, it may be *vice versa*. The *Vedas* have ordained some injunctions for the regulation in deciding merit and demerit (or for creation of dispassion about objects of senses), but confusion in understanding them fundamentally cuts the distinction.

17. Those who are already sinners, commission of an act similar to other sinner is no longer a demerit. Sexual intercourse with one's married wife (during the prescribed

not worn in regions infested by robbers. ŚR. quotes a *Smṛti* text which lays down that the factors of time, place, physical and mental condition, materials, its objects and other relevant circumstances must be taken into account before determining the purity of a thing or a person.

period) is not a sin for a householder, though it is so for a *Sannyāsin*. He who lies on the ground has no further fall.

18. From whatever object or course of action, a person desists, he becomes free from attachment. This *Dharma* (righteous course of action) is the source of well-being and removes grief, delusion and fear.

19. By mistaken attribution of agreeable qualities to (sense)-objects, man comes to cherish attachment for them. From attachment springs up the desire to possess it, and desire leads to quarrel among men (for securing it for one's self).

20. A quarrel breeds irrepressible anger which is followed by infatuation. And the all-round grasping capacity and judgement of man is soon swallowed up (and obscured) by this self-delusion.

21. O pious Uddhava ! A man devoid of intellect and judgement is reduced to the stage of non-existence. He fails in (accomplishing) his purpose in life, even as a man who has lost his consciousness or is dead.

22. Through deep attachment to worldly objects, he does not realize himself nor the Supreme Self. He wastes his life in vain like a tree, breathing mechanically like bellows.

23. Just as a promise of delicious (eatables) is made (to children) before administering a dose of (wholesome yet unpalatable) medicine, this promise of fruits to be reaped (in heaven) is made for creating a liking (for religious duties), as an introduction to the elucidation of the (path to the) *summum bonum* or *Mokṣa*, even though it does not lead men to the final beatitude.

24. Even though they are the cause of misery (viz. bondage in *Saṃsāra*) to the Soul, men, by their very nature, are attached in their heart of hearts to their desires and belongings (like cattle) to their life and to their relatives.

25. How can a wise person (or the Veda) direct persons who are ignorant of their own real interests (or the highest spiritual bliss) and yet put implicit faith in the Vedas which promise cattle, long life[1], progeny etc., through per-

1. "Span of life, power of the senses—VR.

formance of sacrifices wander in the path of misery (of *Saṃsāra*) and (after enjoying the celestial life) enter the dark hell in the form of plant life?[1]

26. Not comprehending this real purport of the *Vedas*, some persons of low understanding (of Asura mentality) mistake flowers (i.e. flower-like heavenly enjoyments) for the fruit of eternal bliss in *Mokṣa*. But the real knowers of the *Veda*) like sage Vyāsa) never do so[2].

27. Persons hankering after sensual desires are miserly and avaricious. They regard the flower (the flowery pleasures in heaven) as the fruit (of Liberation from *saṁsāra*). They are stupefied by the Fire-cult, and at the end of their life go by the path of smoke (*dhūma mārga*), and fail to realize their self and their real region, viz. *Mokṣa*.

28. Like unto persons whose vision is bedimmed with mist, they, to whom ritualistic performance or killing beasts for sacrifices appear as the real teachings of the *Veda* and are bent on gratifying their carnal desires, do not know me who am stationed in their very heart (as their Inner Controller)—me who constitute this universe, and from whom this world has been created, O dear Uddhava.

29. If persons have a liking for eating flesh and would like to kill animals, they should restrict this injury to life to the performance of sacrifices (in which the flesh remaining after oblations is shared by all as *prasāda*—the grace of gods). But this (performance of animal sacrifices) is not an obligatory duty.[3] Without understanding my implied meaning expressed indirectly, these persons who are addicted to sensual

1. VJ. raises the objection that the scripture which misleads people to momentary pleasures would cease to be *Veda* (*katham iti viṣayābhiniveśena tamo viśatas tān punas teṣu viṣayeṣu Vedaḥ kathaṁ yuñjyan na katham api yunakti / unmatta-vākya-sāmyaprāpti-bhayād iti śeṣaḥ /*

2. VJ. : Persons of Asura nature being ignorant of the true purport of the *Vedas* speak of the heavenly happiness when they really mean that Liberation from *saṁsāra* is the real fruit. VJ. thinks that Asuras (i.e. persons of Asura nature) are implied in these verses.

3. Some editions add : "Hearing this commandment of the Veda, people are not deluded into such acts."

pleasures[1], unnecessarily kill animals and get themselves troubled and tortured by them after death.

30. Those wicked persons who take delight in killing animals for sport, (outwardly) worship gods, manes and lords of beings by the slaughtered animals oblated in performing sacrifices, but they really want to gratify their addiction (to flesh).

31. Painting in their mind (the rosy picture) that the next world which is unreal like a dream, non-existent, yet charming to the ear, is certainly real, they spend their resources (in performing sacrifices) entertaining the hopes of blessings (in the next world), just as a merchant, (abandoning his present fortune) stakes the whole of his property (in a dubious sea voyage) in the hope of earning more wealth (and loses both).

32. Persons in whom these attributes, viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are ingrained, worship gods headed by Indra who, being possessed of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, take delight in them but they do not worship me (who transcend the *guṇas*).

33. They strongly hope that by worshipping god with performance of sacrifices in this world (during their life-time), they would enjoy themselves with heavenly pleasures (in the next world) and at the end of that celestial life, they would be born in noble lineage and live in palatial mansions.

34. With their minds distracted by the flowery language of *Karma-Kāṇḍa* holding out promise of heavenly life) these proud and highly obstinate persons (steeped in perverse notions) do not like even the mention of my name.

35. (As a matter of fact the *Vedas* advocate the path of renunciation). Although the *Vedas* deal with the three subjects (viz. those concerning ritualism, devotion and spiritual knowledge), they teach mainly about the *Brahman* and the *Ātman*[2]

1. SS & VR add here : *vṛthā paśūn vihiṃsanti hiṃsyante pretya tais tu te ।*

2. VR. : They teach that the Supreme *Brahman* is abiding as the Inner Controller in all beings (*sarvāntarātma-bhūta-Para-brahma-viṣayaḥ*). They deal with the nature of the Supreme *Brahman*, His attributes and the path of *Brahma*-realization.

(that the *Ātman* and *Brahman* are identical). The Vedic texts (*mantras*) or their seers present their exposition in an indirect way, as such presentation (with hidden import) is liked by me (it is expected that only the pure-hearted persons are eligible to know the real import of *Vedas*. If others follow it literally, they will be misled and give up their *karmas* (religious duties) prematurely).

36.* The *Veda*, the verbal form of the Brahman, is extremely difficult for comprehension. It constitutes the vital air (The *Parā* stages of speech), the mental faculty (the *Paśyantī* and *Madhyamā* stages of speech at the mental plane) and the oral expression (the *Vaikharī* stage). From the cosmic point of view the cosmic *prāṇa* is limitless and unending, too deep for comprehension and unfathomable like the sea.

37. It is presided over (from within) by me who am all pervading, master of infinite powers, the attributeless, changeless *Brahman*, the inner Controller and perceived in all created beings in the form of 'unstruck', (*anāhata*) sound like fibers filling the stalk of a lotus.

38. Just as a spider evolves (lit. vomits) out of its mouth woolly cob-web fibers from its heart, the Lord in the form of *Hiraṇyagarbha*, through *Prāṇa* (the vital air) manifests himself in the form of Veda. Essentially he is absolutely blissful. With the material of eternally abiding unstruck, (*anāhata*) sound emanating from the cavity of the heart through the medium of the mind, he brings out various sounds represented in the letters of the alphabet.

39-40 The Lord who is the embodiment of the Vedic meters and essentially sweet (lit. nectarine), manifests out of Oṁ

* (i) *EK* : After explaining how *Praṇava* evolves from the *Parā vāṇī* till it is expressed orally (with the *vaikharī* he states that despite the efforts of sages like Vyāsa, Sumantu, Jaimini and others, the *Veda* has remained incomprehensible, but it is the Lord who knows the inner subtle meaning of the Veda.

(ii) *VJ* : *Veda* is incomprehensible except through my Grace. The terms *prāṇa* etc. in the verse designate god Brahmā and others which preside over senses. The *Veda* is too deep etc. like the sea for the ineligible persons (*alpādhikāriṇaḥ*).

the *Vaikhari* form (of speech) which flowed out in a thousand ways beautiful with various sounds classified as consonants, vowels, sibilants (Ś,Ṣ,S), semivowels (y,r,l,v). Such proliferated *praṇava* (OṂ) became expanded in various languages and was characterised by metres each consisting of four more letters than the previous one, and is (in a way) limitless. The Lord who creates this unlimited Vedic speech, also withdraws it[1] within himself.

41. (In the *Vedas*) there are many metres like Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik, Anuṣṭubh, Bṛhatī, Paṅkti, Triṣṭubha, Jagatī, Aticchanda Atyaṣṭi Atijagatī and Virāṭ.

42. Nobody else except I in this world, knows the real implica ion[2]—the very heart as to what the *Veda* prescribes, what it explains, what it prohibits after making a statement.

43.* It lays down injunctions of worshipping me (through performance of sacrifices—This is the *Karma* Kāṇḍa).

1. *VR.* : All the articulated sounds are evolved out of OM (*Praṇava*). It is ever-abiding and of unlimited extent, expressing wonderful ideas in four chief metres (each foot of which is longer by four syllables than that of the previous metre). It is *Prāṇa* which evolves and withdraws this speech.

2. VJ. : It is only the vital breath who, through my Grace knows it (*..cet ko vāyur mat-prasādāt vetti*)

* (1) ŚR and GD : Just as the sap derived from the seed by the sprout proliferates into branches but the original sap runs all through these branches, leaves etc., the Lord, the "sap" of *Praṇava*, pervades all the branches of the *Veda* which is a proliferation of Om.

ŚR. pays obeisance to the eternally-free promulgator and Knower of the Veda who enlightened him on what is *Ātman*. This Supreme Ruler is his preceptor and his preceptor is the Almighty Lord. 'To him I bow'.

(2) VR. : The Veda states that the difference such as a man, a god, a subhuman being etc., is the modification of *Prakṛti* and this difference has nothing to do with the individual Soul (*jīva*). The *veda* finally concludes that I (the Lord) am distinct from every other principles (*vedaḥ . . . deva-manuṣyādi-bhidām māyā-mātram prakṛti-mātram anūdyatām jīva-svarūpe pratiṣiddhya . . . sarva-tattva-vilakṣaṇa-mat-pratipādanena paryavasita-vyāpāro bhavatītyetāvān evetyarthaḥ* !)

(3) VJ. : There is no difference in my incarnations. I am Viṣṇu in each of them. The bondage of *saṁsāra* is due to my will. By following the path of devotion, the spiritual knowledge dawns and the *jīva* is liberated. Stating this the *Veda* which depends on Vāsudeva for its supports sinks into silence.

It declares my Nature (as gods to be worshipped and enunciates the path of Devotion or, and it removes Upāsanā Kāṇḍa) external universe that is imposed on me (i.e. the part called knowledge—*Jñāna Kāṇḍa*). I am verily the purport of the entire *Veda*. Basing itself on me, the *Veda* first explains diversity (in me) as the result of *Māyā*—(Finally) denying the reality of diversity, the *Veda* assumes silence (is merged in me. Ultimately I alone stay existent).

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Enumeration of Principles (Tattvas) The Distinction between Prakṛti and Puruṣa

Uddhava enquired :

1. How many fundamental categories or principles have been enumerated by sages, O Lord of the Universe ? We have heard you enumerate them as nine, eleven, five, three—in all twenty-eight categories—previously.[1]

2-3. Some say that the number of categories is twentysix, others twentyfive, some others seven; some declare it to be sixteen, four and eleven respectively; while some others state that it is seventeen, some, sixteen while some others thirteen. Be pleased to explain to me, O Long-lived one, with what standpoints the sages severally declare (lit. sing) such a variety in the total number of categories.

The Lord replied :

4*. Though it is not supported by Reality what those Brāhmaṇas (experts in *Vedas*) declare is but correct as all the

(4) JG. : The Veda feels that it has achieved its purpose by entire dependence on Lord Kṛṣṇa. He quoted BG. (XV. 15). *Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ* etc.

1. vide *Supra*, ch. 19.14.

*. VR : when the Brāhmaṇas accept my Māyā or Prakṛti as the basis for classification, what position is impossible and hence untenable. Hence all the positions taken by Brāhmaṇas stand to reason.

categories are mutually inclusive. What theory is not tenable (lit. difficult to establish) when my Māyā potency is accepted.

5. "The reality is not as you stated; what I affirm is correct." The cause of difference among such disputants is my insurmountable potencies[1] viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* which create innumerable mental tendencies.

6*. Difference (of viewpoints or theories) which becomes the subject of arguments among the disputants arises due to the cogitations (and resulting permutations and combination) of these powers. But when the control of the mind and the senses is achieved, the cause of disputation disappears and as a sequal, wrangling or discussion ceases altogether.

7. Due to the mutual inclusiveness of the categories, the enumeration of categories varies according to the stance adopted by the speaker in explaining them as cause and effect, (resulting in the inclusion of effects into causes).

8. Even in only one category all the other categories are found included, irrespective of their inclusion either as a cause or an effect.

9. As there is the possibility of offering a logical reasoning for the causal relations of these categories as well as their enumeration as advanced by these disputants, according to their capacity of argumentation, we, therefore accept the position presented by them.

10. As realization of the *Ātman* by self-effort is not possible in the case of a person possessed by nescience or ignorance which has no beginning, another person who knows the truth is essential for imparting the truth to him. (This preceptor being God as distinct from Jīva, the number of categories becomes twentysix according to these disputants).

11. (But those who hold that the number of these principles is twentyfive and not twentysix argue:) There is not the slightest distinction between *Puruṣa* (Individual Soul) and

1. VR. regards *Prakṛti*, *Mahat*, *Ahaṅkāra*, etc. as God's powers.

*. According to *VJ*, wrong apprehension is due to the different powers of the Lord and the wrangling on different viewpoints is due to different attitudes of the mind. Once the mind is concentrated on the Lord through sense-control, misapprehension disappears.

Īśvara (God), as both are characterised by intelligence and consciousness). The assumption that they are mutually distinct and different is not correct. (The argument that God must be posited for imparting Self-realization is untenable as) (Self-knowledge or the faculty of knowing is inherent in *sattva-guṇa* which is a constituent of *Prakṛti*.

12. *Prakṛti* is nothing but the equilibrium of the attributes or modifications known as *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. They (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) are the cause of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe respectively. Thus they are the attributes of *Prakṛti* and never that of *Ātman*.

13. In this (Sāṅkhya) system of thought, knowledge is regarded as the modification of the attribute called *Sattva*, action, that of *Rajas* and ignorance, that of *Tamas*. Time is the cogitating principle disturbing the equilibrium and agitating the *guṇas* while Nature is the *Sūtra* or *Mahat*.

14*. (After elucidating the three categories mentioned (v. one above) the Lord enumerates the nine principles in that verse as follows :)

Puruṣa (The Intelligent Principle), *Prakṛti* (The Primordial Matter), *Vyakta* or *Mahat* (the principle of Cosmic intelligence) Ahaṁkāra (the cosmic Ego), the sky, air, fire or light, water and the earth—these are the nine categories enumerated by me.

15. The senses of hearing, touch, sight, smell and taste—are the faculties of cognitive senses. While the organs of speech, hands, the organ of generation, the organ of excretion are the conative organs. The mind, however, is both a cognitive and conative (internal) organ, dear Uddhava.

16. Sound, touch, taste, smell and colour or form—these are the five varieties of objects of senses, while locomotion, expression or speech, excretion (including urination and defecation) and manual skill are the functions of the organs of action.

*. VR. : *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* constitute the body of Paramātman. *Ahaṁkāra* includes all sense-organs and the five elements have in them five objects of senses.

17. At the beginning, at the time of creation of the Universe, *Prakṛti* assumes the functions of both cause and effects. Through its attributes *Sattva* and others, it assumes the state of being created, while the unmanifest *Puruṣa* remains as a witness.

18. The *Mahat* and other categories being agitated and impregnated with the energy of the glance of the intelligent principle (*Puruṣa*) combine together and create the egg of the Universe, reinforced with the power imparted by *Prakṛti*.

19. Those who hold that there are only seven categories state them as follows: Five categories beginning with the ether, knowledge i.e. knower or *Jīva* (Individual soul) and the *Ātman* (Supreme Soul), the support (of the seer and the seen, the subject and the object). The body, sense organs (and five) life breaths are evolved from these.

20. According to those who hold that the number of categories is six, they are as follows: Five elements and the sixth is the Supreme Person. Combining with the elements which are evolved (out of himself) by him, he created this universe and entered into it (as *Antaryāmin*, the Inner controller).

21. *(Another view mentioned in verse above holds that) the number of categories is only four. These are as follows: Fire, water and food i.e. the earth, which are born of the (fourth category viz.) *Ātman*. Like the evolution of things made up of parts, the creation of the universe (which too consists of numerous parts) has taken place out of these (four categories).

22. (In verse 3 above, a view holds that the total number of categories is seventeen.) When the total number of categories is spoken of as seventeen, they are enumerated as follows; Five gross elements, five subtle elements[1] (*mātrā* = *tan-mātrā*); five

* It is not understood why VR includes the explanation of eleven categories here when a later i.e. 24th verse deals with eleven categories. According to VR the *Ātman*, five elements and five (cognitive) senses make up the eleven categories.

1. EK takes *mātrā* = objects of senses, EB 22.2-4.

(cognitive) senses, mind and the *Ātman*, the seventeenth category.

23. When (the principles or categories are) counted as sixteen, the Ātman (the thinking Principle) is also spoken of as the mind (the rest being as in the above verse). They (number of categories) are said to be thirteen, when the five elements (*Bhūtas*), five senses, the mind and soul in two forms (viz. Individual soul and the Supreme Soul) are calculated together.

24. Another view which holds that the total number of categories as eleven, is as follows: The Soul (including the mind) consists of five elements (*Bhūtas*) and five senses. While eight *Prakṛtis* (viz. *mahat*, *Ahaṅkāra*, mind and five elements, combined with *Puruṣa* (the intelligent Principle) make up the nine categories.

25. In this way different enumerations of fundamental categories have been hypothesized by old sages (to clarify the difference between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. All of them are tenable as they are cogently supported by (logical) reasoning. How can a theory proposed by the wise be unbecoming ?

Uddhava submitted :

26. O Kṛṣṇa, although (as you say it) *Prakṛti* (Primordial nature) and *Puruṣa* (the intelligent Principle possess by their very nature different distinctive characteristics, (in our practical life) no difference between them is noticeable as they are mutually dependent and inter-related. (The *Ātman* is found in the physical body which is the product of *Prakṛti* while *Prakṛti* is found in the *Ātman*, as both body and Soul appear identical).

27. For the *Ātman* is noticed in the *Prakṛti* (the physical body being a product of *Prakṛti*), while the *Prakṛti* is found in the *Ātman*. (The very concept of "I" is impossible unless *Prakṛti* and *Ātman* are together, O lotus-eyed Lord, it behoves you to remove this grave doubt in my mind, by your decisive words supported by skilful logical reasons, O Omniscient Lord.

28. It is through your grace that the individual Souls (*jīvas*) receive enlightenment. It is due to your power (called *Avidyā* or Nescience) that knowledge of the *Jīvas* is obscur-

ed. You alone and nobody else knows the course and working of your own Māyā.

The Lord replied :

29. There is a fundamental difference between *Prakṛti*[1] (the psycho-physical organism called the body) and *Puruṣa* (the Soul), O eminent Uddhava. This (body) is subject to changes (such as boy-hood, youth, old age, etc.) as it is created out of the disturbance of the balance of *guṇas* (while the Soul is changeless and self-existent).

30. Dear Uddhava my *Māyā* which is constituted of three *guṇas*, creates through them manifold differences and concepts about them, in various ways. The creation which is subject to modifications is of three types—*Adhyātma*, *Adhidaiva* and *Adhibhūta*.

31. (For example) The sense of sight is *Adhyātma* The form or colour (i.e. the object seen) is *Adhibhūta* and the *aṃśa* or part of the sun present in the occular sense is *Adhidaiva*. These are interdependent (any one of them depends on the other two) for its existence. But not so that (the sun) which exists independently in the sky. In the same way the Soul (*Ātman*) who is the cause of the *Adhyātma* etc. is different from them. It is by virtue of his own inherent power of consciousness that he illumines other agents (such as *Adhyātma*) which shed light on others. Similar (threefold) nature can be predicated about the senses of touch, hearing, smell and taste and of the mental faculties (ego, etc.)

1. SS.VR. and VJ. interpret *Prakṛti* in a broad sense as 'the created universe'.

(i) VR : This created universe consisting of *Adhibhūta*, *Adhidaiva* and *Adhyātma*, is evolved out of *Ahaṁkāra* which in turn is the evolute of *Prakṛti*. Ahaṁkāra as applied to an individual is a synthesis of *Ātmic* (or psychic) qualities expressing love, hate and physical qualities like corpulence, etc.

(ii) VJ : There is a cardinal difference between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. The confusion between the two is due to misapprehension caused by *Tamoguṇa*. The universe is a creation of the combination of *guṇas* in different proportions, with a particular *guṇa* dominating the whole combination.

32. *Ahaṁkāra* (the ego) is the modification caused by the agitation of *guṇas* (as a result of the disturbance of their equilibrium) caused by the Time-spirit or the Supreme Ruler (who is thus an instrumental cause). It is an evolute of the *Mahat*, of which *Prakṛti* is the material cause. It is of three types viz. *Vaikārika* (from *Sattva guṇa*), *Aindriya* (from *Rajo-guṇa*) and *Tāmasa* (from *Tamo-guṇa*). It is the *Ahaṁkāra* which causes the notion of difference and delusion.

33. The *Ātman* is essentially pure knowledge. The controversy about the existence or non-existence of difference (between the Soul and the body or *Ahaṁkāra* is due to non-realization of the self. Though it has no basis and is meaningless (as it lasts till self-realization), it is true that it will not disappear from the minds of those who are averse to me—their very self.[1]

Uddhava said :

34-35. Be pleased to explain to me how persons whose minds have turned away from you, accept (are born into) and give up (in death) various bodies high or low as determined by their own *Karmas*, O Govinda. This phenomenon is very difficult to comprehend (properly in all its aspects) by persons of poor understanding. Generally there is a scarcity of persons who know this as all people are deluded (by your Māyā).[2]

The Lord explained :

36. The mind of men as modified by the subtle impressions left by *karmas* and accompanied by the five (subtle)

1. VJ : Such people presume existence for the non-existence and *vice versa*. Perceiving what is contrary to reality these people identify *Jīva* with *Īśvara* and deny the reality of the universe (A dig at *Advaitavāda*). According to VJ—difference between *Jīva*, *Īśvara* and the reality of the universe is true, but the opponents deny it and hence the controversy.

2. VJ thinks that the purpose of Uddhavas' asking this question is to know if there is any other cause of the transmigration of the soul.

(*nityānāṁ jīvānāṁ janma-mṛti kāryau, Karmetara kāraṇaṁ kim iti pṛcchati Uddhavaḥ*).

senses, transmigrates from one region (i.e. body) to another and the Soul though distinctly different from them, follows (due to the influence of *Ahaṁkāra*.)

37. The mind is under the dominance of (the residual impressions left by) *Karmas*. According to their influence the mind (at the time of death) broods over the objects actually experienced (during the life-time) or heard (as promises of future fruits of *karmas* as stated in scriptures. (After death) he becomes manifest (i.e. is reborn) among the objects contemplated by him and the previous objects (in the last existence) are lost in oblivion. Thereafter, the memory connecting the previous existence with the present birth becomes lost.

38. Due to excessive attachment to the present body and objects of enjoyment or due to some mysterious reason a person does not remember (anything about) his body, etc. of the) last existence. Such total obliviousness is verily the death of a being. (It is the body that is forgotten and dead and not the Soul).

39. And they (scriptures) opine that the (new) birth of a being consists of the identification on the part of the *jīva* with the objects of enjoyment i.e. with a particular body just as one imagines oneself identical with the body in one's dreams or in a day-dream (forgetting that his body in the wakeful condition is different, O liberal Uddhava.

40. In this manner, in the present dream state, the *jīva* does not remember his previous dreams or reverie and looks upon himself as a newly born person, though as a matter of fact he is the same old already existent person.

41. When a new body which is the site of the ten sense-organs, is born or the mind, the basis of the senses, identifies itself with a new body (in a different birth), the threefold distinction (viz. a particular body being the highest, the middling and the lowest, Or of being in the wakeful, dreamy or sleepy state, Or the body, the mind and senses) though unreal, becomes apparent in the *Ātman* who alone is real. Due to false identification with them, the *Ātman* becomes the cause for the idea of internal and external differences (i.e. He enjoys external objects of senses and experiences internal (mental) states such as pleasure, pain etc.). Even as

an individual Soul (*jīva*) creates (out of himself) a number of unreal bodies and sees himself as many in a dream or the father of a wicked son, though himself impartial, looks upon differently with the friends and foes of his wicked sons.

42. (In order to confirm Uddhava's feeling of renunciation, the Lord adds unasked).

It is every moment that bodies of creatures come into being and go out of existence, through the force of Time of inexorable velocity. But the velocity is too subtle to be perceptible to gross senses.

43. Just as in the cases of changes (in size of) flames, the flow of the current of a stream and changes in the (green or unripe, yellowish or ripe) appearances of fruit, so in the case of all created beings, changes in age and other factors (such as physical strength, lust, skill, etc. are brought about by (the continuous current of) Time.

44. (Even though the luminous particles in a flame appear and disappear every moment) the statement is made that 'This is the same lamp', (and although particles of water flow down the current giving place to other ones at the same spot in the stream of water) it is asserted that 'this is the same water of the stream',[1] similarly when the persons whose life is a waste (due to ignorance) say, 'He is the same man,' their notion and talk is unreal (for changes take place in the body every moment. The notion of unchanging absolute identity is incorrect).

45. Even this (ignorant) person is neither born nor dead due to the seed of his *karmas*. The *Ātman* is immortal. It is an illusion to predicate birth and death in the case of *Ātman*, as in the case of fire (which survives to the end of the *Kalpa* but) which is regarded as enkindled or extinguished due to the limiting condition of the piece of wood with which it is associated.

46. Entry into the womb, existence in the womb, birth, childhood (upto the age of five), boyhood (upto the age of sixteen), youth (upto the age of fifty), middle age (upto the age of sixty), old age and death—These are the nine stages of the body.

47. These fanciful states of the body (which are not related to the Soul), both high and low, are identified as one's own due to associations with *Guṇas*. It is seldom that someone disowns them and casts them off (through the Grace of God).

48. One's own birth can be inferred from that of one's son and death, by that of one's father. But he who clearly understands that birth and death are related to the body, this knower is the *Ātman* who is not subject to and characterized by both (birth and death).

49. Just as the knower of the sprouting of a plant and of its end, is different from the plant itself, so also the *Ātman* who is the seer, is distinct from the body.

50. An ignorant person does not distinguish his *Ātman* from his body in this way and becomes infatuated with the object of the senses and identifies himself with the body, and thus becomes a subject of transmigration or *Saṁsāra*.

51. He wanders in the whirligig of *Saṁsāra* by being born as a sage or a god by doing actions dominated by *sattva-guṇa*; by his association with *rajas* he is born among *Asuras* or human beings, and through association with *tamas*, he goes to the state of evil spirits or sub-human beings.

52. Just as one imitates the *artistes* while one witnesses a dance or attends a musical performance, in the same way the *Ātman* though free from desires or inactive, witnesses the qualities of *Ahaṁkāra* and is prompted to imitate them.

53-54. Just as trees (though stationary) on the bank of a flowing stream of water appear to be moving or when the eye is set rolling, the earth appears to be rolling; or just as reveries and dream visions though unreal give the pleasurable and painful experience to one, similarly, the *saṁsāra* that is the pleasures or the pains experienced therein are unreal, O descendent of Dāśārha.

55. Though from the point of reality, worldly objects have no existence, the *saṁsāra* does not vanish in the case of a person who broods over them, just as a person experiences evils in a dream.

56. Therefore, O Uddhava, do not enjoy the objects of pleasure with the senses which are by nature evil (unreal). Please understand that it is merely an illusion which shows difference which is reflected in the *Ātman* due to ignorance about its true nature.

57-58. Even if scolded, insulted, defrauded, envied, belaboured, fettered, deprived of the means of livelihood or defiled with actual spitting and urination and thus persecuted in various ways by the wicked and the ignorant, and thus subjected to a difficult situation, an aspirant after Final beatitude should extricate his *Ātman* by dint of his own self.

Uddhava submitted:

59. Please explain to me in such a way as I may understand it, O prominent among the eloquents. I consider this outrage of the wicked on my self as simply unbearable.

60. Nature (or Attachment to one's body) is too powerful even for learned people, (they will certainly revolt against such treatment) except in the case of those who are absorbed in performing the (course of) duties enjoined by you, and have become quiescent by securing asylum at your feet.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Song of a Recluse (Bhikṣu Gītā)

Śri Śuka (son of the sage Bādarāyaṇa) said:

1. When thus prayed by Uddhava, the foremost of his devotees, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the prominent leader of the Dāśārha clan, whose glorious exploits are worth listening, appreciated the speech of his servant (devotee) and explained to him in details.

The glorious Lord said:

2. O disciple of Bṛhaspati ! Verily there is hardly any such perfectly pious soul who is capable of consoling his mind which is pierced by the harsh abraisive language of the wicked.

3. A person is not so much pained when pierced by arrows in his vital parts, as he is by the shaft-like cruel words uttered by the wicked, cutting to the quick.

4. In this context, a holy ancient legend is (traditionally) told, O Uddhava. I shall describe it to you. Please listen to it with full concentration of mind.

5. This legend is sung by a certain recluse who was maltreated by the wicked, but who retained the composure of his mind by remembering it to be the consequence of his *Karma* ripened into fruition.

6. In the country of Avanti (country around Ujjain in Madhya Pradeśa), there lived a certain twice-born (Brāhmaṇa) tycoon of enormous wealth, a merchant-cum-agriculturist by profession. He was so miserly that he made his own body, sons, wife, deities, guests and servants to suffer by his parsimony. He was a woman-addict, greedy and most irascible by nature.

7. He never showed the courtesy of greeting his relatives and guests, at least orally. In his desolate house (devoid of religious activities), he did not satisfy his self by catering to its needs and desired objects, at the proper time.

8. His sons and relatives hated him for his wickedness and miserliness. His wife, daughters and servants felt disgusted with him and did nothing that would please him.

9. With this type of Yakṣa (ghost—) like guardian of wealth who was destitute of both the *puruṣārthas* in life (viz. righteousness and enjoyment of pleasure), and had thus fallen from this world as the next, the five deities of the five daily great sacrifices (*mahāyajñas*) viz. gods, sages, forefathers, subhuman beings and men (all of whom are claimants to our earnings) got enraged with him.

10. O highly liberal Uddhava ! As all the fund of his merit got exhausted due to his neglect of the (above-mentioned

five) deities, even his entire wealth which was amassed by him with great labour and pain was lost.

11. Some of the wealth of that wretched Brāhmaṇa was appropriated by his relatives. Thieves robbed some of it, while the rest was taken away by Providence, Time, government and other people, O Uddhava.

12. In this way when he became destitute of wealth, was devoid of righteousness and pleasures in life and was neglected by his relatives, he, being despondent, was lost in deep insuperable anxiety.

13. A deep sense of despair overwhelmed that pitiable Brāhmaṇa, while he was brooding over it for a long time, and was lamenting over it, with his throat choked with tears.

14. He mourned to himself, "Alas ! What a pity ! In vain have I subjected my body to hardship gaining neither religious merit nor any worldly pleasure. And all the hardship for acquisition of wealth was also lost.

15. Generally, the wealth hoarded by the miserly never confers any happiness on them. In this world, it causes affliction to their selves (minds and bodies), and after death it leads them to hell.

16. Just as even a small spot of leprosy mars even an otherwise covetable beauty, so avarice, even of the smallest degree, spoils the pure spotless glory of the glorious and praiseworthy excellences of the virtuous.

11. It is the lot of people to undergo hardships in acquiring wealth, to experience fears and anxieties in preserving and increasing it while acquired, and to suffer delusion when it is lost or spent in enjoyment.

18-19. In the opinion of the public, the fifteen evils found in men viz. theft or misappropriation, violence, falsehood, hypocrisy, lust, anger, pride, arrogance, dissensions, enmity, distrust or breach of faith, rivalry, addiction to women, wine and gambling—all these are rooted in wealth. Therefore, a a person desirous of securing the highest good, should renounce even from a distance the evil, the misnomer of which is *artha* (wealth).

20. Brothers, wives, parents as well as friends—all of whom are tied with bonds of affection—get separated—nay,

are instantly made sworn enemies for a paltry piece of coin (a *cowrie* shell).

21. These (near ones) become agitated and are incensed (*lit.* burn with anger) even for a paltry amount of money. They suddenly snap bonds of friendship, immediately abandon him out of rivalry to kill him.

22. Having obtained birth in the human species which is sought after even by immortal gods, and even the highest status of Brāhmaṇa, they discard it. Having thus ruined their self-interest, they get degraded into an evil state (viz. hell).

23. Having (fortunately) secured birth in this human body which is a gateway to the heaven (*svarga*) and Final Emancipation (*mokṣa*), what person will feel attached to wealth which is the centre (*abode*) of all evils.

24. He who does not share his wealth with gods, sages, manes, living beings, relatives and kinsmen (all of whom are claimants of that wealth)[1] nor does he spend it on himself, is merely a Yakṣa, (a ghost—) guardian of his wealth and he falls down into hell.

25. My life and strength have been wasted in the fruitless attempt to acquire wealth. It is with these (three) that wise people attain the Final Beatitude. Aged (and devoid of strength and wealth as I am), what good can I accomplish now ?

26. For what purpose does a learned person, aware of the evils of wealth, constantly put himself into the vain efforts of acquiring wealth, the desire for which is fruitless ? It is certain that this world is thoroughly infatuated by the deluding potency of some (indescribable) person.

27. What purpose of a person who, caught in the jaws of death, is being devoured by death, could be served by riches or by them who bestow wealth on him or by the objects of pleasure or by those who confer such objects on him or by actions which may lead to a new birth ?

1. It is regarded that what one acquires does not belong to him only individually, but gods, sages, etc. are also instrumental to that gain and as such these claimants should be propitiated by the daily five *mahā-yajñas*.

28. Ii is certain that Lord Hari, the embodiment of all gods, must have been graciously pleased with me and has brought me to such a state. For the despondency (that has been engendered in me by His grace) is the boat (which will help me cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*).

29. In the remaining part of my life, I, in whom the sense of renunciation has awakened, shall remain self-complacent (in my mind), and shall cease to be careless about my object in life (viz. working for final beatitude), and shall dry up my body in performing penance.

30. May the gods, the divine rulers of the three worlds bless me with their grace in this state (of working for my own salvation). (My life may be very short) but the ancient pious king Khaṭvāṅga[1] attained the region of *Brahman* (realized *Para Brahman* and became one with him) within the brief span of *Muhūrta* (45 minutes).

The Lord said:

31. Having deliberated and resolved in his mind in this way, that pious-most Brāhmaṇa of Avanti loosened the knots (of *Ahaṁkāra* and the feeling of mine-ness) in his heart, and turning into a quiescent recluse, he became a sage engrossed in meditation.

32. Having brought his mind, senses and breath under his control, he wandered over this earth, entering towns and villages only for begging alms, wearing no external characteristics (about his being a recluse) and forming no attachment to anything.

33. Seeing that aged, dirty (nude) recluse, evil-minded persons (in the town) maltreated him in various humiliating ways[2].

34. Some took away his triple bamboo staff (a symbol of total renunciation), some his begging bowl, and others, his

1. vide *Supra* II.1.13 (Vol. I. P. 154 and Ft. note No. 505).

2. The ill-treatment meted out to this nude, unclean (as ŚR put it) mendicant as given in the following verses, is similar to that given to Mahāvīra, the 24 th Tīrthaṅkara of Jainas, as described in the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, I *Śrutaskandha*. The textual similarity between these two texts is worth noting.

water-jar (of gourd), some, his seat, some, his string of beads and others, his quilting of rags and strips of cloth.

35-36. (To make a show of return) they showed and returned those articles to him and instantly snatched them away from him. While the poor fellow was eating food he got by alms, on the bank of the river, those sinners urinated on his head and spat on him. They forced the silent sage to break his (vow of) silence, and if he refused to speak, they belaboured him.

37. Alleging that he was a thief, some threatened him with words of abuse. Shouting "Bind that fellow". "Tie him down", some people tied him with ropes.

38. Some reviled him contemptuously. "He is a rogue carrying (the triple-staff as) an outward emblem of piety. He has become a bankrupt (depleted in wealth) and is driven out by his relatives, he has therefore adopted to this form of livelihood.

39. (others would say) "O he is quite robust and stout-hearted like a big mountain. He seeks his end by (assuming the vow of) silence. He is relentless like a crane".

40. In this way some ridiculed him; some broke wind against him. Like a toy, they tied him, whilst others, encaged him.

41. Whatever type of affliction that came to his lot—whether caused by the elements, or by his Fate (or gods) or his own body he took it in his stride reconciling himself with it, as ordained by his Fate, in which he must acquiesce.

42. Persecuted thus by the dregs of the society, who wanted to bring about his downfall (by making him abandon his saintly life), the Brāhmaṇa, remaining firm in own Dharma (course of righteous duties) and strong in fortitude of the *Sāttvic*[1] type, sang the following song.

1. This is defined in BG 18.33 as follows :
The unswerving firmness whereby through Yoga, the functions of mind, the vital breath and senses are regulated, is called *sāttvika*.

*The Brāhmaṇa said**

43. Neither these persons, nor any deity or myself (body), nor planets nor *Karma* nor the Time-spirit is the cause of pleasure or pain. But as it is said (in the *śrutis*), it is the mind alone that is the real cause of these, for it is the mind which sets into motion (the wheel of) *Saṁsāra* (worldly existence).

44. It is this powerful mind which creates i.e. sets in motion the *guṇas* (viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). From those *guṇas* proceed *Karmas* of wonderful, various kinds which are white (*sāttvika* or meritorious), black (*Tāmasic*, sinful) and red (*Rājasika* a mixture of merit and sin). It is from these that various species of life (corresponding to the colours of characteristics of the *guṇas*) proceed.

45**. The *Ātman* is perfectly unconcerned and inactive, though associated as the Inner Controller with the mind (which is actively engaged in *Saṁsāra*). He is shining like gold i.e. is characterised by His potency of perfect knowledge. As a friend or director of mine i.e. of the *jīva*, he stands merely as a witness with his vision unobstructed. But that very *jīva* (individual soul) assuming the mind as identical with the Self, enjoys the objects of the senses, becomes attached to the (three) *guṇas* and gets entangled in the bondage of *Saṃsāra*.

46. The control of the mind is the ultimate goal of charitable gifts, observance of righteous duties (prescribed for one's caste and stage in life), abiding by the rules of discipline called *Niyama*[1] and *Yama*[2], study (of philosophy), performance of acts enjoined in the *Vedas* and observance of good vows (e.g.

* ŚR calls this soliloquy of the Brāhmaṇa as *Aṣṭā-daśa śloki Gītā* in eighteen verses),

** VJ :—The Supreme Soul, with unclouded vision, witnesses the activity of the mind of the individual soul. That activity is the cause of *Saṁsāra*. But the Supreme Soul is unconnected with it as he is the embodiment of pure bliss. He is my friend. It is the *jīva* in the bondage of *Saṁsāra*, who is deeply attached to his mind which forms his subtle body. It is the *jīva* who is addicted to objects of senses and pursues them.

1. They are : purity, contentment, penance, study of Vedas and singing the name of the Lord.

2. They are : Non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celebacy and owning no property.

fasting on the *Ekādaśī* day). For the Supreme Yoga consists of withdrawal of the mind from all (external) things and concentrating on the *Paramātman*.

47. Tell me what he has yet to accomplish by giving charitable gifts (and other acts mentioned above), if his mind is perfectly serene and established in the Supreme Self. What good purpose can charitable gifts etc. serve, if one's mind is distracted, uncontrolled and inactive (through sluggishness, etc.)?

48* If the mind is subdued other senses as well as gods presiding over them (automatically) come under control. But the mind is not subjugated by anyone. The mind is thus a formidable deity, who is mightier than the mighty[1] He who can bring the mind under control, is the god of gods.

49. Without conquering the invincible enemy of inexorable force which cuts one to the quick, some persons infatuated (by *Māyā*) inflict a ruthless war upon other mortals, and make friend of some enemies of others and remain indifferent with still some other persons.

50. The bodies are the creation of the mind (and not real). Identifying themselves with their bodies as "mine" and "I" the people whose intellect (mind) has become blind entertain the false notion that 'this is I', "He is another—other than I", and thus under this misapprehension they wander in the darkness (or *Saṁsāra*) which being limitless is difficult to cross.

51. If an individual person is posited to be the cause of

* (1) SS. states that the grace of the Lord is necessary for controlling the mind.

(ii) VR. takes the formidable deity as the Supreme Lord, and interprets : The Supreme Lord, refulgent in his own splendour, should be worshipped by pious acts like charitable gifts, etc. He keeps the mind attracted towards him. He is mightier than the mighty and rules over the gods who are the presiding deities of the senses. They are afraid of him.

1. ŚR quotes a Śruti as follows :

manovaśe sarvam idam babhūva /
nā'nyasya mano vaśam anviyāya /
bhīṣmo hi devaḥ sahasaḥ sahīyān /

pleasure or pain (experienced by us), the Ātman (who is neither a doer nor an experiencer) has nothing to do with it. That (passive and active) relation (of giving and experiencing pleasure or pain) is between two bodies (of the doer and of the sufferer), which are (after all) made of dust. If a person bites his own tongue with his teeth, with whom should one get angry for the pain.

52. If the presiding deities of our senses be presumed to be the cause of our pair, how is it related with the *Ātman* (who is unconcerned with it)? For it is with the two organs of the same body) that the modification, viz. giving and receiving pain is concerned. When one limb of a body strikes another limb of the same body, with what part of the body can a man get angry?

53. If (it be argued that) one's own self is the cause (of our joys and sorrows), then the very nature of the soul being responsible (for the pleasure or pain) none else can be the cause. (But even the *Ātman* cannot be the cause as he is not insane to create trouble for himself). If there is any other cause than the *Ātman*, it cannot be real (as only the *Ātman*, the all-pervading Brahman, is real). That being the case, there is neither pleasure nor pain in reality. Where is then the cause to get angry?

54. If it is presumed that planets are the cause of pleasure or pain, planets can affect a body that is born[1]. How are they related to the *Ātman* who has no birth? Moreover, astrologers state that good or evil planetary influence, affect the planets. But the *Ātman* is neither the body nor a planet. With whom should the Self flare up?

55. Granted for the sake of argument that *Karma* is the cause of pleasure and pain. But how does the *Ātman* come into the picture? *Karma* is possible when one and the same body

1. ŚR. explains astrologically, when the planets are in the unfavourable houses of the horoscope (the 8th, the 12th, etc.) of a person then they harass him. But this trouble is to the body due to the identification of a presiding deity of a planet with the body. The planets create trouble *inter se* due to their enmity. But *Puruṣa* (the Self) is unconcerned as he is neither the body nor a planet.

happens to be both sentient *and* insentient (for only the insentient can undergo a modification and sentiency is a condition precedent of action). But the material body is non-sentient (and hence incapable of undergoing experience of joy, sorrow, etc.), while the Self is pure sentiency. With whom can he get wroth? For, *Karma*, the supposed cause of pleasure or pain, does not exist at all.

56. Even if the Time-Spirit (*Kāla*) be regarded as the cause of one's pleasure and pain, it has no relation with *Ātman* (as it is a part of *Brahman* with which the *Ātman* is identical. It is generally agreed that the whole never troubles its part. For example:) A flame is not destroyed by the fire. (It goes out when its limiting condition viz. fuel, is burnt down), so also the coldness of ice does not deaden with cold its particles[1]. With whom can the *Ātman* flare up as there is no scope for duality or pairs of opposites in the Supreme (*Brahman*)?

57. The *Ātman* is transcendental to *prakṛti*. Hence no pair of opposites (such as pleasure and pain can be imagined to affect the *Paramātman* either through the instrumentality of anything, at any time or place, in any way, as it is possible in the case of *Ahaṁkāra* (Ego) which is of the nature of (or cause of) *Saṁsāra*. One who has realized this, has nothing to fear from created beings.

58. Therefore, basing myself firmly on this conclusive faith in the Supreme Soul which the ancient-most great sages espoused (with careful deliberation), I (a poor recluse as I am) shall get over the uncrossable ocean of darkness (i e. *Saṁsāra* by resorting solely to the feet of Lord Mukunda.

The Lord said:

59. Having lost his wealth, he became disgusted (with *Saṁsāra*). Overcoming his feeling of despondency, he became a recluse and wandered all over the world. Though he was ill-

1. VR. puts it a bit differently:
The *Ātman* being sentient and of intelligent nature cannot be attributed pleasure or pain under the force of Time. If Time is regarded as the cause of the Soul's pleasure or pain, Time must be regarded as the cause of the heat of the fire or the cold of ice (and not their real nature).

treated in this way by wicked people, he remained steadfast to his course of righteous conduct (unflinchingly). The sage sang the following song:

60. "There is no other person (except one's ownself) which causes weal or woe to one's self. This mundane existence consisting as it is, of friends, foes and indifferent persons, is nothing but delusion of the mind caused by darkness (ignorance of the Self)".

61. Therefore, O Uddhava, having concentrated your intellect (mind) firmly in me, make all possible efforts to control your mind. This is, in brief, the entire teaching of Yoga.

62. A person who, with a concentrated mind, muses over, listens to or recounts to others this song of the recluse which teaches the control of the mind with the realization as the Supreme Lord[1], will not be overpowered by pairs of opposite states like pleasure and pain.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Elucidation of Sāṃkhya Yoga

The Lord continued :

1* Now, I shall elucidate to you fully the *Sāṃkhya*[2] doctrine as definitely and conclusively ascertained by ancient sages (like Kapila and others). Having realized this (philoso-

1. *Brahma-niṣṭham Brahmotkarṣa-jñāna-pūrvaka-mano-nigraha-lakṣmaṇam /*

* ŚR : Though the Supreme Soul is one without a second, all the quality arises through *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* due to Māyā, and it (the quality) dissolves into him again. A person who realizes this after close enquiry and contemplation, becomes free from the delusion of quality.

2. *Sāṁkhya*—(i) correct knowledge about the *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and *Īśvara* as being distinct from one another—VR.

(ii) Correct knowledge of the Truth ('as it is in reality')—VJ.

(iii) The discriminative knowledge of what is the Soul and the non-Soul—VC.

phy) thoroughly, a man can immediately shed off the illusion[1] (in the form of duality like pleasure-pain, etc.) caused by the erroneous notion of difference (between oneself and others, etc.)

2* In the beginning, during the *Pralaya* stage (when the universe did not exist and), before the *Yuga*—period—(began to run its course), in the first *Yuga* called *Kṛta* when people were accurate in discriminating between the reality and its semblance or illusion, the seer (or the subjective conciousness) and the totality of the objective existence were identical (one only) undifferentiated substance completely absorbed in *Brahman.*

3. That entire undifferentiated Reality, viz. the *Brahman* is beyond the reach of speech and the mind. It (the Brahman) became (as if) dual[2] in the form of Māyā or objective existence and that which is reflected in it, viz. the *Jīva.*

1. *bhrama*—The illusion in regarding one's body as the Soul or an absolute being—VR.

Vikalpa—(i) The body and the illusory super-impositions caused thereby—VC.

(ii) Illusions regarding one's body, household, etc.—SD.

vide supra III Chapters 26-27.

* (1) VR : (i) In the *Pralaya* stage, before the creation of the universe, at the beginning of the creation during the incomparable *Kṛta-Yuga* (the first *Yuga* period) and in the case of persons who could discriminate between the triad of the principles called *cid, acid* and *Īśvara,* Knowledge i.e. essential nature of the Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*) was but one—the total identity between knowledge and its object being absolutely undifferentiated by name and form.

or (ii) Both knowledge (i.e. the essential nature of *jīva*) and its object (viz. *Prakṛti*) were entirely one, undifferentiated by name and form.

(2) VJ : At the beginning of the creation, in the *Kṛta Yuga* knowledge and its object were one (factually real). There was no scope for doubt or mistake in the correct comprehension of the objective reality.

(3) SD : *Brahman* was possessed of the potencies of *Prakṛti, Puruṣa* etc. The *Jīva* (individual soul, the objective reality, *Prakṛti* were undifferentiated from *Brahman* as their cause

cf. *sad eva saumya idam agra āsīt* /

—Chāndogya 6.2.1.

2. VR. : Assumed two forms viz. *Māyā* and *phala* (the final goal) but JG. takes *phala* as the *Prakāśa viśeṣa* of *Brahman.* According to VJ. : In the

4. Out of the two, one is *Prakṛti* possessing two aspects[1] (viz. the cause and effect), and the other aspect is Knowledge (*Jñāna*) and it designated as *Puruṣa*.

5.* From *Prakṛti* which was being powerfully agitated by me and by the glance of the Lord in the *Puruṣa* form (or by the unseen destiny of *Jīva*), were evolved the *guṇas*, viz, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

6. From the three *guṇas* was evolved the *Sūtra*[2]—the first modification characterised by the (cosmic) activity and then (was evolved) the Mahat (The Cosmic intelligence). The *Mahat* in conjunction with *Sūtra* underwent modification and *Ahaṁkāra* (Ego) was evolved therefrom. It deludes the *Jīvas*.

7. *Ahaṁkāra*[3] (egotism) is of three types : *Sāttvika* (or *Vaikārika*), *Rājasa* (or *Taijasa*) and *Tāmasa*. It is both intelligent and non-intelligent or material by nature and is the cause of *Tan-mātrās* (the subtle objects, of sound, touch etc.) cognitive senses, conative organs and the mind.

8. From the *Tāmasa* (type of) *Ahaṁkāra*, the evolutes of which are the (five) *Tanmātrās*, came into existence the (five) gross elements (like the sky, air, wind, etc.) From the *Taijasa* (or *Rājasa*) type came into being the (ten cognitive and conative) sense-organs. From *Vaikṛta* (or *Sāttvika Ahaṁkāra*) were

Kṛta age, knowledge was one with reality and hence pure. In the *Tretā* age, it became divided and gave rise to doubt and in the *Dvāpara* age, it developed into perversity.

1. *Ubhayātmikā* : (i) Being of the nature of cause and effect : ŚR.

(ii) EK. Being of a nature of both-ness, one essential Reality constituting of Śiva and Śakti aspects, both of which are non-dual—EB. 24.97-101.

* VJ. uses mythological terminology all through. At the beginning of evolution through me were born out of Lakṣmī, Brahmā (*Puruṣa*) and Gāyatrī (*Prakṛti*). Through Lakṣmī and myself, *Prakṛti* evolved three forms viz. Gāyatrī, Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī presiding respectively over the *guṇas*, *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Sattva*.

2. The concept of *Sūtra* as an evolute of *guṇas* and as a predecessor of *Mahat* is the contribution of the *Bh. P.* and is not found in the Classical *Sāṁkhya*. EK. faithfully follows the text of the *Bh. P.*

3. Though usually translated as 'egotism' which is a later semantic development, its original connotation evades translation. G.J. Larsen (in his *classical Sāṁkhya*), suggests 'Self-awareness', 'I-ness'. The latter appears to me more appropriate.

evolved the eleven deities[1] (presiding over the sense-organs and the mind).

9. All these principles were impelled by me (with my energy) and were made to work conjointly. They created the egg of the universe which to me—(The Inner Controller of this *Vairāja*) became an excellent dwelling place.

10. In that egg laid on cosmic waters, I manifested myself (and lay as *Nārāyaṇa* on the sheet of that water). From my navel sprouted forth a lotus called Viśva (as it was the cause of the universe). And the 'self-born' god Brahmā appeared there (thus *Vairāja* re-manifested himself as a god with four faces).

11. Endowed with the principle of energy (rajas) and equipped with penance (and knowledge) and through my grace, god Brahmā, the Soul of the universe, created the worlds with their protecting deities, consisting of three regions, viz. *Bhūr-loka* (the earth with seven subterranean regions like Atala Vitala and others), *Bhuvar-loka* (the aerial region above the earth) and Svar-loka (consisting of *Mahar*, *Jana*, *Tapas* and *Satya lokas*)

12. *Svar-loka* or heaven is the abode of gods. *Bhūloka* (the terrestrial globe) that of all mortal beings including men. Beyond these three regions (in *maharloka*, *Janaloka*, etc.) lies the abode of Siddhas.

13. Below our sphere of the earth, god Brahmā created the subterranean regions (known as Atala, Vitala, etc.) as the abodes of Asuras and Nāgas. All the fruits of *karmas* performed by those who are under the influence of three *guṇas* are enjoyed in the (above-mentioned) three spheres.

14. *Mahar-loka*, *Jana-loka* and *Tapo-loka* are regions free from all impurities. These are the destinations of those who practice Yoga, perform austerities or become *sannyāsins*. But my region, Vaikuṇṭha is the destination of those who practice the Yoga of devotion (*Bhakti*).

1. ŚR. enumerates them as follows : Deities presiding over quarters, the wind-god, the Sun-god, Pracetas (Varuṇa), two Aśvinīkumāras, the Fire god Indra, Upendra (God Viṣṇu), Mitra (Prajāpati) and the Moon-god. They are refulgent with their splendour and hence called *devas* (*Prakāśa-svabhāvāt*).

15.* By me, the Almighty creator in the form of time-spirit which apportions the fruits of *Karmas*, this world which is bound up with *karmas*, is made to go up (to *Satya-loka*) or down to the insentient stage in this stream of *guṇas* (according to the nature of *Karmas* done by these beings).

16. All beings (or objects) whether minute or big, thin or stout which are in existence, are constituted by the pair, *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*.

17. Whatever forms the beginning as well as the end of a thing, certainly constitutes its middle also. It is the real entity (as it pervades all the states). Modifications have been only perceptual and of practical nature, as the ornaments are of gold or pots, of the earth.

18. The real entity at the basis of the product is that which the earlier existence adopts as the material to evolve the latter existence or that which is, in a given case, considered to be the beginning and the end of a certain effect.

19. Prakṛti is the material cause of what is regarded as *sat* (real existence from the practical point of view or mentioned in the previous verse). The Supreme Person is its support (presiding authority). And the Time-Spirit is the revealer of it (which does so by disturbing the equilibrium of *guṇas*). And I, the Brahman, constitute this triad (of *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and *Kāla*).

20.** (He proves the reality of *Brahman* due to his persistence before, during and after the existence of the universe—). As long as my glance (the Divine Will) is there, this enormous process of creation proceeds in due order from cause to effect (or father to son) continuously. It continues for the enjoyment of the *jīva* (who, due to the influence of three *guṇas* takes birth in various species for enjoying the fruits of his *Kar-*

*. ŚR. : All destinations except the Lord's region Vaikuṇṭha, are of short duration. A *jīva* can rest eternally in Vaikuṇṭha. One should give up the path of *Karma* and take to *Bhaktiyoga*. The verse thus preaches renunciation.

** VR. The creation of the universe consisting of categories like *Mahat* and others, continues to proceed while I will it. The universe has two aspects—intelligent (*cid*) and Non-intelligent (*acid*) and is invested with three guṇas. As I will it, the universe exists and gets dissolved.

mas) upto the end of the universe (till the glance of the Lord lasts).

21.* This universe (*virāṭ*) in which the creation (subsistence) and dissolution of the worlds (along with creatures inhabiting them) take place is pervaded by me. It (with all the fourteen spheres—*bhuvanas* arranged in it) becomes eligible for dissolution into its five components (the elements).

22.** (Here the process of involution of the universe is described).

(At the time of the dissolution of the universe due to a severe drought of one hundred years) the (bodies of) the mortal (creation) are withdrawn into the food, and the food, into the food-grains, the seeds, into the earth (which being burnt down by the solar heat from above and the poison-fire of *Saṅkarṣaṇa* from below) is reduced to its subtle state of smell.

23. Smell gets absorbed into waters and the waters into its essential characteristic *Rasa* (taste). *Rasa* gets dissolved into the (elemental) fire or light which (in its turn) is merged into (its essential characteristic) colour.

24. Colour is withdrawn into the element—air which is reduced to its essential property Touch. Touch gets dissolved into the ether (sky) which is reduced to its subtle state sound. The cognitive senses and conative organs get merged into their own sources (viz. their presiding deities like the Sun, Indra, Varuṇa etc.)

25. The causes (or deities presiding over senses) get dissolved into their controller; the mind along with the deities gets merged into *Sāttvika Ahaṁkāra*. Sound (the essential characteristic of the ether) is dissolved into *Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra* and that powerful *Ahaṁkāra* (which includes *Sāttvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa* types) is withdrawn into *Mahat*.

26. That great and mighty principle *Mahat* (which possesses the potencies of knowledge and actions) highly

* VR : When I, through Time, will like to destroy the *Brahmāṇḍa* consisting of various *bhuvanas* or spheres for the enjoyment of *jīvas*, it becomes fit to disintegrate into five (gross) elements.

** VJ. states that here the categories and their presiding deities are spoken of in the same words. (We should understand that) the deity presiding over food is absorbed in the deity presiding over seeds or food grains.

endowed as it is with *guṇas* is withdrawn into its cause the three *guṇas* which in turn get dissolved into the Unmanifest (*Prakṛti*) And that Unmanifest *Prakṛti* becomes merged with the Time-Spirit which has ceased to function.

27. The (operation-less) Time-Spirit becomes one with the *jīva*, the Maker of the Universe who directs *Māyā* (and is full of knowledge. The *jīva* gets integrated with me, the birthless (eternal) *Ātman*. The absolute *Ātman* who is to be inferred from the process of evolution and involution of the universe abides (eternally) by himself.

28. How can any illusion or misapprehension caused by the (wrong) notion of difference, arise at all in the mind of a person who makes searching enquiries about the *Ātman* and how can any misconception (if arisen at all) continue (to linger) just as darkness would, after the rise of the Sun in the sky ?

29. This is the process known *as Sāṁkhya*. This (differentiation between what is *Ātman* and what is Not-*Ātman*) cuts the knots of all doubts in one's heart. This has been explained to you by me. The omniscient one knows all things great and small, or he knows the truth about cause and effect or the past, present and future, from the point of evolution and involution.

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

The Three Guṇas and Their Workings

The Lord said:

1. Now listen to me attentively as I explain to you, O excellent person, how *guṇas* when unmixed with each other (and acting in that pure state), affect severally the behaviour of a human being.

2. The effects of *Sattva* are: Control of the mind and that of senses, forebearance, discrimination, observance of one's religious duties or penance, truthfulness, mercy, memory

(or prompt remembrance of *Śāstric* teaching), contentment, renunciation, non-covetousness, faith, avoidance of unbecoming acts (not even looking at them), charity, straightforwardness, modesty, and satisfaction in the bliss of the Self.

3. The effects of *Rajas* are: Lust after sensual pleaures, activity, arrogance, insatiable greed, pride, seeking heavenly blessings for prosperity, the sense of differentiation (between oneself and others), voluptuousness, quarrel-mongering, liking for self-praise, affection, ridiculing others, show of power, hard exertions through power.

4. The effects of *Tamas* are: Intolerance, miserliness, deceitfulness, violence, begging, hypocrisy, langour, quarrelsomeness, sorrow, delusion, despondency, stupour, expectation, fear and indolence.

5. These are the effects of *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* respectively. These are exhaustively enumerated by me. Now listen from me the effects of their combinations.

6. The expression of the notions 'I am' and 'Mine is' etc. is the effect of the combination of *guṇas*. Whatever act is done by the mind, objects of senses, the senses and the vital breath—all these transactions (in life) are the combinations of these *guṇas*[1].

7. When a person is enthusiastically working to attain (the three *puruṣārthas*) viz. *Dharma, Artha* and *Kāma*, each of such pursuits is a combination of three *guṇas* and they are conducive to the creation of faith (about *Dharma*) or attainment of wealth and satisfaction of sense-pleasures (which are *Sāttvika, Tāmasa* and *Rājasa* respectively).

8. If a person is deeply attached to activities characte rised by *Pravṛtti* (this-worldly-ness) and is intensely attach-

1. ŚR explains : When we say "I am quiescent, passionate or irascible" or that "These qualities (quiescence, passionateness) are mine", it expresses the idea of mine-ness—which is due to the mixture of these *guṇas*. The mind is *Sāttvika, bhūtas* (elements) are *Tāmasa*, while sense-organs are *Rājasa*. Naturally when an act involving the use of or working of the mind, senses, sense-objects and the vital breath takes place (as normally all acts are so involved), they become the product of the combination of *guṇas*.

ed to the house-holder's life, and performs righteous duties (prescribed for his stage of life), there is a combination of *guṇas* (as attachment to household is *Tāmasa*, his worldly *pravṛtti* is *Rājasa* while righteous duties are *Sāttvika*)

9. From (a person's) self-control and other qualities, it may be inferred that he is endowed (mainly) with *Sattva-guṇa*; from his inclination to lust and such other qualities, the person is dominated by *Rajo-guṇa* and from (passions like) anger (avarice etc.), it should be inferred that he is possessed with *Tamo-guṇa*.

10. But when, without expecting anything in return, a person resorts to me (and worships me), through the duties prescribed for him by *Śāstras* and adores me with devotion, one should know that person to be of *Sāttvic* nature—the same holds good in the case of women.

11. When with expectation of securing worldly pleasures a person worships me through (performance) of righteous duties prescribed for him by *Śāstras*, it should be understood that he is *Rājasika* by nature; but when he does so with a desire to cause injury to others (his enemies, etc.), one should know that he is *Tāmasika* by nature.

12. The *guṇas—Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*—affect the *Jiva* (individual Soul), and (as such) they have no concern with me. They are engendered in the mind of the *Jivas*. A person who is attached to *bhūtas* (i.e. the worldly objects which are products of *bhūtas*) is bound down by them to *Saṁsāra*.

13. When the illuminating, pure and auspicious quality of *Sattva* domineers over the other two, then a man is happily united with righteous tendencies, spiritual knowledge and other qualities.

14. When *Rajas* from which spring attachment, notion of difference and which drives one to activities triumphs over the two (other) *guṇas*, a person becomes restive and unhappy, indulges in activities and aspires after fame and wealth.

15. When *Tamas* which stupefies discretion, obscures one's vision and renders one dull, overpowers both the *Sattva* and *Rajas*, a person suffers from grief and delusion, becomes sleepish and becomes harmful and beggarly enough to expect help from others.

16. When the mind becomes serene, senses quiescent and averse to their objects, and there is fearlessness about the body, and the mind feels no attachment for anything, you can be sure that there is *Sattva-guṇa* which leads to my state.

17. When the mind gets agitated through passionate activity and his intellect (judgment) gets distracted, his senses are restless, the organs of action have no ease and the mind is in confused state, know that it is the dominance of *Rajo guṇa.*

18. When the faculty of understanding fails and the mind becomes powerless to grasp the objects and drooping its activities (temporarily) ceases to function, and when darkness (ignorance) and despondency prevail, know that it is the dominance of *Tamo-guṇa.*

19. When the *Sattva-guṇa* is in ascendance, the power of gods increases, when the strength of *Rajo-guṇa* enhances, the power of Asuras becomes dominant and when the *Tamo-guṇa* grows in strength, the Rākṣasas grow in strength, O Uddhava[1].

20. One should regard the working state of beings due to *Sattva-guṇa*, dream state due to *Rajas* and deep sleep due to *Tamoguṇa.* The fourth state which is the *Ātman* itself should be regarded persistent through all the previous three stages.

21. The Brāhmaṇas i.e. persons who follow the course of righteous duties prescribed in the *Vedas*, through the dominance of *Sattvaguṇa* go higher and higher up upto *Brahma Loka*, but with overwhelming *Tamoguṇa*, they go down lower and lower to state of immovables. And in between these two states shuttle the human beings due to *Rajo-guṇa.*

22. Persons at the time of whose death *Sattvaguṇa* is predominant, go to the celestial world. Those who give up the ghost while *Rajoguṇa* is ascendant, return to human world. Those who depart from the body while the *Tamoguṇa* is powerful, go to hell. While those who are above these three *guṇas* (even while they are alive), come to me (and merge).

23. The course of righteous duties prescribed by the *Śāstras* (irrespective of their nature as obligatory or occasional),

1. ŚR explains : Here the senses which tend toward *Nivṛtti, Pravṛtti* and delusion are respectively regarded as of the form of gods. Asuras and Rākṣasas.

if performed and dedicated to me or without any expectation in return from it, is *Sāttvic*; that which is done with some expectation of fruit is *Rājasa*. And the act done with some vindictive (harmful) (or hypocritical or jealous) motive is *Tāmasa*.

24. Knowledge that tries to cognize nothing but the *Ātman* (excluding all other objects) is *Sāttvika*; that which comprehends the Self along with its conditioning body is *Rājasic*; knowledge of the uncultured (such as ignorant children, the physically handicapped) is *Tāmasic*, while knowledge that concerns me only transcends all the three *guṇas*.

25. Residence in forests is regarded as *Sāttvika*; dwelling in a village or a town is Rājasa; while staying in gamble houses is *Tāmasa*. Dwelling in my shrine is above these three *guṇas*.

26. A doer of an action who is not attached to and expecting any fruit in return is called a *Sāttvika* agent. One who has become blind with attachment (for the fruit of an action in return) is remembered a *Rājasic* agent, while he who has lost his discrimination between what is right and wrong (but still does it) is called the *Tāmasic* agent. But a person who entirely depends on me is an agent who transcends the *guṇas*.

27. Faith in *Ātman* as taught in the *Śāstras* is *Sāttvika*, that in ritualistic acts and other duties prescribed in the Vedas is *Rājasa*. Faith in unrighteous acts as righteousness is *Tāmasa* while that in my service (worship, meditation, etc.) is beyond the influence of all *guṇas*.

28. Food that is nourishing, wholesome and obtained without exertions is *Sāttvika*; that which caters to the taste (and is palatable) is *Rājasa*, while that which is impure, nauseating and causing some disease is *Tāmasa*.

29. Happiness which is felt in (the realization of) the Self is *Sāttvika*; that which arises from the objects of senses is Rājasa: pleasure that comes through delusion and low taste is *Tāmasa*. But the spiritual bliss arising from realizing me transcends the three *guṇas*.

30. Thus three *guṇas* constitute everything such as substance (e.g. food in verse 28 above), place of residence

(vide verse 25), fruit (verse 29), time(verse 13-16), knowledge (verse 24) the act (verse 23), the doer (verse 26), faith (verse 27), state of consciousness (verse 20), form of existence (verse 21) and final destination (verse 22).

31. Whatever is seen, heard or contemplated by the intelligence—in fact all entities which are pervaded by *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, are the products of three *guṇas*, O prominent person (lit. O bull among men).

32. All these transmigrations of a person (i.e. of his Soul) are caused by these *guṇas* and his actions. The individual (Soul) by whom these *guṇas* which are engendered in the mind are completely subdued and who, by means of the *Bhakti-yoga* (path of devotion), is firmly established in devotion to me, becomes eligible for my state i.e. final emancipation, O gentle Uddhava.

33. Therefore, having fortunately obtained this (human) body which is eligible to attain both *jñāna* (knowledge) and *Vijñāna* (Realization of the Self), a wise and intelligent person should thoroughly shed off *their* attachment to *guṇas* and seek resort in me by worshipping me.

34. Therefore, free from attachment to sense-objects and with his senses brought under control, a wise person should worship me devoutly and with alertness. Concentrating his mind on me, he should discomfit *Rajas* and *Tamas* by developing the *Sattva guṇa*.

35. Becoming a contemplationist, he should subdue *Rajas* and *Tamas* by cultivating the *Sattva guṇa* and by strengthening himself by desirelessness, he should bring *Sattva* also under control. Freeing himself from *guṇa*, the *jiva* should shed off the subtle body (the cause of his *jiva*-hood) and attain to me.

36. The individual Soul (*Jiva*) who is thus emancipated from his subtle body (or *Jiva*-hood) and also from *guṇas* arising in the mind, becomes permeated with my presence (i.e. becomes one with *Para Brahman*), and the *Jiva* does not go out for enjoyment of external objects nor turns inward for enjoying them mentally. (He is liberated while alive in thisbirth).

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Song of Aila (Purūravas)

The Lord said:

1. He who having obtained this human body (existence) capable of perceiving my real nature, and having adopted the path of devotion so pleasing to me, duly attains to me who am Supreme Bliss and the Supreme Soul abiding in his heart.

2. Emancipated completely by dint of his knowledge from the *Jīva-hood* constituted of *guṇas*, and though living in the midst of objects of senses which are unreal, he does not get attached to them, as they are created by (and hence dependent upon) Māyā (and as such) are perceived falsely.

3. One should never associate oneself with unworthy persons who seek to satiate their hunger and gratify their sexual desire. For like a blind man following another blind person, the followers of such sensualists fall into blinding darkness.

4. Emperor Purūravas[1], the son of Ilā, who was well-known far and wide, became mad due to his separation from Urvaśī. When he regained his normalcy and decided to resign, he sang the following song:

5. As Urvaśī forsook him, the king lamented loudly and like a mad person, unaware of his nudity, followed her crying, "Wait, O cruel wife, do stop".

6. His mind being completely fascinated by Urvaśī, he enjoyed trivial pleasures through nights year after year and remained unsated. He was not aware of the years that passed away nor those coming in.

Aila (Purūravas) said:

7. Alas ! How terrifically vast is the extent of my infatuation ! My mind has been soiled (and spoilt) by my libidinousness. I was not even aware of the loss of (the major part of) my life, while my neck was being clasped by the queen (Urvaśī).

1. For the legend of Purūravas vide Supra IX. 14.32-47.

8. Hypnotized by her, I could not know when the sun arose or set. What I pity, that being enamoured of her, I was unaware how days amounting to a number of years just flitted away.

9. What a shocking self-delusion ! I, the sovereign ruler of the world, the crest-jewel of kings, was made a pet-deer of women.

10. The woman who spurned me (contemptuously) like a blade of straw even though I was a ruler with royal grandeur (and paraphernalia). And I, weeping like a madman, went after her in nakedness.

11. What majestic lustre, power or Lordship could there be in me, who like a donkey kicked (by a she-donkey) followed the woman as she deserted me.

12. What is the value of that learning, penance, liberality, scriptural scholarship, resort to solitude or observance of silence in a man who has lost his heart to women.

13. Fie upon me ! A fool who, though impervious to his self-interest, fancy myself to be a learned man and who, even after being installed as a sovereign ruler, was subdued and roped like a bull or a donkey by women.

14. Although I had been enjoying the intoxicating nectar of the lips of Urvaśī for years together, my inborn lust for her is not satiated, like fire fed with oblations (of ghee)[1].

15. Who else than the glorious Lord Viṣṇu, the Lord of those who revel in the spiritual bliss of the Soul, is capable to deliver my mind from (the clutches) of a wench who captivated it.

16. Even though I was advised by the queen (Urvaśī) in well-argued speech (recorded in a Vedic *Sūkta*) the deep infatuation entrenched in my mind does not disappear, as I, being perverse-minded, had not controlled my mind.

17. What offence has been committed by her against me ? Or what wrong can be attributed to a rope against a person who, not knowing its real nature, mistook it for a ser-

1. The famous verse attributed to King Yayāti in *MBH Ādi.* 85.12.
nā'jātu kāmaḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati /
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva bhūya evā'bhivardhate //

pent ? It is I who could not subdue my senses, am responsible (for this tragedy).

18. What a lot of difference there is between a (woman's or a human) body full of dirt, stinking with bad odour and impure and the attributes of being like a flower (clean. sweet-smelling, pure). But these attributes are superimposed on it (a woman's body) through Nescience.

19. It cannot be definitely determined whether this human body belongs to parents (who procreated it), or to the wife (one's life-partner), or to the employer, or to the fire (which ultimately consumes it) or to dogs and vultures (in case it is not cremated but lies unclaimed) or whether it belongs to the Soul (who abides in it) or to friends and well-wishers ?

20. What a pity that a man should be fascinated with this disgusting body which disintegrates into worms (if interred), faeces (if eaten by carnivorous animals), and ashes (if cremated), and appreciates it as a beautiful feminine countenance with shapely nose, beaming with charming smiles.

21. What difference is there between people like me who enjoy pleasure in a feminine body which is nothing but an accumulation of skin, flesh, blood, nerves, fat, marrow and bones and worms who enjoy themselves in feces, urine and pus.

22. A person knowing his personal interest, should under no circumstances associate himself with women or persons addicted to women; for the mind gets agitated only when there is a contact between objects of senses and senses and not otherwise.

23. A thing that is not spoken about, seen or heard creates no passion or desire for it. A person who does not direct his life-breath (mind or sense-organs to external objects), gets his mind steady and serene.

24. Therefore, one should not associate with women or women addicts through the medium of senses. For the group of six (internal) enemies (like lust, anger, greed and others) cannot be trusted even in the case of wise people. What need be said of (ignorant) persons like me ?

The Lord resumed:

25. Singing loudly the song (of his life) in this way, Purūravas, the King of the Kings, left the realm of Urvaśī. He realized me as his own self, and having shaken off delusion by virtue of this knowledge, he retired from worldly life.

26. Therefore, an intelligent person should dissociate himself from evil company, and associate himself with the saintly people; for it is these pious saints who would cut off his deep attachment (to sense-objects) by their wise precepts.

27. The saints devote their minds to me without expecting anything in return. Being desireless, they are serene, viewing all beings as equals (as they are none else but *Brahman*). They have superseded the notions of mine-ness and I-ness (i.e. identification of the Soul with the body). They are not affected by the pair of opposites (like joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain) and are perfect have-nots (property-less).

28. It is in the company of these supremely fortunate persons, O highly blessed Uddhava, that my legends are told and these stories absolve the listeners from all sins.

29. Those persons who listen to these (my) stories, extol them in songs, devoutly appreciate them and are devoted to me with faith and reverence, get devotion engendered in them.

30. What else remains to be achieved by the saints who attained real devotion towards me, the *Brahman*, who am endowed with infinite qualities and potencies and who am conscious blissfulness *incarnate*.

31. Just as cold, fear (of darkness) and darkness fly away from a person who resorts to the fire, similarly, those who wait upon and worship saints, become free from fear, ignorance and apathy.

32. Even as a strong boat is to those who are drowning in the sea, saints, serene-minded knowers of the *Brahman* are the best life-savers to those who are tossed about and are drowning in the sea of *Saṃsāra*.

33. Just as food is the very life of living beings, I am the shelter to the afflicted. Righteousness (pious acts) is the wealth (investment) in the other world, the saints are the

support (resort) of those who are afraid of repeated transmigration of the Soul in future.

34. The saints confer the (inner) vision (of the *Brahman*) on those who associate with them, even as the sun bestows the external eye (to see nature). Saints are deities, the near and dear relatives, the very soul, nay they are even myself.

35. It is traditionally recounted that Purūravas who divested himself of all longing for the realm of Urvaśī (and pleasures in her company), renounced all attachment, and revelling in the spiritual bliss of the *Ātman*, went about all over the world.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

The Yoga of Active Service

Uddhava said:

1. Be pleased to explain to me the Yoga of active service (*Kriyā-Yoga*) consisting of the propitiation of your worship, O Lord! What type of votaries worship you? With what motive do they propitiate you? What is the procedure of their worship, O Lord of Sāttvatas.

2. Sages like Nārada, the worshipful Vyāsa and Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, the preceptor (of gods), have repeatedly asserted that this course is conducive to the Final Beatitude to men.

3. The teaching that was issued from your lotus-mouth was the same which the glorious unborn god Brahmā communicated to his sons of whom Bhṛgu was the chief, and also what god Śiva imparted to his divine consort Pārvatī.

4. That teaching is approved as meritorious to persons belonging to all castes (*Varṇas*) and stages in life (*Āśramas*) I believe it is the best course conducive to emancipation from *Saṁsāra* even for women and Śūdras.

5. O Lord with eyes like lotus-petals! Be pleased to elucidate that course which unties the bondage of *Karma* (per-

manently) to me who am your beloved devotee, O Lord of the masters of this universe (the Trinity of gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra).

The Lord replied:

6. Limitless is the *Karma-kāṇḍa* (as courses and practices of ritualistic worship of the Lord are infinite). I shall, however, describe that to you succinctly and in proper sequence.

7. My worship is threefold—Vedic, Tāntric and a synthesis of these two. But of these three modes, one should offer me worship according to the method of his choice (and suitability).

8. Learn from me the method how a person, having attained the status of a twice-born when he is invested with a sacred thread according to the injunctions laid down in the Vedas, should worship me, with faith and devotion.

9. With sincere devotion and without any fraudulent motive (of expecting some fruit or ulterior objective in return), a person should worship me, the preceptor (or the father of world) with the articles of worship (by offering these to me) through the medium of an image or an altar of a sacrifice or the fire or the Sun or the waters or (image enthroned in) his heart or of a Brāhmaṇa.

10. For bodily cleanliness, he should first brush his teeth and take his bath. While bathing he should use earth (and other materials) for washing, muttering all the while Vedic and Tāntric *mantras* (sacred formulae).

11. After the performance of the Twilight prayer (*Sandhyā, Brahmayajña, etc.*) and other duties which have been enjoined by me through the Veda, he should, with a pure, solemn determination (of propitiating me) perform my worship which sanctifies (i.e. relieves one from the bondage of) *karmas*.

12. An image is said to be of eight kinds: It may be made of stone or of wood or of metals (like gold, silver, etc.) or of earth or of sandal paste or may be a painting (on the wall) or of sand or a mental image or made of a precious stone.

13. An image which is the shrine of the Lord, is of two kinds—movable (e.g. a Śālagrāma pebble) or immovable.

While adoring an immovable image, *āvāhana* (invoking the presence of the deity) and *udvāsa* (or *visarjana*, a farewell to the deity) are not necessary, O Uddhava.

14. In worshipping a movable image, one can exercise a choice whether invoking and evoking of the deity in the image should be done. But in the case of an altar of sacrifice both must be done. If the image be not of earth (or sandal-paste) or a painted picture, it may be bathed, but in the case of other material, it should be sprinkled with water.

15. My worship through the medium of images should be performed with excellent articles. But a sincere (guileless) devotee may worship me with whatever articles are available to him. In the case of worshipping me in the mind, it should be done with articles created by the mind with utmost devotion.

16. Bathing and decorating an image pleases me the most, O Uddhava. In the case of an altar, invocation of the specific deities at their respective places by means of *mantras* is desirable (or placement of twentyfive *Tattvas*—categories or principles by uttering twentyfive letters from *ka* to *ma*). In the case of sacred fire, oblations with ghee be offered.

17. In the Sun-god, worship with *Arghya* (respectful offering of water and other articles of reception) and prayers is the most pleasing to me; and in water, with libations of water and flower, etc. Even if mere water is offered with faith and devotion by my votary, it gives me the highest pleasure.

18. What need be said if sandal-paste, incense, flowers, lamp, food, etc. are presented to me as offerings. On the contrary, even if rich gifts in abundance be offered to me, by a non-devotee, it does not contribute to my pleasure and joy.

19. Purifying oneself (by taking a bath) and collecting together all the requisite articles of worship, seated on a seat of *Darbha*-grass with the Darbha's pointing to the east, one should face the East or the North or face the image of the god, if it was immovable.

20. Consecrating his person by Nyāsa (which consists of assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations) and the respective parts of the image, he should touch

it with his hand and clean it (by removing sandal-paste, flowers etc. of the previous worship) and should also duly consecrate the pitcher (*kalaśa*) containing water for bathing the deity and other vessels for sprinkling water.

21. He should sprinkle that consecrated water from the *Kalaśa*) and sanctify the shrine of the deity, the articles of worship and one's own person and also fill the three vessels with water and articles of worship[1].

22. The worshipper should consecrate the three vessels containing water for washing the feet (*pādya*), hands (*Arghya*) and sipping (*Ācamana*) of the deity, with the Mantras[2] called *Hṛdaya* (heart), *śirṣan* (head) and *śikhā* (Tuft of hair on the head) respectively, and then pronounce the *Gāyatri Mantra*[3] over them all.

23. One should contemplate on my transcendental atomic (subtle) *aṁśa* (part) of *Paramātman* which abides in the 'Lotus' of the heart in one's body, which is dried up by the (gastric) wind, and parched up with fire at the *Ādhāra cakra* (a spiritual nerve-plexus presumed to be located at the navel), but revived by the sprinkling of nectar issuing from the moon located in the forehead. It is beyond the 'un-struck' (spiritual) sound (*anāhata nāda*) which is the fifth part of *Praṇava* (the remaining four being A, U, M, *Bindu* or nasal sound) and it

1. ŚR. gives the following details. The three vessels with water are meant for washing the feet (*pādya*), hands (*arghya*) and for sipping (*ācamanīya*) water for the deity. The water for washing the feet of the deity should contain small grains of Śyāmāka rice, blades of Dūrvā grass, lotus flower and a herb called Viṣṇukrānta or Aparājita. The water for washing the hands of the deity should contain the following eight articles : sandal-paste, flowers, unbroken grains of rice (*akṣata*), of barley, blades of Kuśa grass, sesamum seeds, mustard seeds and blades of Dūrvā grass. The water for sipping or rinsing the deities' mouth should contain nutmegs, cloves, berries called Kakkola or Kankola. The list is commonly given by all commentators with a few additions. SD. states that if any article is wanting *Tulasī* leaves should be substituted.

2. GS. gives them as follows :
hṛdā namaḥ, śirṣṇā svāhā, and *śikhāyai vaṣaṭ*.

3. It is as follows :
tat-savitur vareṇyam bhargodevasya dhīmahi dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayā

is meditated upon by *Siddhas* (who have attained spiritual perfection).

24. When his own body is permeated by that divine particle (*aṁśa*) or contemplated as his *ātman* (like a house illumined by the light emanated from a lamp, the worshipper should be (himself) full of my presence and invoke me and worship me with mentally created articles. He should then invoke my presence in the image (to be worshipped), perform the *Nyāsa* (assigning the various syllables of the Mantras to the part of its body) and then adore me that way.

25-26. After constructing mentally a throne[1] (seat) for me, and with the nine powers[2] attending upon it, he should conceive that there is (on the seat-cover designed over it) a shining lotus of eight petals beautified with a pericarp and filaments. With a view to secure success here and emancipation from *saṁsāra* hereafter, he should, according to Vedic and Tāntric procedure of worship, offer me water for washing feet (pādya), washing hands and rinsing the mouth.

27. He should duly worship in the serial order the discus the *Sudarśana*, the conch *Pāñcajanya*, the mace *Kaumodaki*, the sword *Nandaka*, the bow *Śārṅga* as well as the arms of *Saṅkarṣaṇa*, viz. the plough and the pestle, in the eight quarters and the *Kaustubha* gem, the *Vaijayanti* garland and the *śrivatsa* mark (all the three on the chest of the Lord in their respective places).

28. Similarly, he should worship the eight attendants (*Pārṣads*) of the Lord, viz. Nanda, Sunanda, Pracaṇḍa, Caṇḍa as well as Mahābala, Bala, Kumuda and Kumudekṣaṇa,

1. ŚR. gives the following concept of this seat. It has *Dharma* or Righteousness, *Jñāna* or Knowledge, *Vairāgya* or Renunciation and *Aiśvarya* or Rulership as its legs in the South-east, South-west, North-west and North-east corners and the opposites of the above viz. Unrighteousness, Ignorance, Attachment and lack of rulership as its four sides and the three *guṇas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* as the planks at the base.

2. ŚR. enumerates the following nine potencies of the Lord, *Vimalā*—purity, *Utkarṣiṇī*—exalted state, *Jñāna*—Knowledge, *Kriyā*—activity, *Yoga*—Yogic Supernormal powers, *Prahvī*—modesty, *Satyā*—truthfulness, *Iśānā*—Sovereignty and *Anugraha*—Grace.

standing around the Lord in eight directions and Garuḍa facing Him in front.

29. He should also adore by the usual offering of water to wash hand, etc., *Durgā*, *Vināyaka*, the sage *Vyāsa* and *Viṣvaksena* (all these surrounding the Lord in the four corners), His own spiritual guide (standing to the left of the God), and the guardian deities of the eight quarters, each in his respective position, all of them facing the Lord.

30. If he can financially afford to do so, he should every day give me (and my attendants) bath with water fragrant with sandal paste, *Uśira* (a fragrant root of the plant *Andropogon Muricatus*), camphor, saffron and aloe-wood chanting all the while *Mantras* during the bath.

31. He should chant (while bathing the deity) the *svarṇagharmānuvāka* (the section of the *Taittarīya Āraṇyaka* beginning with the *mantra*: *suvarṇaṁ gharmaṁ pariveda venam* (T. A. 3. 11. 1a) the *Mahāpuruṣa Vidyā*[1], the *Puruṣa sūkta* (ṚV. X. 90) and texts of the *Sāmaveda* known as *Rājan-sāma*[2] (and *Rauhiṇa sāma*).

32. My votary should lovingly decorate me appropriately with clothes, sacred thread, ornaments, decorative drawings on my body (on cheeks, chest, etc.), garlands of *Tulasī* leaves and sandal pigments.

33. My worshipper should offer to me with faith and reverence various articles (of worship) such as water for washing feet and rinsing the mouth (for sipping), sandal-paste, flowers, *Akṣatas* (grains of unbroken rice), scented fumes, light and articles of food.

34. If he can afford it financially, sugar and milk preparations, ghee and butter, cakes, pastes and sweet-meats,

1. It contains the following *Mantra* :
jitaṁ te puṇḍarīkākṣa namaste viśva-bhāvana |
Subrahmaṇya namste'stu mahāpuruṣa-pūrvaja ||
2. It begins thus :
Indraṁ naro nemadhitā havante
RV. 7.27.1a, TS. 1.6.12.1a, SV 1.318a
VJ. includes the recitation of *Viṣṇu Sūkta*, *Samudra Sūkta*, *Pavamāna Sūkta* in addition to the above.

porridge made of wheat flour with ghee and raw sugar, curds and soup of pulses should be offered to me.

35. Every day or (if that is not possible due to financial stringency) at least on holy days (like the eleventh day both in the bright and dark half of the month, etc.) or in the birthday celebrations of the incarnations of God, perfumed oil, paste of saffron and camphor (for massaging my body), a mirror (to show me my reflection), tooth brush for cleansing the teeth, bathing with *pañcāmṛtas* or five articles like milk, curds, ghee, honey and sugar, to be finally washed clean with pure fresh water), sweet food for eating should be offered to me and music and dance should be presented on these days.

36. (To those who wish a higher type of fruit, worship of sacrificial fire is recommended as follows: A sacrificial receptacle sufficiently hollow in the middle prepared as per prescribed rules, in the earth along with three zone-like constructions and platforms around it be prepared and fire be deposited in it and when sufficiently kindled, he should collect it with his hand.

37-38. After spreading the *Kuśa* grass on all sides (as per usual procedure), he should sprinkle water on all the four sides of the receptacle of fire and after performing the procedure of *Anvādhāna* (depositing fuel[1] and other things in the sacred fire), the worshipper should contemplate me in the fire, as being brilliant in complexion like red-hot molten gold, with four beautiful arms equipped with a conch, a discus, a mace and a lotus, gracious and serene in appearance, clad in raiments of golden colour like pollens of a lotus flower.

39. (He should contemplate me as) adorned with a lustrous crown, with bracelets and a girdle and excellent armlets; with *śrīvatsa* mark on the chest, and shining *Kaustubha* gem (round the neck), and a garland of forest flowers (*Vanamālā*)

40. Having contemplated me (as such), he should

1. The sacred fuel and articles to be offered are to be placed to the north of the fire. They are to be sprinkled with consecrated water taken in a spoon before offering them to the fire.

offer the sacrificial sticks soaked in ghee into the fire. He should then pour into the fire two offerings of ghee specifically called *Āghāra*[1] and *ājyabhāga*[2] and should offer other oblations soaked in ghee.

41. A wise person (knower of these technicalities) should pour the offerings into the fire, uttering the fundamental *Mantra*[3] (*Om namo Nārāyaṇāya*) and some portion of the oblations with each of the sixteen verses of *puruṣa sūkta*. He should then give oblations (through the sacrificial fire) to Dharma and other gods according to the sequence given above (vide verse 25 above), uttering the name of the deity (in the Dative case and adding the word *Ṣvāhā* every time. Finally, at the end of the sacrifice a thanks-giving oblation to fire with the Mantra *Agnaye sviṣṭakṛte svāhā* is to be offered.

42. Having worshipped me and paying me obeisance, he should offer worship to the attendant deities (Nanda, Sunanda, etc.) muttering all the while the *Mūla Mantra* (*Om namo Nārāyaṇāya*) meditating on the Supreme *Brahman, viz.* Nārāyaṇa.

43. Having offered water for sipping, he should hand over the remnants to *viṣvaksena.* Then he should offer betel leaves containing spices and aromatic substances making the mouth sweetsmelling. He should conclude by *mantra-puṣpa* (showering flowers on me).

44. After singing and extolling my excellences, dancing before me, imitating my past *lilās* (sportive actions), recounting and listening to my stories, he should remain immersed in that blissful state for a while.

45. Eulogizing me by singing various hymns found in ancient texts as well as those in the current language (of the masses), he should lay himself prostrate before me with the prayer, "may you be propitious unto me, O Lord."

1. In this, ghee is to be sprinkled across the sacrificial pit from the north to the south and *vice versa*, muttering the sacred formulae *prajāpataye Svāhā, Indrāya Svāhā.*

2. Offering ghee to the sacrificial fire uttering the sacred formulas *Agnaye Svāhā, Somāya Svāhā.*

3. This being the *Pāñcarātra Sādhanā*, they won't use the mantra *Om Namo Vāsudevāya*, though some modern commentators do so.

46. Placing his head on my feet and clasping them (my feet) by both of his hands (he should pray) "protect me, O Lord. Afraid of the sea of *saṁsāra* full of alligators in the form of death, I have sought protection in you."

47. He should then reverentially place on his head some flowers, etc. from my worship as a gracious gift from me. If withdrawing of the spiritual light invoked in the image is necessary, he should contemplate that the divine light in the image is now withdrawn and merged in the Supreme Light in the lotus of his heart.

48. One may worship me at any time and in any form (image, picture, etc.), in which one entertains devout faith. For being the Soul (Inner Controller) of all I abide in all beings as well as in the Self of the worshipper.

49. He who worships in the manner described above, according to the course of active yoga as taught in the Vedas and the Tantras, receives from me accomplishments of his desired objectives, both here and hereafter.

50. After installing my image, he should get a fine durable temple or shrine built for it; (he should get) beautiful flower-gardens laid out for it, and establish foundations (or endowments) for the regular performance of my daily worship as well as for celebration of festivals and for pilgrimage.

51. He who makes formal grants of lands, markets, villages and towns for the perpetual continuation of my worship etc. every day as well as on specially sacred or festive occasions, attains to that divine state in which he can enjoy lordly blessings similar to mine.

52. By installing my image, one attains the sovereignty of the entire globe (in future); by building a temple or a shrine, he is sure to get dominion over the three worlds; by performing worship and rendering other services, he can attain to the region of god Brahmā. But he who serves me in all the above-mentioned three ways, attains a state of (blissful) equality with me.

53. A person who follows the path of disinterested devotion to me, directly attains to me only. He who worships me in the manner described above, is blessed with the *Bhakti Yoga* (the path of real devotion to me).

54. He who confiscates the endowment founded either by himself or by others for the sake of the deity or Brāhmaṇas, is destined to be born as a feces-eating worm for ten crores of years.

55. Whatever fruit is destined for the actual agent of a deed, awaits also his colleague, his director or the appreciator of it, as all these are the collaborators in that act. And in the next world, everyone of them shares the reward or retribution in proportion to their contribution to that deed.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Essence of the Path of Knowledge

(*Jñāna Yoga*)

The glorious Lord said :

1.* Realizing that the universe—a product of *Prakṛti* (Primordial Nature) and *Puruṣa* (Spirit) is nothing but one substance (viz. the *Brahman*), a person should neither praise nor censure the serene or violent nature and action of others.

*SS and VR : (i) One should realize that the Lord (i.e. my-self) is the Inner Controller. VR adds : The universe is the body of the Supreme Soul (me). One should realise that the universe consists of the sentient (*cid*), non-sentient (*acid*) and *Īśvara*.

(ii) VJ. interprets *para* as the opponent who fails to see the difference between the *Brahman* and *jīva*. (*paraḥ Śatruḥ, Jīva-Brahmaṇor vailakṣaṇya-satyatāyā asahamānatvāt*). The actions of such an enemy (an *advaitin*) are evil and should not be applauded but censured! (*What a gospel of hatred in the name of the Lord* !

VJ. adds : One who perceives that the universe along with the non-sentient *Prakṛti* and *Hiraṇyagarbha* (*Puruṣa*) is pervaded by the Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*) and is the real knower.

(iii) Ek. holds the *cid-vilāsa-vāda* about the universe due to the influence of Jñānadeva or Kāśmirī Śaivism.

2. He who applauds or condemns the natural inclinations and corresponding actions of others, immediately deviates from his own purpose (of attaining spiritual wisdom) as he, thereby, develops attachment to what is not real.

3. When the sense-organs which are the product of the *Taijasa* type of ego(caused by *Rajas*) are over-powered with sleep (and cease to function), the individual soul (*jīva*) remaining confined in the body, strays in the realm of illusions (*Māyā*) and witnesses dreams (which are unreal), and if the mind is still over come with torpidity, loses the consciousness of the body, sinks into death-like deep sleep. Similarly, the person who perceives the outward differences only (and fails to grasp the underlying oneness—the Reality) is distracted by illusory objects of senses and is ultimately sunk in utter darkness.

4.* When the quality itself is unreal, the problem of what is auspicious (or commendable) or inauspicious (or censurable) that too to what extent, does not arise at all; for whatever is uttered by the tongue (i.e. perceived by our sense-organs) or conceived by the mind is illusory and unreal.

5. Even though the reflection of an image or the reflection of a sound, occular illusions like a mirage are unreal (and unsubstantial), they do create an effect (on the mind of the seer or hearer). In the same way, this body or other things arouse fear till death (till every thing is dissolved into *Prakṛti*.)

6.** It is only the Almighty Supreme Soul who creates this universe and is both the creator and the created, the protector and protected. Being the universal Soul, he is the withdrawer and the withdrawn. (He is thus both the material and instrumental cause of the universe).

* (i) VR : The Soul is different from the body and it is wrong to identify them. The body is ever-changing (but the Soul is the same). There is no propriety in praising the body of a celestial as good or condemning the body of an insect as bad, as they are the modifications of the same *Prakṛti* and the body is not the Soul or Ātman.

** VJ. Being the almighty Lord, the creator etc. of the universe he creates himself into various forms, sustains them (or lives with other created beings) and withdraws them at will. The universe is thus real and not *Mithyā*—illusory (*Satya-saṅkalpena satya-karmaṇā parameśvareṇa sṛṣṭatvāt idaṁ sarvaṁ satyaṁ na mithyābhūtam* /

7. Hence, no being or reality other than the Supreme Soul existing independently out of the created universe, has been observed or stated (by the *Vedas*). The three-fold appearance of creation, sustenance and destruction of things[1] in the *Ātman* is baseless[2]. Therefor , do understand that this threefold universe (consisting of the seen and the process of seeing) is the product of *guṇas* and is caused by *Māyā*.

8. He who understands thoroughly this *Jñāna* and *Vijñāna* as expounded by me, does neither deprecate nor praise others but moves about in the world (far above partiality or duality) like the Sun.

9. Concluding through logical proofs like direct perception, inference, scriptural authority and self-realization that every thing (including the universe) which has a beginning has a beginning, has an end, a person should move about in the world shedding off attachment to everything.

Uddhava said :

10. (As you say it) the *Saṁsāra* (the transmigration or experience of pleasure and pain) is related neither to the Soul who is the intelligent self-luminous seer nor to the body which is the seen (or the object, an unintelligent non-self). The fact of the matter is that the transmigration does take place. (Be pleased to explain) to whom *Saṁsāra* is related.

11. The soul is not subject to decay, attributeless, pure, self-luminous like fire and is unobscured by anything (such as Nescience), while the physical body is non-sentient like wood. Now which of these two are affected by *Saṁsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths) ?

The Lord replied :

12. So long as there is a contact between the indiscriminate *jiva* and the body, senses and vital breath, *Saṁsāra*, though it has no reality, continues to bear fruit (by giving pleasure, pain, etc.)

1. *or* the *ādhibhautika, ādhidaivika and ādhyātmika* universe—ŚR.
2. The notion that Paramātmā is the *Samavāyi*, the *Asamavāyi* or the Nimitta cause is baseless. The *Brahman* is the material cause of the universe —VR

13. Just as (due to brooding over objects in the wakeful condition) a person in dream experiences pleasure or pain or witnesses objects which have no real existence, this *saṁsāra*, though non-existent in reality, does not cease to persist in the case of a *jīva* who constantly thinks over objects of senses.

14.* Just as the state of dreaming brings a number of (unreal yet) evil experiences to a person who has not wakened up from sleep, but that very dream is not capable of deluding a person when wide awake.

15. (Feelings and moods like) grief, joy, fear, anger, greed, delusion, cravings and others as well as the states of birth and death, are seen related to (a *jīva* due to his involvement with) *Ahaṁkāra* ('I'-ness), but not to the *Ātman*.

16**. The soul who is presiding over the body, senses, vital airs and the mind, identifies himself with them and abides in them, is called *jīva*. His subtle body is constituted of *guṇas* (like *Sattva* etc.), and (residual impressions left after performing) *Karmas* or actions. He is variously sung (i.e. designated) as *Sūtra* or *Mahat*. Being controlled by Time-Spirit (or *īśvara*), he revolves in the cycle of life and death (*Saṁsāra*).

17. Having cut off the sword of spiritual knowledge sharpened by means of contemplation, this baseless, apparent multiplicity of forms like the mind, speech, vital breath and

*. VR : When the spiritual knowledge enlightens a person, he ceases to identify his body with the Soul and has no attachment (*tad dehātmābhimāna-rūpa-mahā-janana-dvārā sukha-duḥkha-kṛn na bhavati* /

**EK : When the infinite *Ātman*, transcendental to *Māyā*, becomes the basis of *Māyā*, he is called *Antarātmā*. He pervades the *Māyā* and still remains infinite. He is hence called *Parameśvara*. As he is the controller of the *Māyā*, he is called *Īśvara*, the Ruler. When the *Ātman* is reflected in Nescience (*Avidyā*), he is called *jīva* (individual Soul), with a powerful feeling of his identification with the body, he became *Ahaṁkāra* (Ego) In this way, EK describes how the *Ātman* transformed himself into Mind, the ten sense-organs, the subtle body and its cause, viz. the three *guṇas*, the objects of enjoyment, *sūtra Prakṛti* and its agitator, the Time-spirit. Hence the *Ātman* is in every object. After describing in details how every object is constituted of *Ātman*, EK concludes that 'Bondage' (of *saṁsāra*) consists in identification of the Soul with the body and the realization that the *Ātman* is unrelated to the body, is called Liberation (*Mokṣa*).

—*EB* 28. 193-208.

the body—all unsubstantial (yet variously manifested unrealities), the sage should rove all over the world, without ever being subject to desires and temptations.

18. Spiritual wisdom consists of discrimination between what is eternal (The *Brahman*) and what is non-eternal. The means to attain it are the study of the Vedas, penance (i. e. abiding by the duties prescribed for one's *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*), direct (personal) experience, tradition or spiritual guidance from the preceptor and logical inference. This wisdom convinces that the absolute entity (viz. *Brahman*) that was at the beginning of the universe, and remains after the destruction of the universe, exists in the middle also and it (the *Brahma*) manifests the universe as well as is the cause of it.

19. Just as gold bullion before it is wrought into beautiful forms exists as gold before as well as after its modifications (as ornaments, coins or other decoratives), and is the same gold even in the middle when it is called by different names (as bangles, ear-rings, etc.) similarly, I exist before the creation and after the dissolution of the universe and I am given different designations in the middle, (while the universe exists as such. Thus the universe is not separate from me).

20.* O Uddhava ! From the point of both invariable concomitance and logical discontinuance, the Brahma is real. It is the fourth principle beyond the mind (vijñāna) which is subject to three states (viz., wakefulness, dream-state and sleep) caused by three *guṇas* (viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) which create the three-fold universe comprising the cause i. e. the sense-organs (*Adhyātma*) the Effect i.e. the elements (*Adhibhūta*) and the doer i. e. the presiding deities over the senses (*Adhidaiva*). He (the *Brahma*) reveals triads and persists when the above-mentioned threefold distinctness ceases to appear as when a person is merged in *Samādhi* (transcendental meditation).

21. That which did not exist before the creation and does not survive after it, has no existence in the middle period

* VJ ; This *Brahman* is *vijñāna*. It leads the *jīva* to three different destinations (Liberation, *Saṁsāra* and hell). Being beyond the realm of the triads (of states, *guṇas*, etc.) the *Paramātman* exists eternally independent.

except merely in name.[1] This body which was not Ātman either before it came into existence or after its death, cannot be Ātman while the body exists. That by which anything is caused is the same as the effect that is manifested. (The effect of that which is revealed is impossible without the cause or the revealer. That is my considered opinion in the matter.

22. Though this universe of modifications appears to exist, it is non-existent. It is the modificatory creation (of *Brahma*) through *Rajoguṇa* (and as such it is a product or effect which is revealed). But the *Brahman* is self-existent (not a product of anything but the cause of everything else), and is self-luminous (self-revealed yet the revealer of others). Hence, it is *Brahman* alone which shines[2] manifested as the diverse wonderful universe consisting of the senses, the objects of senses (viz. subtle elements), the mind (including the deities presiding over the senses) and the gross elements.

23. Having completely dispelled (lit. cut off) all doubts regarding the nature of the *Ātman*[3] by convincing proofs (such as scriptural authority, tradition, direct experience, etc.) of correctly discriminating the *Brahman* and by discarding the notion that the non-*Ātman* (viz. the body or the universe) the *Ātman*, as also through the grace of the preceptor of deep spiritual knowledge, a person should stay immersed in the Supreme bliss of the Self dissociating himself from all the cravings of the senses for enjoyment.

24. The Soul is (distinct and different from and hence) not the physical body of earth. Nor is he the senses (which are instruments), their presiding deities (who are the modifications of *Prakṛti*), the vital breath, elements like the ether, air, water, fire and the earth; nor is he the mind, intellect, the reason and the ego, as they depend on food (for nourishment). He is

1. *vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyam /*
—*Chāndogya Up.* 6.1.4.

2. *tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam /*
tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti //
—*Kaṭha* 5.15.
Śvetāśvatara 6.14
Muṇḍaka 2.2.16

3. VR. This word connotes the transcendental Supreme *Brahman* but the term *Brahma* in the last foot—*Brahmendriyārtha*, etc. is used in the sense of *Prakṛti*.

also not the object of senses and *Prakṛti* which is the state of equilibrium of *guṇas* (as they are non-sentient).

25.* What benefit can accrue to my devotee who has properly realized my nature by correct discrimination, by control of his senses which are the products of three *guṇas*? Or what blemish is there to him if the senses get distracted? What effect can there be on the sun if clouds surrounded it or disperse from it?

26. Just as the sky is not affected by the (drying, burning, drenching and soiling powers of) wind, fire, water and the earth, nor by the (heat, cold, etc.) of the coming and passing of seasons, in the same way, *Brahman* which is eternal (indestructible) and transcendental to the (cosmic) ego[1] is never soiled by the dirt of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* which are the causes of *Saṁsāra*.

27. However, so long as *Rajoguṇa* which soils the mind with attachment to sense-objects is not completely wiped out, all associations with the objects (senses) created by *Māyā* should be scrupulously avoided by the *yoga* of intense and unswerving devotion to me.

28. Just as a disease which is not properly treated medically, annoys patients by its frequent virulent recurrence, the mind of an imperfect Yogi whose passions and the *karmas* resulting therefrom have not been completely burnt down, becomes passionately attached to every thing (objects of senses, property, relatives, etc.) and brings about the fall of a *Yogin* who has not attained perfection.

29. Yogins who are frustrated in the attainment of their goal by interruptions created by god, men or other beings (or by the *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma* types of difficulties) (and die in an imperfect stage) again take to the path of *Yoga* (in the next birth) by virtue of their Yogic practice in the previous existence, but never turn to the elaborate path of *Karma*.

30. An ignorant person being impelled by some power (may be God's will or his previous *Karma* or destiny) performs

* VJ. thinks that this verse applies to Hari and not to his devotees.

1. VR-: The *Ātman* which is expressed by the word 'I'.
(*ahaṁ-śabda-vācyam ātma-svarūpam-api*)

some acts (e. g. taking meals) till his death and undergoes modifications (such as experience of pleasure or pain). A spiritually wise person though living in the domain of Prakṛti or Māyā is thus subject to it, but he is free from the cravings of his senses as he has experience of the spiritual bliss of the Soul.

31. (Here is the description of 'asamprajñāta samādhi'). He whose mind is concentrated on and established in the Self-Ātman is unaware of his body irrespective of whether it is standing, sitting, walking, strolling, lying down, passing urine, eating food or doing any other natural activity.

32. Even if a man of spiritual wisdom happens to perceive the unreal objects of extroverted senses (like those experienced by touch, taste, smell, etc.), due to their many-ness, he reasons that they are other than the self and he, therefore, does not regard them as real like a person who has risen from sleep regards the objects of his vanishing dream.

33. Dear Uddhava ! Before the dawn of spiritual knowledge, this body marvellously wrought by (three guṇas) and karmas was regarded as not distinct from the self (due to absence of discriminating power). But this (misconception of the identity of the soul and the body during the state of bondage) is dispelled by spiritual knowledge; for the soul is neither taken (perceived) nor forsaken !

34. Just as the sun-rise would disperse from the eyes of men darkness (that obscured their vision) but does not create a new thing (like a pitcher, etc.) which was not there, similarly a thorough discriminative realization of the self dispels the darkness of ignorance blinding the intelligence of man.

35. This (ever-present eternal) Soul is self-luminous (absolutely unsoiled by ignorance), unborn, immeasurable (beyond the ken of logical reasoning), unlimited by time and space (hence not subject to modifications of growth, decay, etc.[1]) self-luminous (capable of cognising every thing), one without a sec-

1 SS and VR : The Soul is not apprehended as the physical body (saying 'I am fat' etc.) nor is subject to creation and destruction (*sarga-saṁhārādi-bhāk*)

ond, beyond the range of words. It is when impelled by it that the speech and life-breath function.[1]

36. But it is self-delusion to entertain the notion of difference in the Soul who is absolute. For even this delusion about difference[2] (has to depend on the Soul) as it has no other support than the Soul[3].

37. It is the view of some persons who regard themselves as learned that duality in what is perceptible by names and forms (i. e. this body and the external world) and in what is constituted of five elements, is irrefutable and the statements in (texts of) Vedānta are merely complimentary (*artha-vāda*). But this conviction (of the so-called learned people) is meaningless[4].

38. If a *yogin* who has not yet attained perfection in *Yoga* (lit. is yet unripe in yogic practices) but is still striving in *yoga*, be visited by (some such difficulties (as bodily indisposition, etc.) the following procedure is prescribed (as a remedy).

39. He should cure some of these (viz. troubles from heat and cold) by yogic concentration (on the moon and the sun), some (caused by flatulence and other abdominal troubles) by various (yogic) physical postures, and some others (caused by evil planets, serpents, etc.) by penance, *mantras* (sacred formula) and medicinal herbs.

40. He should overcome some obstacles (caused by lust and anger) by intensively meditating on me. by singing my name and glorifying me while others (caused by hypocrisy and arrogance) leading to evil consequences by attending upon persons who are past-masters in yoga.

41. Some persons try to keep their body in sound health and preserve their youth by various expedients and then they begin the yogic practice for attaining miraculous powers.

1. *Keneṣitaṁ patati preṣitaṁ manaḥ.*
Kena Up. 1

2. viz. the difference with reference to the body and its condition —VR.

3. *neha nānāsti kiñcana—*
Kaṭha 4.11
Bṛhad. 4.4.19.

4. VR. regards the above views of the self-conceited as delusion of the mind.

42. But this cause should not be approved (and adopted) by the wise, as, after all, the physical body is perishable like fruits of a tree (and these efforts are in vain).

43. Even if the body of a person who takes yogic exercises every day becomes exceptionally strong (and lasting to the end of a *Kalpa*), he should not give much importance to it believing it to be imperishable. He should discontinue that yoga of physical culture and devote himself to me.

44. If a yogī entirely entrusts himself to me and devotes himself scrupulously to the practice of yoga (as detailed by me), he may not be hindered by obstacles. Becoming totally free from all desires and yearnings, he should enjoy himself thoroughly immersed in the bliss of self-realization.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Bhakti Yoga Recapitulated :

Departure of Uddhava to Badarikāśrama

Uddhava submitted :

1. O Imperishable Lord ! It is my considered opinion that the course of yoga as enunciated by you is impracticable to those who have no control over their minds. Pray, be pleased to elucidate to me (in easily understandable terms) that spiritual path by following which an ordinary person will attain perfection without any difficulty.

2. Aspirants after yoga who endeavour to concentrate their minds are subjected to great strains in controlling their mind, and feeling fatigued and frustrated in attaining mental serenity, they become despondent, O lotus-eyed God.

3. Hence, O Lotus-eyed Lord of the universe, swans i.e. those who can discriminate between what is essential and unessential (i.e. your devotees) joyfully resort to your lotus-feet which yield nectarlike spiritual bliss but these arrogant follo-

wers of the *karma* and yoga path devoid of your *Bhakti*—do not resort to them as they are confounded by your *Māyā*.

4. What wonder is there, O Imperishable Lord, that you abide by the will of your servants who have dedicated themselves exclusively to you? Even though your foot-stool gets polished with the crests of the glorious crowns of great rulers like god Brahmā and other rulers of the world (while they prostrated themselves at your feet), you took delight in the friendship of beasts (monkeys like Sugrīva, Hanumān), O friend of all living beings.

5. What person who is grateful and conscious of the gracious blessings bestowed by you upon your dependants (devotees who resort to you) can forsake you, the Inner Controller, beloved-most and Ruler of all beings? What person will accept something other than you which, though leading to good fortune, make us forget about you? (or who would worship some other god for securing great fortune or celestial world?) What object is inaccessible to us who devote ourselves to the dust of your feet?

6. O Ruler of the universe! Wise persons who gratefully remember your gracious favours and are full of spiritual bliss, realize that they cannot repay your obligations even during the longest span of life like that of god Brahmā; for you are present externally as the spiritual guide and internally as the *Antaryāmin* (the Inner Controller) and thus you dispel all inauspiciousness (sins, evil desires) of all creatures and manifest your true nature to them.

Śrī Śuka said :

7. When respectfully inquired thus by Uddhava who was deeply affectionate to him at heart, Lord Kṛṣṇa whose sport is the evolution of the universe, and who, by his potencies viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, has assumed three forms (viz. that of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva respectively) and is the Supreme Lord of the rulers of the universe, with a winsome smile replied affectionately to him.

The Lord said :

8. It is with pleasure that I shall explain to you the course of righteous duties which are exceedingly auspicious and pleasing to me. By following them with devotion, a mortal being can over-come the unconquerable death (*Saṁsāra*).

9. Remembering me deligently, one should perform all his duties dedicating them to me. He should resign and concentrate his heart and mind to me and should find delight in doing duties pertaining to me.

10. He should resort to the holy lands (and sacred places) frequented by my saintly devotees, and he should follow the course of conduct of my devotees whether they be gods, Asuras or human beings.

11. Either individually or in a group he should arrange to celebrate, on holy days (like *Ekādaśi*) pilgrimages, processions or great festivities accompanied with songs, dances and other royal arrangements worthy of great kings.

12. He should consider that he visualizes me only, manifested in all beings, both internally and externally, like the sky. With a pure, sinless heart he should see me within himself also.

13-14. In this way, O greatly enlightened Uddhava, he should establish himself in pure knowledge and should consider all created beings as being the God himself and respect them all. He who looks with an equal eye (without making any difference in) *Brāhmaṇas* and low caste peoples, a robber and one devoted to *Brāhmaṇas*, the sun and the spark of fire, a cruel and merciful person, (such impartial person) is really the spiritually wise person.

15. A person who invariably considers me to be present in all human beings, finds that before he is free from the (feeling of) inimical competition (with the equals), jealousy (against superiors) and contempt (towards the inferiors) along with his egotism.

16. Disregarding one's friends and relatives who smile at him in ridicule and setting aside the viewpoint (about the superiority) of one's person and giving up the sense of shame, should prostrate himself like a staff in bowing to all beings

upto a dog, a Cāṇḍāla (a man of the lowest caste) a cow and a donkey.[1]

17. He should continue to propitiate me orally, mentally and physically in this manner, so long as the perception of my presence in all beings is not engendered in him.

18. To him everything appears as permeated with *Brahman* by virtue of his knowledge that God is everywhere. Realizing this clearly and with all his doubts clarified, he should cease to participate in *Karmas* (or follow the path of *Karma*).

19. It is my considered opinion that out of all the pathways to God, to perceive my presence in all beings in one's thought, word and deeds is the most efficacious one.

20. Dear Uddhava ! Even if merely a beginning is made, there is no danger of the slightest loss (of the exertions made) in the righteous course of conduct prescribed by me, as it is free from wishful expectation, and it has been so systematically ordained by me as it would not be affected by *guṇas*. (It is not the ordinary *Dharma* laid down by Smṛti-writers like Manu).

21.* Whatever fruitless exertion of a worldly nature such as fleeing out of fear, lamenting out of grief, etc., if dedicated to me who am of transcendental nature, attains the status of *Dharma* (as in the case of Kaṁsa's fear, Gopī's love, Śiśupāla's hatred).

22. That one should attain to the Real through the unreal (body) and reach me, the immortal eternal Lord, by means of this mortal coil—This is the most intelligent act of an intellectual and the highest sagacity of the wise.

23. What has been expounded to you uptill now by me either in details or in brief, constitutes the complete epitome of the definitive teaching on *Para Brahman*. This is difficult to grasp even for gods (though they are *sāttvic* by nature).

1. Strangely enough VJ. distinguishes between Brāhmaṇas and others in the list and lays down that one should physically lay prostrate before Brāhmaṇas but in the case of Cāṇḍālas and others he should bow mentally only. (*Brāhmaṇādīn prati bhūmau daṇḍavan namaṇ anyathā caṇḍālādīn prati manasāsmaraṇam iti bhedaḥ |*)

* VJ. Acts of devotion, worship, contemplation on other deities is a fruitless exertion (*tadāyāsas tatra kriyamāṇa-prayatno nirarthaḥ syāt |*).

24. This spiritual knowledge has been repeatedly imparted to you with clear logical reasoning. A person who digests this will get all his doubts resolved and will be liberated from *Saṁsāra*.

25. He who will treasure up in his memory my lucid, well-reasoned exposition of your queries, will attain to the eternal Supreme *Brahman* which is the secret (knowledge) of the *Vedas*.

26. I, of my own accord, will reveal myself to the expositor of the *Brahman* who would clearly explain this knowledge to my devotees.

27. He who would loudly read out this sanctifying, supremely holy text (containing my teaching), will every day make others see me by the light of spiritual wisdom, and will himself get purified (by realizing me in his mind purified by Yoga[1]).

28. He who devoutly and with concentrated mind listens to this every day and develops supreme devotion unto me, is never bound by *Karmas*.

29. O friend, have you fully realized the true nature of *Brahman?* Has your infatuation and the grief that tormented your heart disappeared, dear friend ?

30. This knowledge should not be imparted to a hypocrite, a nonbeliever, a cheat, an unwilling listener, a person who is not devoted to me or an ill-mannered fellow.

31. You should expound this to persons who are free from the above-mentioned defects, are friendly to Brāhmaṇas and (reciprocally) liked by them. You should teach this to those who are pious, holy and to Śūdras and women if they are devoted.

32. Once this spiritual wisdom is properly imbibed, nothing remains to be known by the aspirant of (spiritual) knowledge, just as nothing remains worth drinking when once the exquisitely sweet nectar is sipped.

33. (There may be many things worth knowing and means of achieving object in the case of non-devotees, but I am

1. *yoga-pariśuddhena manasā sākṣāt-kuruvanniti bhāvaḥ*—VR

everything to my devotee. Hence you seek resort in me alone.)

Whatever objectives or purposes are accomplished by means of (spiritual)knowledge, performance of righteous duties, yogic practices, pursuit of commerce and agriculture, and wielding ruling power—that is all the main four objectives in life (or *Puruṣārthas*), I myself am to you[1].

34. When a mortal being has renounced all courses of actions (prescribed in Śāstras) and has dedicated his self to me, I select him as the recepient of my Special Grace. He then, attains immortality and certainly becomes eligible to be one with me sharing my divine powers of omnipresence, omnipotence, etc.

Śri Śuka said :

35. Having heard the speech of the Lord of hallowing renown, Uddhava, to whom the path of Yoga (union with the Almighty Lord) was thus lucidly explained, folded his palms (in reverence) and with his eyes overflowing with tears of joy and throat choked with overwhelming affection, he was unable to express himself.

36. With courageous efforts, he controlled and stabilised his mind which was agitated with overwhelming affection. Feeling (with gratitude) how blessed he was (by the Lord), he folded his palms (to pay obeisance) and touching His lotus-feet with his head, he submitted to the most prominent hero among Yadus, as follows:

37. "The pitchy darkness of delusion clasped by me so far, has been dispelled by your mere enlightening presence (what need be said about your illuminating discourses?) O creator of god Brahmā, can cold, darkness or fear (of any of these) overpower a person who is sitting adjacent to the fire (or the sun).

38. (Your compassion is limitless). Compassionate as you are, the brilliant lamp of spiritual wisdom has been given

1. ŚR attempts to explain how each of the four *puruṣārthas* are covered by the activities mentioned in this *Śloka*.

to me again. What grateful person would like to abandon the soles of your feet and resort to others for shelter.

39. The strong bonds of (the net of) my affection for (my clansmen like) Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Sāttvatas which were extended by you through (the agency of) your *Māyā*, for the expansion (procreation) of our race, have been cut asunder by you with the weapon of self-realization.

40. Obeisance to you, great yogin. I have approached you for protection. Be pleased to so guide me as I should find incessant joy from and affection for your lotus-feet."

The Lord Commanded:

41-42. Dear Uddhava ! In compliance of my command, do you go to my hermitage called Badarī. Absolve yourself of all impurities there, by performing ablutions and sipping the holy waters of the sacred Gaṅgā which became sanctified by contact with my feet. Having shaken off all your sins and impurities by the very sight of the Alakanandā[1] put on bark garments and subsisting on forest-products (like fruits, roots), stay on unaffected by any longing for pleasures and comforts, my dear.

43-44. Forbearing all experiences of opposite states (like heat and cold, pleasure and pain) continue to be straightforward and good in your behaviour. With your senses under control, serene and with your intellect (mind) concentrated on your *Ātman*, remain endowed with spiritual knowledge and self-realization. Pondering deeply and constantly and realizing whatever you have so assiduously learnt from me, you dedicate your mind and speech to me and continue to constantly abide by the duties prescribed by me. (If you do so) you will transcend the three courses (of existence caused by three *guṇas*--*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, viz. birth in the heaven and on the earth as a human being or a sub-human being or the three

1. A tributary of the Gaṅgā. Its source is traced by Captain Raper a little way beyond Badrināth at a waterfall called Vasudhārā (*Skanda P. Viṣṇu Khaṇḍa III.* 6).

—GADMI, P.3.

states of wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep) and shall attain to me (who am beyond *Māyā*).

Śri Śuka narrated:

45. Thus commanded by Lord Kṛṣṇa (devotion to whom terminates *Saṃsāra*), Uddhava circumambulated him by the right and placed his head on his feet. And even though he transcended the pairs of opposites like joy and sorrow, his heart melted (at the juncture of departure) and he moistened his feet with tears.

46. Nervous and afraid at the imminent separation from the Lord whose affection was extremely difficult to give up, and too much grieved to be able to leave him, Uddhava was deeply agonised. Bearing on his head the wooden sandals (given out of grace as a parting gift) of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava bowed to him again and again and proceeded[1] to Badarikāśrama.

47. Firmly installing him on the throne of his inmost heart, the great devotee of the Lord reached Viśālā (i.e. Badarikāśrama). Scrupulously following the course of (devotional) duties taught by Kṛṣṇa, the one Friend of the world, Uddhava ultimately attained to his state.

47A. (The 2nd line in VJ'S Text)

Having practised penance as instructed by the (only real) Friend of the universe, he attained to Vaikuṇṭha, the region of Hari.

48. Whosoever tastes with deep reverence ever so little of this nectar of spiritual knowledge overfull with the occan of spiritual bliss, taught to his devotee Uddhava by Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose feet are resorted to and served by the masters of Yoga—he gets Final Emancipation from *Saṁsāra* along with the world (the people) who associated themselves with him.

49. I bow to the Supreme Person, designated as Kṛṣṇa, the First cause of the universe, the Author of the Vedas, who

1. In order to reconcile this with Skandha III where Maitreya and Uddhava were given spiritual guidance by Kṛṣṇa, ŚR states that while on his way to Badarī, Uddhava heard of Kṛṣṇa's going to Prabhāsa. He hastily returned and found him sitting alone. Maitreya also came there. Kṛṣṇa gave them spiritual guidance. But Skandha XI is silent about Uddhava's return.

in order to terminate the *Saṁsāra* (transmigration of the Soul) of his devotees following the path of renunciation (*nivṛtti*), and to dispel the fear of old age, death, etc. of his servants following the path of *Pravṛtti*, extracted like bee the (honey-like) essence of the *Vedas* in the form of spiritual knowledge and self-realization and gave it to his devotees (following *Nivṛtti Mārga*) and offered the immortalizing nectar churned out of the sea to his servants (such as gods for drinking).

CHAPTER THIRTY

*Extermination of the Race of Yādavas**

The King (*Parikṣit*) *enquired*:

1. When Uddhava, a great votary of the Lord, repaired to the forest (at Badarikāśrama), what did the glorious Lord, the creator of all beings, do at Dvārakā?

2-3. When his own race was threatened with annihilation by the curse of Brāhmaṇas, how did the Lord of Yādavas cast off his body which was beloved-most to the eyes of all. His personality, so charming that women, having but once looked at it, could not take away their eyes from it; which having once entered into the ears of the saintly persons gets (as if) inscribed in their heart and never leaves it (i.e. is never forgotten by them,): Whose glorious splendour when extolled by poets, brings special charms to their words and enhances respect for them; having seen that form occupying the (charioteer's) seat in Arjuna's chariot, the warriors who were slain in the (battle at Kurukṣetra) in his presence, attained a form similar to him.

* This is merely a summary of the internecine feud among Yādavas. A blow-by-blow account of the fight is given in the *Mausala Parva of the MBH*. It appears more reliable as there we find the dead bodies of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa traced and duly cremated (*MBH, Mausala* 7.31), Kṛṣṇa did not go physically to the next world as the Bh. P. wants us to believe in this chapter.

The sage Śrī Śuka replied:

4. Noticing terrible portents appearing in the sky, on the earth and in the mid-air, Kṛṣṇa addressed the Yādavas who were seated in the assembly hall called 'Sudharmā', as follows:

5. "O foremost of Yādavas ! These terrible portents of a serious nature like unto the flags of the god of Death (Yama) are appearing in Dvārakā. We should not tarry here even for a short while.

6. Let women, children and old people go from this place to Śaṅkhoddhāra[1]. We shall go to the holy place Prabhāsa[2] where the Sarasvatī[3] flows to the west.

7. We shall take our bath there, observe a fast and serenely meditate. We shall also worship our deities with ablutions and application of sandal-paste and offering other articles of worship.

8. Having received the benediction (of Brāhmaṇas) by the recitation of sacred *Mantras* and performance of expiatory rites, we shall worship them with gifts of cows, land, gold, cloths, elephants, horses, chariots and houses.

9. For this is the surest procedure to avert evil and the best means of ensuring auspiciousness. Worship of gods, Brāhmaṇas and cows definitely brings prosperity to beings both here and hereafter."

10. All the (council of) elder Yadus attentively listened to this advice of Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of demon Madhu. They agreed with his proposal, ferried across the sea in boats and drove to Prabhāsa in their chariots.

11. At Prabhāsa, as per instructions of the Lord, whom they regarded as their deity, the Yādavas performed with great faith and devotion, all the rites conducive to their prosperity.

1. The island of Bati (Beyt) at the north-western extremity of the gulf of Cutch. Viṣṇu is said to have killed Śaṅkhāsura and recovered the Vedas from him here. GDAMI, P. 177.

2. Somanath or Devapaṭṭana near Verawal in Saurashtra.

3. Now called Raunākṣi. On the bank of this river under an aspen tree, Kṛṣṇā passed away—GDAMI, P. 181.

12. At that very sacred place, as Fate would have it, Yādavas lost their judgement and drank the highly intoxicating sweet beverage, a liquor called Maireyaka[1] by the filtrates of which the reasoning faculty is completely lost.

13. There broke out a bitter conflict between the proud and haughty warriors who were dead drunk with a strong liquor and were deluded by the *Māyā* of Kṛṣṇa.

14. Infuriated with rage[2], those desperadoes fought each other with bows, swords, spears, maces, iron clubs, and lances on the sea-shore.

15. Confronting each other in their chariots, elephants etc. decked with banners flowing in the air, and riding on donkeys, camels, bulls, buffaloes, mules and human beings (slaves), the highly intoxicated Yādava warriors struck one another with arrows even as wild elephants dash against each other with their tusks.

16. With increasing intense hostility while fighting, there were duels between Pradyumna and Sāmba, Akrūra and Bhoja, Aniruddha and Sātyaki, Subhadra and Saṅgrāmajit, terrible (uncle and cousin) of the (same) name Gada (one being the brother and the other a son of Kṛṣṇa), Sumitra and Suratha as combatants.

17. While others like Niśatha, Ulmuka and others the chief of whom were Sahasrajit, Śatajit and Bhānu became blind with intoxication and deluded by (the *Māyā* of) Lord Kṛṣṇa, challenged each other and meeting at close quarters struck each other mercilessly.

18. Forgetting their mutual friendly relations, all the clans of Yādavas such as Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇa, Andhakas, Bhojas,

1. SKD III., P. 786 gives the following ingredients of this wine:
Sīdhur ikṣurasaiḥ pakvair apakvair āsavo bhavet |
maireyaṁ dhātakī-puṣpaṁ guḍa-dhānānnasaṁhitam ||
I could not trace this verse in *Mādhava-nidāna* if by 'Mādhava' that work is indicated in SKD. From its name it (the liquor) appears to be a stimulant.

2. The MBH describes how Yuyudhāna's criticism of Kṛtavarmā's dastardly attack on the sleeping Pāṇḍava army, sparked off the struggle. The whole report (*MBH Mausal* 3.1766) reads like an account by an eye-witness.

Sātvatas, Madhus, Arbudas, Māthura and Śūrasenas, the Visarjanas, the Kukuras and the Kuntis (out of them some were domiciled in countries like Arbuda, Mathura, and Śūrasena) fought with one another.

19. Sons fought with fathers, brothers with brothers, maternal uncles with their sister's sons, nephews with uncles, friends with friends, well-wishers with well-wishers and clansmen with clansmen, as all of them were stupefied and deluded (by Hari's *Māyā*).

20. (After a time) when the (stocks of) arrows was being exhausted and bows (which they used like sticks) got broken and their weaponry was finished, they (pulled out and) clenched into fists the *Erakā* grass (that grew abundantly on the shore) as weapons.

21. And lo ! The *Erakā* grass when held by them in their fists, became adamant like hard iron-bars with which they struck their adversaries. When forbidden by Kṛṣṇa, they (turned against him and) attacked him.

22. O king ! Being infatuated they looked upon (kṛṣṇa) and Balarāma as their enemies. Those desperadoes determined to kill them and attacked them, O king.

23. At this, they (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) on their part became enraged, O Parīkṣit (scion of the Kuru race). They uprooted a handful of Erakā grass which (automatically was transformed into iron bars wherewith they struck back and moved about in the battle, killing (Yâdavas with their iron clubs).

24. The wrath intensified with jealousy of Yâdavas who were bedevilled by Brahmanical curse and whose minds were completely perverted by Kṛṣṇa's deluding potency which wrought their complete annihilation even as fire sparked off by friction of bamboos, reduces the whole forest to ashes.

25. When all clansmen belonging to his race were thus done to death, Lord Kṛṣṇa felt that all the remnant of the burden of the earth had been lightened.

26. Repairing to the sea-shore, Balarāma entered into Yogic meditation on the Supreme person and uniting his soul with the Supreme Soul, left this mortal world.[1]

1.- The MBH. differs in details (vide MBH *Mausala*. 4).

27-28. Noticing the passing away of Balarāma, the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, quietly went to a *Pippala* tree and sat down on the ground (with his back resting against its Trunk) manifesting his (original) radiant four-armed personality dispelling the darkness of all the quarters with his brilliant lustre like a smokeless fire.

29. (His form) was bearing the *Śrivatsa* mark, blue like a rainy cloud, brilliant like burnished gold, wearing a pair of silken garments and the most auspicious (in appearance).

30. His lotus-like countenance was graced with charming smile and was adorned with bluish locks of hair and eyes beautiful like lotus; it was beautified with dazzling alligator-shaped ear-rings.

31. It was adorned with a (brilliant) zone, sacred thread, a crown, bracelets, armlets, a necklace of pearls, (a pair of) anklets, rings and the *Kaustubha* jewel.

32. His person was encircled by a Vanamālā (a garland of special sylvan flowers). It was attended by his weapons in

(1) When Kṛṣṇa saw his sons killed, he used all his divine weapons and finished with the Yādavas.

(2) Babhru and his charioteer stopped him telling him "most of Yādavas are killed, let us find out where Balarāma is". (*MBH Mausala* 2.43-47).

(3) Bala-Rāma was found resting under a tree. Kṛṣṇa deputed Dāruka to Arjuna to take away women and children from Dvārakā.

(4) When Babhru whom he deputed to protect women and property at Dvārakā was killed in Kṛṣṇa's presence by a hunter's arrow.

(5) Kṛṣṇa told Balarāma to wait till he returned from Dvārakā making arrangements for the protection of women and children.

(6) Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā and requested his father Vasudeva to protect women (and children) till the arrival of Arjuna at Dvārakā.

(7) He reported what happened at Prabhāsa and informed him of his decision to spend the rest of his life (along with Balarāma) in performing penance.

(8) On his return, he found Balarāma giving up his life by a Yogic process.

(9) Wandering in a pensive mood, he decided to give up his body and he lay in Yogic Samādhi when he was pierced with a hunter's arrow.

Was it the second attempt on Kṛṣṇa's life when the first-mis-aimed arrow killed Babhru instead of Kṛṣṇa ?

their personal forms. He was seated with his lotus-like reddish (left) foot on his right thigh.

33. A hunter called 'Jarā' who fixed on the point of his arrow the un-pulverized remnant of the iron pestle ("born" from Sāmba[1]) pierced therewith his foot which appeared in shape like the mouth of a deer (wrongly presuming him to be a deer).

34. Seeing that it was a four-armed person (whom he hit), the horrified perpetrator of the (homicidal) sin prostrated himself at the feet of Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Asuras, touching his feet with his head.

35. 'It is sheerly out of ignorance that this has been committed by me, O Madhusūdana. It behoves you, O faultless Lord of hallowing glory, to pardon me for this sin.

36. This sinful act against you has been committed by me, O Lord Viṣṇu, whose constant remembrance, the wise say is efficacious enough to destroy the ignorance of men.

37. Therefore, put an end to my life immediately, O Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu) so that I should not commit such an offence against any other righteous person.

38. (If you agree that my shooting an arrow at you is not my fault but the effect of the Brahmanical curse, I submit) even god Brahmā, his sons, god-like Rudra and others, and the Vedic seers (the masters of the divine words) have failed to grasp the working of your Yoga Māyā. How can we of impious birth whose vision has been blind-folded by your Māyā can say anything about this sportive act (*līlā*) of yours ? (Be gracious enough to kill me and absolve me of my sins).'

The Lord replied :

39. 'Be not afraid, O Jarā, Get up. What you have done is exactly what was willed by me. (Cast off your body and) with my permission, do you go to heaven, the region of the righteous people.'

40. Thus commanded by the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa who takes any form at his will[2], the hunter circumambulated (by

1. Supra Bh. P. XI.1.17.

2. Lord's form, constituted of pure Sattva. disappeared His apparent form was only an outward semblance of his real form—ŚR.

the right) Lord Kṛṣṇa, bowed to him and went to heaven in a celestial car.

41. Dāruka was tracing Kṛṣṇa by his foot-prints, came in search of him. He identified the spot by the scent of the Tulasī borne on the wind and he stood before him.

42. He saw his Lord there seated at the foot of the Aśvattha tree, attended upon by his sharp brilliant weapons in person. With his eyes bedimmed with tears and heart overflowing with loyalty and affection, he jumped down from (the charioteer's seat in) the chariot and immediately fell at his feet.

43. (Dāruka said :) O Lord, just as one feels lost in darkness, at night, after the setting of the moon, ever since I did not see your lotus-feet, my vision was enveloped in darkness, and was completely lost. I do not see directions (how to behave as well). I have lost the peace of my mind."

44. Even as the charioteer (Dāruka) was speaking thus, his chariot with its flag bearing the ensign of Garuḍa, soared up into heaven along with horses, while Dāruka merely looked on (agape).

45. Even the celestial weapons of Viṣṇu followed the chariot. Lord Kṛṣṇa then addressed his charioteer who was dazed at heart with utter astonishment (at the happening).

46. You go to Dvārakā, O charioteer, and report to the Yādava kinsmen thereof the internecine conflict and mutual slaughter of our clansmen, Balarāma's passing away and my present condition.

47. Warn them that the sea will submerge the city of Yādavas (Dvārakā) abandoned by me. Hence you (i.e. both Dāruka and the remaining inhabitants of Dvārakā) alongwith their kinsmen should not stay at Dvārakā.

48. Taking with you the members of your families at well as our parents, all of you go to *Indraprastha*, under the escort of Arjuna, on the way.

49. Establishing yourself firmly in spiritual wisdom and remaining indifferent (to weal and woe) you follow the spiritual path proclaimed by me. Realizing that all this universe or *Saṁsāra* is nothing but the creation of Māyā (and hence unreal) you should attain spiritual peace of mind.

50. Thus commanded Dāruka went round Lord Kṛṣṇa (by the right-hand side) and bowing him down again and again and placing his feet on his head (i.e. touching them with his head), he went to the city (of Dvārakā) with a heavy heart.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Return to Vaikuṇṭha

Śrī Śuka said:

1-2. (After the departure of Dāruka) there arrived god Brahmā, god Śiva along with his consort Pārvatī, gods led by the great Indra, Sages along with the progenitors of the world, manes, Siddhas, Gandharvas (Celestial singers), Vidyādharas, great serpents, Cāraṇas, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Apsaras (celestial nymphs), Brāhmaṇas like Maitreya and others (or birds inhabiting the region of Garuḍa).

3-4. All of them were desirous and extremely eager to witness the glorious ascent of the Lord to his region. Glorifying in their songs the exploits and incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa the descendant of Sūta, they crowded the sky with rows or their aerial cars and rained on him showers of flowers with the deepest devotion, O King.

5. Beholding god Brahmā (the grand-sire of the universe) and other celestials who were his own glorious manifestations, that all-pervading Lord concentrated his mind on the Supreme Self and closed his lotus eyes in *samādhi* (meditation) with a view to avoid the expected requests of the gods to visit their respective regions.

6. By the technical Yogic process called *Āgneyi* whereby the Yogi concentrates his mind on fire and burns down his body, the Lord did not consume with fire his world-enchanting form which was very auspicious for concentration and meditation (and was the support of the world) but entered with his body his own realm[1]

1. Contrast *MBH Mausala* 7.31.
tataḥ Śarīre Rāmasya Vāsudevasya co'bhayoḥ /
**anviṣya dāhayāmāsa puruṣair āptakāribhiḥ //*

7. Kettle drums were sounded in the heavens; flowers were showered down from the sky. And Truth, Righteousness, Fortitude, Glory, and Prosperity quitted the earth and followed him (to Vaikuṇṭha).

8. Gods and others (who assembled there), of whom god Brahmā was prominent, were not able to behold (or even cognise) Lord Kṛṣṇa of inscrutable ways, while he was entering his own realm (Vaikuṇṭha) and they were left dazed in utter astonishment.

9. The passing away of Lord Kṛṣṇa could not be perceived by gods, just as the trail of lightening in the sky after its passing across the mass of clouds cannot be seen by (mortal) human beings.

10. Witnessing the (incomprehensible) Yogic way of Hari's disappearance, gods headed by Brahmā, Rudra and others were wonderstruck and glorifying it, they returned to their respective regions.

11. O King, please note that the incarnation, disappearance and the (sportive) activities among human beings (Yādavas) of the transcendental Lord, are nothing but histrionics staged by dint of his Māyā Potency, like those of a theatrical performer. Having created this universe by his great Will Power (without any outside material or agency), and having entered it as *Antaryāmin* (Inner Controller) and sported (into it), he withdraws it within himself in the end, and abides established in his own (glorious) state.

12. Was that Lord incapable of protecting his own person who with(i.e. while he was in)his mortal body brought back to his teacher Sāndīpani, his son who had been snatched away to the region of Death (Yama), who restored you to life while you were (practically) burnt by a great missile (Brahmāstra discharged by Aśvatthāman) and who vanquished Rudra, the destroyer of Yama and transported (his assassin) the hunter bodily to the celestial world ?

13. Though he alone was the sole cause of the subsistence, evolution and destruction of the entire universe as he was the wholesole controller of all powers, he did not wish to leave his person behind in this mortal world, as there was no

propriety in retaining a mortal body in this world and wanted to demonstrate the glorious state of those who are established in the Self. (Had he left his body in this world, the Yogins would have preferred to stay on in this world.

14. He who gets up early in the morning and devoutly glorifies the passage to the Supreme State by Lord Kṛṣṇa, will reach that highest stage to which none is superior.

15. Dāruka (the charioteer of Kṛṣṇa), bereaved of Kṛṣṇa arrived at Dvārakā. He fell at the feet of Vasudeva and Ugrasena and bathed them with tears profusely.

16. He reported to them, O King, of the total destruction of the Yādava clans. Hearing that heart-rending tale, people (of Dvārakā) were over-whelmed with grief and fainted.

17. Deeply agitated at their bereavement from Krsṇa and beating their faces and heads (with uncontrollable grief), they hastily rushed to the spot where their kinsmen lay lifeless.

18. When Devakī, Rohiṇī as well as Vasudeva were unable to see their sons Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, they were so afflicted with grief that they lost their consciousness.

19. They were so intensly stricken with grief at their separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa that they gave up their life then and there[1]. The Yādava woman embraced their husbands and ascended the funeral pyres (burnt themselves in the fire).

20. The wives of Balarāma as well clasped his body and entered fire. Queens of Vasudeva embraced his body and the daughters-in-law of Kṛṣṇa clasped each the bodies of their respective husbands like Pradyumna and others, and consorts of Kṛṣṇa like Rukmiṇī and others with their hearts fixed on him entered the fire.[2]

1. The MBH differs. After Arjuna's arrival at Dvārakā, he held consultations with Vasudeva about taking away Yādava men and women with their kit. Vasudeva cast off his ghost by the Yogic process, and his four chief queens immolated themselves in the funeral pyre of Vasudeva—*Mausala* 7.15-25.

2. MBH. states that only Rukmiṇi, Gāndhāri, Śaibyā, Haimavati and Jāmbavati immolated themselves in fire, while Satyabhāmā and other dear wives of Krsṇa went to the forest for performing penance.

—*Mausala* 773-74.

21. Deeply afflicted with the grief of separation from his dearest friend Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna consoled himself by pondering over the words of spiritual wisdom addressed to him(in the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Anu Gītā*) by Kṛṣṇa.

22. In the order of seniority of his relatives who were killed in the fight and had their races cut off, Arjuna arranged for the proper performance of the obsequies (for their welfare in the next world.)

23. The sea immediately inundated the city of Dvārakā forsaken by Hari, with the exception of the palace of the Lord, O great king.

24. It is the auspicious-most of the auspicious and by its very remembrance it removes all evils (including sins), for the glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of demon Madhu, always abides there.

25. Arjuna escorted women, children and old men, the survivors of the massacre and rehabilitated them at Indra-Prastha (the previous capital of Pāṇḍavas) and coronated Vajra (the son of Aniruddha, scion of the royal Yādava family) there, as their king.

26. Having heard the report of the destruction of their (Yādava) friends from Arjuna, your grandfathers installed you (on the throne of Hastināpura) as the successor of their dynasty, and all of them proceeded to the Great path (to the other world).

27. The moral (person) who with devout faith would glorify the incarnations and sportive acts of Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the God of gods becomes absolved of all sins.

28. He who sings the above-mentioned auspicious-most sportive acts of the glorious Lord Hari in his boyhood, and his delightful incarnation and great feats achieved therein-which he has heard here (in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* or elsewhere, would have engendered in him, supreme devotion and would attain to the goal reached only by *Parama Haṁsas* (i. e. recluses of the highest order).

SKANDHA TWELFTH

CHAPTER ONE

Dynasties Of The Kali Age

King Parikṣit requested:

1. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ornament of the race of Yadus, retired to His glorious abode (in Vaikuṇṭha), whose dynasty continued to rule over the earth? Be pleased to narrate that to me, O sage.

Śrī Śuka said:

2-3. O king, Purañjaya[1], who has been named as the last prince in Bṛhadratha's dynasty, is yet to be born. His minister Śunaka will, however, assassinate his master Purañjaya and will instal his son Pradyota[2], as the king on his throne. His son will be pālaka whose successor will be Viśākhayūpa from whom will be born Rājaka.

4. Rājaka's son will be Nandivardhana. These five Pradyotas will enjoy the (sovereignty of the) earth for one hundred and thirty eight years.[3]

5. Then there will be born Śiśunāga whose son will be Kākavarṇa. His son will be Kṣemadharmā. He will beget a son called Kṣetrajña.

1. Bh. P. IX.22.49 refers to him as Ripuñjaya.

2. Historically Pradyotas did not rule Magadha. Buddhist records and Purāṇic accounts make Caṇḍa Pradyota, a contemporary of Bimbisāra, as the founder of a dynasty in Avanti and *not* in Magadha. It is possible that Ripuñjaya might have been treacherously murdered by his minister but he was succeeded by Bimbisāra, the founder of the Magadhan empire : *BVB'S Vedic Age, P.* 328

3. The list of Kings of the Pradyota dynasty differs considerably from Pargiter's in *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age.*

2ndly, The Pradyotas did not supplant the Bārhadrathas & rule over Magadha. The Śiśunāgas did it and it was Bimbisāra who founded the Śiśunāga dynasty and not Śiśunāga. The Pradyotas ruled at Avanti. Caṇḍa

6. He son will be Vidhisāra who will have Ajātaśatru as his son. His son will be Darbhaka while the future son of Darbhaka is Ajaya.

7. Nandivardhana will be the son of Ajaya, while Mahānandi will be the son of Nandivardhana. In this way, there will be ten kings from the Śiśunāga dynasty which will rule (Magadha) for three hundred and sixty years.[1]

8. O mighty Kuru, in the Kali age, they will enjoy the earth to that much period of time. The son of Mahānandi, a mighty king, will be born from the womb of a Śūdra woman.

9. He will be a certain Nanda, the master of a *mahāpadma* (treasury) and an exterminator of *Kṣatriyas*. After him, all kings will be as bad as Śūdras and irreligious.

10. Like another Paraśurāma[2], the Scion of the Bhṛgu race, Mahāpadma will rule over the entire earth under one sceptre (or royal umbrella) and his command will never be violated by any one.

Pradyota, Udayana, Bimbisāra Ajātaśatru were in a way contemporaries of Mahāvīra & the Buddha and the historical information available shows that Pradyotas did not intervene the Bṛhadratha & Śiśunāga dynasties of Magadha.

1. There are some similarities in the names of the descendants of Śiśunāgas as given in the Bh. P. and Pargiter's *Purāṇa Text List*. But instead of Bimbisāra, being the historical founder of the Śiśunāga dynasty, he is represented as the 5th & Ajātaśatru as the 6th descendant of Śiśunāga in the Bh. P.

2. The apparent similarity between Mahāpadma and Paraśurāma is limited to putting an end to the dominance of traditional Kṣattriya families. Mahāpadma, perhaps being insulted by blue-blooded ancient Kṣattriya Kings because of his birth from a Śūdra woman, seems to have made it his policy to eliminate the dominance of these ancient Kṣattriya rulers. Hence this apparent similarity. The account of Mahāpadma as recorded by the Greek author Curtius makes him the son of a barber. Jainas (*Pariśiṣṭaparvan Āvaśyaka-Sūtra*) confirm Curtius. The Buddhist texts (*Mahāvaṁsaṭīkā*) regard Nandas as of 'un-known lineage' (*aññāta-kula*). This unanimous tradition confirms the low origin of Mahāpadma—which is a title meaning 'a lord of infinite army' or 'of immense wealth.' His real name is Ugrasena according to the *Mahābodhivaṁśa* (and it is confirmed by Greeks).

11. It is traditionally reported that Mahâpadma will have eight sons of whom Sumâlya was prominent. These kings will enjoy this earth for one hundred years.

12. A certain Brâhmaṇa[1] on whom the nine Nandas were completely dependent (and practically at his mercy) will uproot them. After their extermination, the Mauryas[2] will enjoy the sovereignty of the earth in the Kali age.

13. That very Brâhmaṇa, it is reported, will crown Candragupta. His son will be Vârisâra whose son will be Aśokavardhana.

14. Aśokavardhana's son will be Suyaśas who will beget Saṅgata. From Saṅgata will be born Śâliśuka whose son was Somaśarmâ.

15-16. From his loins will be born Śatadhanvan and his son will be Bṛhadratha. Thus there will be these ten Maurya kings[3] who will enjoy the kingdom of this world for one hundred thirty seven years.

1. ŚR names him as Kauṭilya, Vâtsyâyana or Câṇakya. But Cânakya or Viṣṇugupta who uprooted that dynasty was their sworn enemy and he outwitted and out-manoeuvered Râkṣasa and destroyed Nandas. Can this be Râkṣasa, the trusted but gullible minister of Nandas (vide *Mudrâ-Râkṣasa*) on whom Nandas depended completely.

2. VJ is obviously quoting a wrong tradition that Mauryas were the descendants of Murâ and belonged to the low caste of fishermen. Now it is accepted that Candragupta belonged to the Kṣattriya class of Moriyas ruling over Pipphalivana (Probably in U.P.)—BVB's *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 17 and 56.

3. According to VP 4.24.28-32 the Mauryan kings are : (1) Candragupta, (2) Bindusâra, (3) Aśoka-vardhana, (4) Suyaśas (5) Daśaratha (not mentioned in Bh. P.) (6) Saṁyuta (7) Śâliśuka (8) Somaśarmâ, (9) Śatadhanvâ (10) Bṛhadratha. Pargiter's *Purâṇa Text list* mentioned above shows much discrepancy about the number, names and order of the Mauryan kings; Bh. P. agrees with the combined versions of *Matsya and Vâyu Purânas*. Out of these different names of Aśoka's successors, the reality of Daśaratha is established by his three inscriptions on Nâgârjunî hills. Jain texts treat Samprati (mentioned in *Matsya P.*) as a patron of Jainism as Aśoka was that of Buddhism. King Śâliśuka is mentioned in the Gârgi-Saṁhitâ. No Purâṇa or Buddhist source claims Candragupta, the founder of the dynasty, as Jaina (even a convert). The final *coup* in 187 B.C. managed by Puṣyamitra ended the Maurya Rule—(For details *vide the Age of Imperial Unity*).

16A. (Having killed the Maurya king Bṛhadratha, his commander-in-chief of the army Puṣyamitra of Śuṅga race[1] will be the ruler himself). Puṣya mitra's son will be Agnimitra to whom Sujyeṣṭha will be born.

17. His son will be Vasumitra who will beget Bhadraka who will have Pulinda as his son. His son will be Ghoṣa to whom will be born Vajramitra as the son.

18. The next ruling prince will be Bhāgavata from whom will be born Devabhūti as it is reported. These ten Śuṅga kings[2] will enjoy the kingship of the earth for a little over a hundred years.

19-20. Later on, O king Parīkṣit, the earth will pass under the control of the Kaṇva dynasty of every poor merit. Having killed the dissolute monarch Devabhūti Śuṅga (through a female slave), the highly intelligent Vasudeva himself will rule over the earth. His son will be Bhūmitra whose son will be Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa will have a famous son called Suśarmā.

21. In this way, kings of the Kaṇva dynasty will enjoy rulership of the earth for fortyfive years from 75 B.C. to 30 B.C. though the Purāṇic statement is three hundred fortyfive years of the Kali age.

22. Murdering king Suśarmā of the Kaṇva dynasty, his low born servant Balī[3] of the Āndhra race, one of the wretched most persons, will rule over the earth for some time.

1. Not in SR's text. Strangely enough VJ thinks Śuṅga as the proper name and Puṣyamitra his caste.

2. The list of Śuṅga kings in the Bh. P. concurs fairly well with Pargiter's *Purāṇa text list*. But the Bh. P. states ten as the number of Śunga kings but actually names nine kings. ŚR however clarifies that Puṣyamitra, the commander-in-chief of Brhadratha Maurya, who was killed by Pusyamitra should be regarded as the 1st Śuṅga king and thus makes the number of kings ten. ŚR states that the period of this dynasty was 112 years. Thus the Śuṅgas ruled from circa B.C. 187 to 75 B.C. This dynasty did not only stem the tide of Greek and other foreign invaders but rejuvenated Hinduism by performing an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. The spread of Bhāgavatism under them is remarkable.

—BVB. *Age of Imp. Unity*, pp 95-99

3. The author of the Bh. P. does not know that his real name is Simuka and uses the adjective 'Powerful'. As Pargiter's *Dynasties of the Kali Age* (DKA) (P. 38, Notes 14, 16) shows, other *Purāṇas* use similar adjectives *balīyas, balī* with reference to Simuka. The consensus of *Purāṇas* on 'Simuka'

23. After him his brother called Kṛsṇa will be the next king. His son will be Śāntakarṇa and his son Paurṇamāsa

24. Lambodara will be his son and from him will be born king Cibilaka. He will beget Meghasvāti whose son will be Aṭamāna.

25. Aniṣṭakarmā and Hāleya will then follow. Hāleya's son will be Talaka. He will beget Purīṣabhīru who will be succeeded by his son king Sunandana.

26. Sunandana will have a son called Cakora who will be succeeded by eight sons known as *Bahus* collectively, the youngest of them being Śivasvāti, the vanquisher of enemies. He will beget a son called Gomatī-putra whose son will be Purīman.

27. The succession of princes after Purīman will be Medaḥśiras, Śivaskanda, his son Yajñaśrī and his prince Vijaya and his successors Candravijña and Salomadhi.

28. These thirty kings[1] will enjoy the sovereignty of the world for four hundred and fifty six years, O delight of the Kuru race.

as the name of this king is confirmed by numismatics and in Buhler's List of Brāhmi Inscriptions. The author of the Bh. P. seems to be a staunch orthodox Brāhmaṇa, so like Candragupta Maurya, Simuka or Balī is called *Vṛṣala* though his descendants like Gautamī-putra Śātakarṇi (in Nasik inscriptions) assume the title *eka-Brāhmaṇa* (the unique Brāhmana). The prejudice against Āndhras as *Dasyus* dates from the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. Simuka is called *Rājā Simuka-Sātavāhana* and as the legend goes Satavāhanas or Śālivāhanas were of mixed Brāhmana and Nāga origins (*Dvātriṁśat-Puttalikā*). The epigraphic evidence of the associations of Sātavāhanas with Śakas and Nāgas shows that the orthodox Brāhmaṇas regarded them as *vṛṣalas* or degraded Brāhmanas or outcastes despite Sātavāhana's claim to Brāhmaṇahood—*The Age of Imp. Unity*, pp. 106-107, etc.

1. The Bh. P. actually enumerates 23 kings though in conformity with other *Purāṇas*, the number of kings is stated as thirty. Pargiter's single unified list of *Purāṇa Text* (DKA pp. 38-43, 71-72) and his co-ordinated list (DKA-36) show differences in names of the kings. The list of 30 kings as given in *Matsya* P. is quoted in *The Age of Imp. Unity*, pp, 706-707.

Viṣnu P. (4.24.5) correctly calls these kings Āndhrabhrtyas, for after the Andhras probably (as happened in the case of Śuṅgas and Kanvas) the servants of the Āndhra rulers became the rulers and came to be known as such. --

29. At their capital Avabhrti[1], seven Ābhīra princes will rule the earth, ten kings of Gardhabhī dynasty and sixteen of the Kaṅka (Śaka) race—all of them very greedy and lewd will hold the sway.

30. They will be succeeded by eight Yavana rulers (Bactrian Greeks), and fourteen kings of the Turuṣka race. Again there will be ten kings of Guruṇḍa (Probably Maruṇḍas vide DKA P.45) race and eleven of the Mauna (Hūṇa) dynasty.

31-33. These kings (beginning from Ābhīras upto Maunas, viz. sixtyfive kings will enjoy the sovereignty of the earth for (a total of) one thousand ninetynine years[2] And the eleven Mauna (Hūṇa) kings will rule over the earth for three hundred years, O king. When their dynasty ended, at the capital town of Kilikila, kings Bhūtananda, Vaṅgiri Śiśunandi and his famous warrior brother Yaśanandi will reign for one hundred and six years.[3]

34. They will have thirteen sons called Bāhlīkas. Then will rule the Ksatriya Prince Puṣya-mitra and his son Dumitra.

35. All these will be contemporary kings ruling over different states. Seven of these will be the rulers of Āndhra and seven kings of Kosal. The kings of Vidūra and Nisadha also will be out of these Bālhīkas.

36. There will be a king of Magadhas called Viśvasphūrji. He will be well known as Purañjaya the second. He will reduce the higher castes to the status of Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas.[4]

1. ŚR is simply offering a conjecture when he explains 'Āvabhrtyas,' as the rulers of Avabhṛti.

2. The above four verses, viz. 29-33 mention some local dynasties. References to other *Purāṇas* and Pargiter's DKA (*Dynasty of the Kali Age*) show that some of them were contemporaries. Hence the duration of these dynasties viz. 1099 years as given in the Bh. P. is not correct. In fact, the author of this chapter of the Bh. P. is less critical and relies on hearsay evidence. Some of these are foreign tribes viz. Śakas (called Kaṅkas in the Bh. P.) and Hūṇas (*called Maunas here*).

3. Compare DKA : Dynasties of 3rd Cent. A D.—pp. 50-53.

4. BVB. *AGE Imp. Unity* regards Viśvasphūrji as a foreign ruler of Magadha, p. 177 Ft. Note No. 3.

ŚR gives Viśvasphūrji the credit of creating the subcastes like Pulindas.

37. That powerful but wicked-minded prince will establish a caste-less society where there will be no reverence to Vedas and Brāhmaṇas. He will exterminate the Kṣatriyas as well. In his capital city of Padmāvatī, he will enjoy a well-guarded state from Haradwar to Prayāga in the valley of the Gaṅgā.

38. The twice-born castes of Saurāṣṭra, Avanti, Ābhīra, Śūra, Arbuda and Mālava countries will become fallen (due to lapse or non-performance of *saṁskāras, such as the investiture of the sacred thread*) and the rulers of these people will be mostly of Śūdra castes.

39. Śūdras, persons fallen from higher castes, Mlecchas all bereft of Vedic culture and way of life—will be the rulers over the banks of the Sindhu and the Candrabhāgā (the Chinab), the city of Kaunti and the region of Kaśmīra.

40. O Parīkṣit ! All these contemporary kings will be as good as Mlecchas, bent on unrighteousness, falsehood, miserly and ferocious.

41. (With no compunctions) they will murder women, children, Brāhmaṇas, slaughter cows. They will covet after the women and property of others. Subject to vicissitudes of fate and overwhelmed with joy or grief, they will be poor in strength and of short duration of life.

42. Devoid of culture or purificatory ceremonies (right from inception) of righteous deeds and dominated by *rajas* and *tamas*, these Mlecchas in the guise of Kṣattriyas will exploit their own subjects.

43. The subjects inhabiting those lands will emulate their rulers in their habits, character, way of talking and coming in conflict with each other as well as their rulers, will perish.

CHAPTER TWO

The Evils of the Kali Age

Śri Śuka began to narrate:

1. Thereafter, day after day, under the force of the inexorably powerful Time, righteousness, truth, purity, (both physical and mental), forbearance, mercy, duration of life, physical power, and sharpness of memory shall go deteriorating.

2. In the Kali age, wealth alone will be the deciding factor of nobility of birth, righteous behaviour or merits. And only brute force will be the only standard in the arrangement or decision of what is righteous or just.

3. Mutual liking (and not family pedigree, social status etc.) will be the criterion of selecting a partner of life in marriage; cheating is the order of the day in business relations; satisfaction of the sexual pleasure is the only consideration of masculine or feminine excellence and worthiness and wearing of the sacred thread (*Yajñopavita*) (and not the pious behaviour or Vedic or Śāstric learning) is the outward index of Brāhmaṇahood.

4. External marks (such as a staff, deer-hide) and not the observance of the vows and restrictions of a particular *Āśrama* (or stage of life) has been the only index of a particular *Āśrama* of a person and is the only guide to greet mutually when they meet each other. Justice has become weak and partial through the inability of the party to bribe these administering it[1]; and garrulity has been the hall-mark of scholarship.

5. Want of affluence is the cause of one's impiety or bad name while hypocrisy is the index of goodness. Mutual consent and not the *Śāstric* way) is enough for marriage. And mere toilet alone is a substitute for bathing.

6. To go to distant place of sacred waters (and not attendance on one's preceptors or elders) is looked upon as pilgrimage and wearing long hair a sign of beauty. The highest purpose of life is to fill one's belly and arrogant

1. Poverty will prevent the party from getting justice—ŚR.

audacity (and not the statement of the facts as they are) is regarded as veracity.

7-8. Maintenance of one's family will be looked upon as skill; It is for self-advertisement of one's fame of piety that righteous deeds are to be performed; In this way the whole world will be populated by wicked people: and he who among Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, becomes the mightiest will be the ruler.

9. When the subjects are deprived of their women and looted of the wealth by greedy, merciless, robberlike Kṣattriyas the subjects will seek shelter in mountains and forests and subsist on leaves, roots, meat, honey, fruits, flowers and seeds (and such forest-products).

10. Being oppressed by draughts or famines and heavy taxation and being subjected to excesslve cold, biting winds, (blistering) sunshine, (driving) downpour of rain, snowfall, mutual rivalry, the people are going to perish.

11. People will be tormented by hunger, thirst and diseases and will be overpowered with anxieties. And the maximum span of human life in the Kali age will be fifty (lit. thirty plus twenty) years.

12. When through the evil effect of the Kali age, the physical bodies of embodied beings become emaciated and reduced, the prescribed ordinances of the Vedic path pertaining to different classes of people and stages of life become lost.

13. When (in the Kali age) religion will be predominantly heretical, and kings will be as good as robbers and men will be earning their livelihood by theft, (economic offences) mendacity, wanton violence to life and such other pursuits.

14. When all classes of the society (*Varṇas*) will be as good as Śūdras, cows will be reduced to the size of she-goats (in yield of milk also); all *Āśramas* (stages of life) will merge in the householder's stage of life (there being no celibates or recluses) and the term "relative" will connote the relations of the wife only.

15. Medicinal herbs will have minimal efficacy; big trees will be stunted (and would afford neither shade nor relief) like the Śamī trees; the clouds will be giving lightning flashes and

clapping of thunders (but no rain) and the houses will be desolate (as there will be no hospitality as it was in previous ages).

16. In this way, when people have undergone such hardships—just at the end of the Kali age, the Lord will incarnate himself in his *Sāttvika* form for the protection of religion.

17. Lord Viṣṇu is the Creator and Preceptor of the mobile and immobile creation. He is the Controller of the world and the inner Soul abiding in all beings. His advent (on the earth) is for the protection of the path of righteousness and for wiping out all the *Karmas* of the righteous and to lead them to Final Emancipation from *Saṁsāra*.

18. It is in the houses of Viṣṇuyaśas, the noble-souled Brāhmaṇa chief of the village called Śambhala[1], that Lord Kalki will be incarnated.

19-20. The Lord of the Universe, endowed with eight Spiritual powers (like *aṇimā*, etc.) and excellences (like solemnity of vows or truthfulness) was unsurpassed in splendour and glory. Riding on a fleet horse called Devadatta, he would traverse over the whole earth on the horse; will massacre with his sword capable of subjugating the crores and crores of robbers and wicked miscreants who posed themselves as kings.

21. (To indicate the beginning of the Golden Age—*Kṛta* Age) Thereupon, when the entire class of robbers, thieves and such enemies of the society is annihilated both in the town and in the country, the minds of the rural and urban population become pure by the touch of the wind wafting the sacred fragrance of pigments on the person of Lord Vāsudeva.

22. When the glorious Lord Vāsudeva, the very embodiment of strength, is enthroned in their heart, their progeny will naturally be extremely powerful.

23. When Lord Hari the Protector of righteousness, will descend on this earth as Kalki, there will be the advent of the *Kṛta* Age (Golden Age), and the children who will be born thereafter will be of pious (*Sāttvika*) disposition.

1. A village near Moradabad in Rohilkhand, 80 miles to the east of Delhi. It is 'Sambalaka' according to Ptolemy.

—GDAMI, p. 176

24. When the Moon, the Sun and the Jupiter are in conjunction in the same zodiacal house and the star Puṣya is in ascendance, the *Kṛta* age dawns.[1]

25. All the kings belonging to the Lunar and Solar dynasties who have ruled in the past, or are reigning at present or will govern in the future, have been briefly described to you.

26. The period commencing from the birth of your worship to the coronation of Nanda would come to one thousand one hundred and fifteen years.[2]

27-28. Of the seven stars comprising the constellation the Great Bear, two of those asterisms come to view first., in the east (viz. Pulaha and Kratu). Midway between them in the north-western line, is noticed a star or a constellation (of the group of *Aśvini*, *Bharaṇi*, etc.) at night. Those Heavenly Sages i.e. the stars Pulaha and Kratu remain associated with that intervening constellation for a period of one hundred human years. Those Sages (stars) are now associated with *Maghā* during your reign.

29. When (the *Maghās* were in that position) the self-illuminating personality comprised of pure Sattva of Lord Viṣṇu who came to be known as Śrī Kṛṣṇa retired to his region,

1. ŚR : Here the simultaneous entry of these planets is indicated. Otherwise every twelfth year when the Jupiter is in the zodiacal sign of Cancer, there are at least two or three New Moon days when this phenomenon occurs. Hence *Simultaneous* entry of these three planets is the *sine qua non* of *Kṛta* Age.

2. As ŚR. notes this statement is ambiguous. But the author of the Bh. P. is not much at fault, as we have not yet been able to fix the date of the Mahābhārata War. Pargiter, on the basis of various statements in Purāṇas has tentatively suggested 950 B. C. as the date of that war. But Jayaswal, A.C. Das and other Indian scholars favour 1500 B.C. Pusalkar in BVB's *Vedic Age* (p. 273) concedes 1400 B.C. as the date of the Kuru-Pāṇḍava War. The discussion of the date of the Mahābhārata war is beyond the scope of this note. But I still believe in Ray Chaudhari's evidence presented in his *Political History of Ancient India from the Accession of Parīkṣit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty*, p. 9, 1923, and regard Parīkṣit as belonging to 900 B.C. This date has no relation with the composition of the present text of the Bh. P. as shown in Intro. to Volume I of the Bh.P.

Kali immediately entered the world and people began to take delight in sinful ways.

30. While the Lord of the goddess Lakṣmī used to touch the earth with his lotus-feet, till then Kali did not dare to encroach upon the earth.

31. When those seven Divine Sages (*Ursa Major*) enter the constellation Maghā, there will be the advent of Kali lasting for twelve hundred celestial years (i.e. 432,000 human years).

32. When these Great Sages (the asterisms, constituting the Grear Bear) will proceed from *Maghā* to *Pūrvāṣāḍhā*, Kali will be more powerful since the ascension of king Mahāpadma Nanda.

33. Experts in ancient Lore have stated that on the very day—nay at that very hour—Lord Kṛṣṇa retired to his region, the Kali Age has set in.

34. At the termination of the period of one thousand divine years of the fourth i.e. Kali age, the *Kṛta* age will dawn again and the minds of men will get the revelation of the Self from within.

35. Just as the career or ups and downs in the history of Manu's race has been described, in each age, the history of Vaiśyas, Śūdras and Brāhmaṇas in various ages should be understood to be similar to them (age after age).

36. It is only the names of the noble-souled persons described so far and of whom (neither kingdom nor race survives except) the legendary account enshrining them remains, (nothing but) their fame only survives, on the earth.

37. Devāpi, the brother of Śantanu, and Maru, the descendant of the Ikṣvāku race—both of them possess very great Yogic powers and are still living in village called Kalāpa (Near Badarikāśrama in the Himālayas).

38. At the end of the Kali age, both of them, under the instructions and command of Lord Vāsudeva, will come forward and will promulgate and establish the ancient religious order with its institution of *Varṇas* (Classes of people) and *Āśramas* (Stages of life) once again as before.

39. This cycle of four *Yugas* (Ages) viz. *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali* runs in this order on the earth for the sake of created beings.

40. O king Parīkṣit, these kings described by me and many others (not mentioned by me) all claimed that the earth was theirs. But ultimately they had to leave it and passed away.

41. The physical body which (when alive) is designated as King is ultimately called worms (if buried or left uninterred and is turned into worms), or "Excrement" (if eaten by beasts or birds of prey and after digestion or non-digestion thrown out as faeces) or Ashes (if cremated). It is for this body that one perpetrates sins and commits violence against living beings. Does he not know that this sinful conduct leads to hell ?

42. How will this entire earth held under their own (undisputed sovereignty) by my forefathers and now held under my sceptre, pass on the same way to my son and grandson and his race ?

43. Rulers who are unwise (indulge in such thoughts anxiously), look upon their physical body made up of heat, water and food as their Soul, and the earth as their personal property, ultimately quitting them both, sink into oblivion.

44. O Parīkṣit, All those lords of the earth who enjoy the earth by dint of their personal power, have been reduced by Time to mere themes of stories when people narrate the past events.

CHAPTER THREE

Dharma (Righteous Way of Life) in every Yuga : Efficacy of God's Name

Śrī Śuka said :

1. Perceiving how kings are eagerly occupied with the plans of conquering her, this earth laughs at them saying, "How stupid ! These kings who themselves are but playthings of (the god of) Death aspire to conquer me !

2. Though they are aware (of the inevitability of death) these kings have reposed over-confidence in (the longevity of) their personal body which is momentary like a bubble of water. Hence the ambition or desire of these rulers of men is definitely futile.

3-4. (They plan in their minds):

"Having first conquered the group of six (Five cognitive senses+Mind) of our own self, we shall subjugate the counsellers, executive officers, relatives or confidants, citizens, conductors of elephants or army officers of other kings and then after removing all "thorns" (socially undesirable elements), we shall thus gradually bring under our control the earth engirdled by the seas." These kings whose hearts are thus tied down to their hopes and desires, do not perceive the god of Death who is near (and ready to snatch them away).

5. Having conquered me as far as the sea, some of them (being more ambitious) enter the sea (for naval victory and conquest of other island-continents). "Of what importance is this conquest against our self-control? Emancipation from *Saṁsāra* is the proper reward of self-control."[1]

6. O scion of the Kuru race ! These foolish kings wish to conquer me through war, when great Manus and their sons and descendants had ultimately to abandon me and to depart as they came (leaving me here behind).

7. Feuds and fights for me break out between fathers and sons, and between brothers and between those wicked Kings whose minds are possessed with the notion of mine-ness with reference to their kingdoms.

8. "This entire earth belongs to me only and not yours, O fool. "Contending and competing thus, kings kill each other and die for my sake."

9-12. Pṛthu, Purūravas, Gādhi, Nahuṣa, Bharata, Arjuna (of a thousand arms—Sahasrārjuna), Māndhātā, Sagara, Rāma,

1. ŚR. : Extremely dull-witted are they who desire to attain sovereignty by practising control over senses.

GS : Sovereignty being transitory is an insignificant gain as a result of self-control; emancipation from the misery of *Saṁsāra* is the real recompense, for it is eternal.

Khaṭvāṅga, Dhundhumāra, Raghu, Tṛṇa-bindu, Yayāti, Śaryāti, Śantanu, Gaya, Bhagīratha, Kuvalayāśva, Kākutstha, Nala (the king of Niṣadha), Nṛga, Hiraṇya-Kaśipu, Vṛtra, Rāvaṇa, the scourge of the people (who made people to cry), Namuci, Śambara, Naraka, Hiraṇyākṣa and Tāraka, and many other Daityas and Kings who were the emperors of the world, all possessed of knowledge, valiant, vanquishers of all others but of themselves, remained unconquered.

13. Though they were mortal by nature, they cherished the strongest attachment to me as if I belonged to them. But they were frustrated in accomplishing their desires, and were reduced as names in legends, by the inexorable Time or Death, O King.

14. O King Parīkṣit ! It is with the intention of elucidating (the knowledge of) the unsubstantial nature of the world and to create (a sense of) renunciation about it, that these legends of those illustrious persons who after spreading their great renown in this world, had passed away, have been narrated to you. And all this (picturesque) narration is not mere display of words but bears vital relation to the highest truth ![1]

15. But if a person is desirous of attaining pure (selfless) devotion unto Lord Kṛṣṇa he should incessantly listen every day to the exposition of the excellent attributes and great deeds of the Lord of hallowing renown (viz. Viṣṇu) which are always glorified in songs (by his votaries and pious persons) and which destroy all evils and inauspiciousness.

King Parikṣit enquired :

(Thinking that devotion unto the Lord cannot be engendered due to the evil influence of the Kali age, the King asks)

1. Although respectable annotators like SR. VR. interpret quite to the contrary, viz. 'The non-relation of these legends to the highest or real purpose', I feel that the explanation of GS, suits the context better, despite the next verse which contrasts the difference between the glory of these kings and that of the incarnations of Viṣṇu and exhorts one to listen to the glory of Lord Kṛṣṇa constantly.

16. "Be pleased to explain to me (in details) the course resorting to which, people can shake off and destroy the accumulated evils of the Kali in the Kali age itself, O revered sage !

17. Kindly tell me (something) about the Yugas (the Ages or Aeons), the special course of duties prescribed for each Yuga, the duration of the life and the deluge (*Pralaya*) of the universe, the course of the omnipotent Time-spirit which is the potency of the great-souled Lord Viṣṇu."

Śrī Śuka began to narrate :

18. In the *Kṛta* Age, Dharma (righteous course of conduct) as adhered to by the people of that age, proceeds on all its four legs. And Truth, compassion, penance, (selfcontrol and meditation) and affording protection to all (irrespective of friendly or inimical relations) are the four legs of that Perfect Dharma, O King.

19. The people of that age were generally full of contentment and compassion, friendly to all beings, serene and peaceful, self-controlled, forebearing, finding spiritual bliss in their souls, looking upon all as equals (and practising no discrimination between their people and others) and engaging themselves in spiritual exercises such as meditation, etc.

20. In the *Tretā* Age, one-fourth part of each of the leg of *Dharma* gets gradually disabled by each of the four legs of *Adharma* (unrighteousness) viz., falsehood violenee, discontent and discords respectively.

21. In that age, people were keen on performance of Vedic rites and were devoted to austere penance. (The five sins—*pañca-śūnās*—in the life of a house-holder are inevitable but people were not given to too much of violence. Nor were they lewd or addicted to the pleasure of senses. They used to exert for the first three purposes of human life, viz. *Dharma* (religious merit), *Artha* (wealth) and *Kāma* (worldly pleasures, enjoyment). They were sincerely devoted to and advanced in Vedic studies, and Brāhmaṇas were regarded to be the highest *Varṇa* (class of society).

22. In the Dvāpara age, the four feet of the *Dharma*, viz. Penance, Truthfulness, Compassion and Protective and chari-

table attitude to all diminish by half with (the growing influence of) the four characteristics of unrighteousness (*adharma*) viz. violence, discontent or covetiousness, falsehood and hatred.

23. In that age, people hankered after fame or glory, were prone to the performance of great sacrifices, indulging in the teaching and the study of the Vedas, endowed with great affluence, maintaining big families, joyous by nature. Brāhmaṇas and Kṣattriyas were then the most important classes of society.

24. In the Kali age, only one quarter of each of the four feet of *Dharma* remains. And that too goes on diminishing day by day by the powerfully increasing 'feet' of *Adharma* (unrighteousness) to such an extent that ultimately it becomes extinct.

25. In that (Kali) age, people will be greedy, take to wicked behaviour, will be merciless, indulge in hostilities without any cause, unfortunate, extremely covetous for wealth and women (or worldly desires) and higher social status will be attained by Śūdras, fishermen and such other (former backward) classes.

26: The attributes viz. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* become manifest in men. And being impelled by the force of the Time-spirit, their influence varies (waxes or wanes).

27. When the mind, intellect and sense-organs are dominated by *Sattva* and when there is genuine liking for (spiritual) wisdom and knowledge and performance of asceticism, one should know that it is thc *Kṛta* age.

28. O intelligent king ! When embodied beings (people) show devotion and liking for the first three purposes of human life, viz. *dharma*, *artha* and *Kāma* and the attribute called *rajas* controls the attitude of people, note that that is the *Tretā* Age.

29. When the time (i.e. the attitude of people) is controlled by a mixture of *rajas* and *tamas*, and when greed, discontent, pride, hypocrisy, jealousy predominate and men like to perform religious acts for achieving desirable ends, it is the *Dvāpara* Age.

30. When deceit, falsehood, lethargy, sleepiness, violence,

despondency, grief, delusion, fear, poverty-stricken-ness prevail, that is the *Kali* Age which is characterised by *tamas*.

31. As a result of Kali's influence, mortal beings become dull-witted, unlucky, voracious, destitute of wealth yet voluptuous, and women, wanton and unchaste.

32. Countries will be ravaged by robbers and miscreants; the Vedas will be condemned by heretics; kings will exploit the subjects (lit. Rulers will be men-eaters), and twice-borns like Brāhmaṇas will be given to the gratification of their sexual desires and other appetites (lit. filling the belly).

33. Celibates (belonging to the *Brahmacarya* stage of life) will cease to observe their prescribed vows of study, purity and celibacy; householders (in stead of helping others by alms-giving) will take to begging; hermits (of the *Vānaprastha* stage will leave forests where they retire for penance), will resort to villages (and towns) and *Sannyāsins* will be extremely greedy of money.

34. Women will be short-statured but voracious, noted for fecundity and shameless. They will be harsh-speakers, given to theft, fraud and dare-devilry.

35. Petty-minded people (with no moral values) conduct business transactions and merchants will be fraudulent. Even when there is no emergency or imminent danger people will follow trades or pursuits censured by the righteous.

36. Servants will resign their services of the masters who are excellent in all respects but have become penniless. Masters will dismiss even their hereditary servants when they are in distress (through physical disability, etc.) and people will not maintain cows when they cease to yield milk.

37. In the *Kali* age, men will abandon their parents, brothers, friends and relatives and establish their friendliness on sexual basis. Their affection being centred on their relation with women, they will seek consultations from their wives' relatives (such as sisters and brothers-in-laws) and will be miserable.

38. Earning their livelihood under the guise (and make-up) of recluses and sages, Śūdras will accept charities. People ignorant of religion, will occupy high seats (and pulpits) and will (pose to) preach religion.

39. People will have their minds weighed down with constant anxiety and fear, due to devastating famines and heavy taxation. The land being devoid of food-crops, people will be always afflicted with the impending fear of droughts.

40. Being destitute of clothing, food, drink, bed, sexual satisfaction, bath and adornments, people in the *Kali* age, will appear like ghosts.

41. In the *Kali* age, even for a paltry amount of a *Kākiṇikā* (20 *cowries*), people will fight, throwing to winds all friendliness and good will. They will even kill their own relatives or give up their dear lives (commit suicide for such a petty amount).

42. People will not protect even their aged parents. Low-minded persons bent on satisfying their sex and filling the belly will not care for their sons even though they may be clever and skilful in all respects.

43. O King ! During the *Kali* age, the minds of the human beings being perverted by heretic doctrines[1] will not generally worship Lord Acyuta, the supreme Father and Preceptor of the worlds, the lotus-feet of whom are bowed by the lords of the three worlds.

44. During the *Kali* age, people will not worship the Lord by uttering unawares whose name even unconsciously, a dying man or a person afflicted (with care or disease), falling or trembling, becomes absolved and free from all the impediments of *Karmas* and attains to the highest goal (viz. *mokṣa*-emancipation from *saṁsāra*).

45. The Supreme Person, the glorious Lord Viṣṇu abides in the hearts of all and dispels all the evils of men arising out of the influence of *Kali* from substances, place and mind.

46. If the Lord enthroned in the heart (of all) is listened to or glorified (by chanting his name or singing his glory) or meditated upon, worshipped or even paid respect to (by some other way), he shakes off (and thus absolves man of) his sins committed and accumulated in thousands of births.

1. VJ takes this opportunity to hit at the *advaitins* and explains *Pākhaṇḍa-Vibhinna-Cetasaḥ* as 'those whose minds are deluded by the heretical doctrine known as *advaita-śāstra*.

47. Even as the fire applied to gold burns off and thus destroys all the impurities or metallic alloys mixed with gold, Lord Viṣṇu who is abiding in the heart (or Soul) destroys all evil thoughts (or sins) in the hearts of Yogins.

48. The inner heart of a man does not attain that much absolute purity by means of (Vedic or Śāstric) learning, penance, breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*), sense of friendliness to all beings, ablutions in sacred waters, observance of vows, giving of (munificent) charitable gifts and muttering silently (His prayer), as it does by (meditating upon) the infinite Lord who is enthroned in the heart.

49. Hence, O King Parīkṣit, with all your power of concentration, enthrone Lord Keśava in your heart. Meditating upon him with full concentration at the time of death, you will attain the highest goal (viz. *Mokṣa*).

50. This glorious Lord who is the supreme Ruler of the universe should be meditated upon with full concentration, by persons who are about to die. Dear Parīkṣit ! He is the Soul and supporter of all. He leads them to the state of being one with him.

51. *Kali* is certainly the Store-house of all evils. But O king, there is one very great virtue and a good point in that age, inasmuch as by singing the name and the glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that person is freed from all attachments and attains to the highest region (*Vaikuṇṭha*).

52. What one achieves by meditating upon Lord Viṣṇu in the *Kṛta* age, by performance of sacrifices in the *Tretā* age, by worship and service of the Lord in the *Dvāpara* Age, a person attains that in the Kali age by chanting the name of Hari.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Four-Fold Pralaya[1]

Śrī Śuka continued :

1. The divisions of Time commencing from its minutest unit (*Paramāṇu*) and ending with the period forming the life-span of god Brahmā (consisting of two *parārdhas*) have been described to you, O King. The duration of four *Yugas* also has been narrated to you. Now listen to the periods of *Kalpa* (a span of time for the round of creation and subsistence of the world) and *Laya* (The period of the dissolution) of universe.)

2. The period consisting of a thousand revolutions of the *Yugas* (viz. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali) is called one day (in the life) of god Brahmā. This period is known as a *Kalpa*, during which fourteen Manus successively reign over the world, O protector of men.

3. At the end of that period, there is an equally long period of dissolution of the universe (*Pralaya*). It is called the night (in the life) of god Brahmā. At the end of the Kalpa, these three worlds become due for dissolution and get dissolved.

4. This dissolution (*Pralaya*) is called occasional[2] (as it is caused by the occasion of the sleep of god Brahmā). During this period, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Creator of the universe, withdraws all the universe within himself and goes to sleep on the bed of Ananta's (the serpent Śeṣa's) body. And so does god Brahmā.

5. When the period of two *Parārdha*[3] years forming the span of life of the highest god Brahmā, comes to a close, the

1. SR explains that *pralaya* (dissolution) is four-fold, *naimittika* (occasional) *Prākṛtika* (pertaining to the primordial matter), *ātyantika* (everlasting) and *nitya* (constant or eternal). And all these are described in this Chapter.

2. As this *Pralaya* of three worlds takes place due to the condition of Brahmā's sleep, it is called 'conditional' or 'occasional'—*naimittika*—ŚR.)

3. One Parārdha = 100,000,000,000,000,000 years.

seven *Prakṛtis* or causal principles of the universe (viz. *mahat* or cosmic intelligence, *ahaṁkāra* the cosmic I-ness or ego and the five *tan-mātrās*—subtle elements) become due to be dissolved (and are so withdrawn) into *Prakṛti* or Primordial Matter. (Hence, it is called *Prākṛtika*).

6. O King ! this is called the dissolution pertaining to *Prakṛti* or primordial Matter. For in this *Pralaya*, the universe or *Brahmāṇḍa* which is the product of the causes enumerated as seven *Prakṛtis* above, gets finally dissolved as the occasion of the dissolution of these causes arrives.

7. (At that time) the god of rains does not send any shower of rain on the earth for one hundred years. Then the earth becomes bereft of food-grains and beings, tormented by hunger, prey upon and eat one another.

8. Thus harassed by the Time-Spirit, the creatures gradually perish. The fierce sun ending the world (known as *Sāṁvartika*) with its terribly scorching rays, drinks up (evaporates) all liquid (water) that is in the seas, the humids in the body and all moisture and under-ground water on the earth and does not release a drop of it.

9. Then the cosmos-destructive fire emanating from the (thousand mouths of) Saṅkarṣaṇa (the serpent Śeṣa) raging ablaze, burns down all sub-terranean regions which have been already desolate.

10. The egg of the universe is ablaze from above, below and on all sides by the flames of fire (issuing from below from Saṅkarṣaṇa's mouth) and the scorching rays of the sun burns and looks like a ball of burnt cow-dung.

11. Tempestuous winds characteristic of the end of the universe, blow violently for a hundred years and the sky is enveloped in dust and appears smoky.

12. Thereupon hosts of clouds of various shades of colours, roaring with violent peals of thunder, pour down heavy showers of rains for one hundred years.

13. Then the universe within the cosmic egg becomes transformed into one single sheet of water. When the cosmic waters have flooded the universe and everything is merged under water, the water absorbs scent—the quality of the earth.

14. When the earth has lost its essential distinguishing quality viz. fragrance, it disintegrates and ceases to exist. The fire then absorbs the property of fluidity from the waters and they being deprived of their fluidity, cease to exist.

15. The winds thereupon swallow up the form or colour which is the characteristic property of fire (*Tejas*). Then the *ākāśa* absorbs the property of the wind (viz. touch) and it ceases to exist (as it is dispersed in the sky).

16. The wind enters (and is absorbed) in the ether. *Bhūtādi* i.e. ego of the *Tāmasic* type absorbs sound which is the characteristic of the sky which gets dissolved in the *Bhūtādi*.

17. Dear Parīkṣit ! The *rājasa* type of *ahaṁkāra* absorbs all the sense-organs and *Vaikārika* i.e. the *Sāttvic* type of ego does the same in the case of their Presiding deities. The Principle called *Mahat* (Cosmic intelligence) swallows up the *Ahaṁkāra* and the attributes known as *Sattva* and others absorb the *Mahat*.

18. The unmanifest *Prakṛti*, being impelled by the force of the Time-spirit, absorbs the attributes (*Sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*) and establishes equilibrium in them.

19. *Pradhāna* i.e. unmanifest Primordial matter is not subject to the states of modifications (such as birth, growth, decay, death) produced by the divisions of time. It is beginning less; it has no end; it is unmanifest, eternal, the cause of all, but not subject to decay.

20. In that stage of *Prakṛti*, there is no (existence of) speech, mind, modes or attributes of *Prakṛti* like *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* or principles like *mahat* (Cosmic intelligence). There is no scope to vital air (*Prāṇa*) intelligence, sense or their presiding deities. There is no structure or form which can be called "the world."

21. It is a state in which there is no dream, wakefulness or sleep. There is no sky or ether, water, earth, air, fire, or the sun. It resembles to some extent the deep sleep or vacuity itself. But it is beyond the range of thinking or imagination. The Vedas declare that (this unmanifest) state is the original root of the universe.

22. When the potencies of both Puruṣa and the unmanifest (*Prakṛti*) are impelled by Time and get inevitably and thoroughly absorbed into their substratum, that is known as the *Prākṛtika Pralaya* (dissolution into *Prakṛti* or Primordial matter)[1]

23*. Knowledge[2] or consciousness is the substratum of *buddhi* (reason or intellect), *indriyas* (the senses-organs) and *artha* the objects of these senses). It is in the forms of these three that knowledge shines forth. But whatever has a beginning and an end is unreal because of its perceptibility and as such it is undifferentiated from its cause[3].

24. Light, the eye and colour or form are not different from the principle of *Tejas* (as they are the modifications of *Tejas*—light or fire). Similarly, the intellect, the senses and the sense-objects are not separate or distinct from Brahman. But Brahman is quite distinct from them (as Brahman exists even when the triad—the intellect, senses and objects—ceases to exist)[4].

25. It is said that the state or wakefulness, dream and sleep are the states of *buddhi* (intellect). The plurality (such

1. VR points out that potencies (*Śaktis*) are the products or evolutes of *Prakṛti*. When *Prakṛti* remains as an undifferentiated and inseparable attribute of *Paramātman*, that is the dissolution of *Prakṛti*.

* From 23rd verse follows the description of the *ātyantika Pralaya* (everlasting dissolution) which is *Mokṣa*—final emancipation from *Saṁsāra*.

2. VR takes knowledge (Jñāna) as signifying the supreme soul (*Jñāna-śabdaḥ Paramātma-vāci.*)

3. VR : Buddhi (reason), *indriyas* (senses), etc. are like a body and have no independent existence unless *Paramātman* abides in them. It is he who shines through them.

VJ's explanation appears to me farfetched; "During this Pralaya the Brahman who alone supports all, shines along with Lakṣmī, liberated souls (Muktas) and he appears refulgent in the form of light and has the excellent beauty that gives delight to all senses.

Behind VJ, there is, however, a tradition of interpretation of the Bh. P. from Madhva, The founder of Dvaitism.

4. Just as it is on the principle—*tejas* that the three—light (as a product), the eye (the recepient of *tejas*) and colour the property of *Tejas*—depend, so the reason, senses and the objects are created by the Lord and depend on him. Hence, they cannot exist apart from God. But he is distinct from these and is termed as *jyotis*.

as *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña*) ascribed to the pure soul is purely Māyā (illusion).

26. Just as clouds sometimes appear and disappear from the sky, this universe which consists of parts and has a beginning and an end appears and disappears on the substratum of Brahman.[1]

27. Of all objects consisting of parts, only parts are said to be real (in the *Upaniṣads*[2]) as they form the cause, just as threads (of cloth) can be seen (to exist) even if the cloth (is unwoven and hence) not in existence.

28.* Whatever is perceived as a cause or an effect is an illusion as causal relation is (mutually) interdependent. Whatever has a beginning or an end is unreal.

29. The effect called *Prapañca* (or the Phenomenal universe) though apparent or visible to us, is unexplainable at all apart from (i.e. independently of) the pure Self *Pratyagātman*). If it were real even to the slightest degree, it would be the same as the intelligent or conscious Self and as such identical with *ātman*.

30. *Satya*[3] i.e. *ātman* (the Self) has no diversity. It is the real existence, one without a second or difference. One who believes in difference is ignorant. The apparent diversity

1. VJ : just as clouds appear and disappear from the sky, and the clouds and sky are different, so is the Brahma which creates and dissolves. The world is different from it.

2. *Vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttiketyeva satyam*—Chāndogya Up.6.1.4.

* VR : The principle and its modifications are interdependent and denote the same thing in its subtle and gross state. So the distinctness of an effect or product from the general principle and its speciality in modification is nothing but misunderstanding. That which has a beginning and an end (e.g. our bodies) cannot be the Soul (*anātmavastu*).

VJ : A general principle is the aspect of a thing which remains constant throughout its existence. The aspect that is not so constant is the modification. These two are different, separable aspects. Hence that which has a beginning and an end is not an essential part of the thing.

3. VR : *Satya* means the individual soul. He quotes *Tait. Up.* 2.6.1 (*tat Sṛṣṭvā tadevā nuprāviśat tad anupraviśya sacca tyacca' bhavat*). A person who thinks that there is difference in the Jīvātman of gods, men etc. is ignorant.

VJ : "Satya" means Brahman. It is not subject to differentiation or division (*satyasya Brahmaṇo rūpāṇāṁ nānātvaṁ satyaṁ na bhavati*).

is due to some condition (*upādhi*) as between the space enclosed in a pot and the unlimited expanse of the sky (both though one, appear different due to the enclosing condition of a pot), between the sun (in the sky) and its reflections in water or between the vital air or breath inside the body and the air outside the body (in the world over.)

31. Just as gold is denoted by various names according to the form into which it is shaped, so the suprasensuous Lord is called by various names by egotistic persons in the language of the world and in the Vedic parlance.

32. Just as a cloud, created by the sun (by evaporating water with his rays) and exhibited (by the light of the sun), becomes darkness preventing the eye (which is also a part of the sun) from getting the view of the sun, Ego (*ahaṁkāra*) which is evolved out of Brahman and is lighted by Brahman works as an obstruction to *Jiva* or individual self (which is also a part of the Brahman) becomes a bondage preventing it from having a view of the Brahman.

33. When the cloud born of the sun (by the heat of the solar rays) is dispersed, the eye is able to have a view of the sun which is its own form. The same way, when *ahaṁkāra* (ego which works) as the limiting condition (and obscures the realization of Brahman) is destroyed by investigation (into the real nature of the *ātman* (soul), it realizes that it is Brahman itself.

34. When the bondage of the Soul (*ātmaṇ*) consisting of *ahaṁkāra* which is an evolute of *Māyā* and which comes in the way of the realization of the self (*ātman*) is severed with the sword of spiritual knowledge, such a state of ever-lasting final emancipation is known as the eternal *ātyantika*) *Pralaya*.

35*. Some persons, having (deeper) knowledge of the subtle state of things, assert that the creation and dissolution occurs continuously in the case of all beings from god Brahmā downwards, O chastiser of enemies.

36. The continuous sequence of modifications through which changing things such as bodies of beings (a stream of

* VJ: God Brahmā and others experience birth and death every day.
VR : Here *Pralaya* means modifications in the body.

water or the flame of a lamp) which are rapidly being worn away by the inexorable force of the stream of time-pass, are (known as) the eternal causes of the origination and destruction of the bodies.

37. (What can be observed is only very broad stages such as childhood, youth, age). But the continuous successive states (of the body) effected by the Time-spirit which is another form of the Almighty God, and which has no beginning or end, are not distinctly perceptible every moment even as the motion (per minute) of the luminaries (the planets and stars) in their course through the sky, are beyond (our capacity of) observation.

38. Thus the four types of dissolution, viz. constant (*nitya*), occasional or depending on condition (*naimittika*), relating to *Prakṛti* (Prākṛtika) and everlasting or final (*ātyantika*) have been described to you. Such is the course of Time.

39. O most prominent of Kurus ! In this way, these stories of the sportive activities of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the creator of the universe, the abode of all beings (or the centre of all power and goodness) have been narrated to you briefly. It is beyond the capacity even of the birth-less god Brahmā to narrate them in details and in their entirety (even though he is endowed with the longest span of life of two *parārdha* years.)

40. If a man is distressed and scorched in the wild fire of various types of griefs and miseries and is desirous of crossing this occan of *saṁsāra* which it is extremely difficult to cross, there is no other boat (lit. raft) other than (the act of) constantly listening to and thus drinking the nectar-like stories of the sportful activities of the glorious supreme person.

41. In ancient days, the immortal sage Nārāyaṇa taught this compilation of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (through god Brahmā[1]) to Nārada who in his turn taught it to (my father) Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana.

42. It is that worshipful sage Bādarāyaṇa who was pleased to teach me this collection (*Purāṇa*) describing the

1. Vide Supra 2.9. 43-44.

glories of the Supreme Lord which has the same sacred status as the Vedas.

43. O best of Kurus ! Sūta, when requested by sages like Śaunaka and others, will narrate this to sages during the course of a long sacrificial session in the Naimiṣāraṇya (in future).

CHAPTER FIVE

Śuka's Concluding Precept Concerning Brahman

Śri Śuka said:

1. (This *Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* inspires fear-less-ness even from death as) herein every now and then is extolled the Almighty Lord Hari, the Soul and controller of the universe, of whose gracious joy (a trait of *rajas*) was born god Brahmā, the creator of the world and of whose anger was created Rudra, the destroyer of the world (and both are hence subordinate to and dependent on him).

2. O King ! Please do give up this brute-like (foolish) notion (identifying the Soul with one's physical body) that you will die. Unlike (your) body (which did not exist before the moment of its birth and hence shall naturally perish), you i.e. your soul did pre-exist (your physical body), is now in existence and shall never die (irrespective of what happens to your body).

3. You are quite distinct from your body, etc., just as fire (though potentially abiding in fuel) is distinct from the fuel. Hence, on the analogy of seeds and trees, you i.e. your soul (being once a father[1]) shall not take the form of a son, a grandson, etc.

1. ŚR. explains : The quotations from Śrutis e.g. *ātmā vai putra-nāmāsi*, support physical heredity and not a continuity of one's soul—*dehād deho jāyate na ātmā*. Hence in this physical continuity of the race, the soul is not involved.

4. Just as a person sees in his dream that he is beheaded (when factually he is the unaffected party or a witness to the scene of cutting the head of his body in the dream state), so also in a state of wakefulness he sees the death of his body. But as a matter of fact the Soul (*ātman*) is neither born nor dead.

5. When an earthen pot is broken, the space enclosed within the pot becomes the same as before (the creation of that pot), in the same way when (after self-realization which destroys all *Karmas*) the body falls off, the individual soul becomes one with Brahman).[1]

6. It is the Māyā that creates the mind[2]. The mind creates these bodies, objects of senses and actions of the soul. Hence it is due to the Māyā that the *jīva* (individual soul) is involved in transmigration of *saṁsāra*.

7. Just as the light (of an oil-lamp) retains its characteristic of giving light so long as the fire (the flame of the lamp) is associated with the wick soaked in oil, supply of oil to the wick, a container—a storage for this oil supply, similarly, *Karma* is the oil, the mind, the container of the oil, the body, the wick and its contact with fire means relation to the spirit. The body comes into existence and dies through the actions of the *guṇas rajas, Sattva and tamas*.[3]

8. The soul that is embodied does not cease to exist. For He is self-illuminating, distinct from and beyond gross (physi-

1. VR : Becomes a *mukta*—an emancipated soul. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* presumes the continuity of the distinct identity of the soul even in the *Mokṣa* stage and not its absorption and loss in *Paramātman*.

2. VJ: *Māyā* is the unintelligent (*jaḍa*) matter. So its creation—the mind—is also *Jaḍa*. The use of the Ātmanepada *sṛjate* in *tanmanaḥ sṛjate māyā*, in the text of this verse indicates that it is due to the mind's contact with the intelligent being that activates it and enables it do all these (*Sṛjata ityātmanepada-Prayogeṇa cin-miśram mana iti sūcayati*).

3. The *saṁsāra* continues as long as the contact or influence of *guṇas* is there and the false presumption of the identity of the body and the soul persists. The *saṁsāra* like the lamp may cease to exist but the soul persists in existence despite the non-recurrence of the body.

cal) and subtle, unmanifest (astral) bodies. Like the sky, he is the support (of everything else), eternal, endless, unparalleled and all pervasive.

9. Fully absorbed in the meditation on Vāsudeva and by means of your logical reasoning, do you yourself ponder over the self that is abiding in your body, O great king.

10. Impelled by the imprecation of that Brāhmaṇa, Takṣaka shall not be able to burn you[1] (i. e. your soul). All the causes of death can never burn the supreme Lord who himself is the death of such agents of death.

11-12. "I am the Brahman. I am thc Supreme abode. Brahman, the highest goal (to be reached) is I myself." Having realized this and absorbing yourself in the Supreme Self which is beyond the limits or conditions, you will see neither Takṣaka who is biting you at the foot with poisonous fangs (or licking it with his poisonous mouth) nor your body nor the world as being distinct and separate from your own *Ātman*.

13. Dear Parīkṣit ! All this has been elucidated to you as per enquiries made by you about the sportful activities of Lord Hari, the Soul of the Universe. What more do you wish to hear from me, O king !

CHAPTER SIX

Takṣaka Bites Parikṣit: Janmejaya's Serpent Sacrifice: Classification of Vedas in Different Branches:

Śūta said:

1. Having heard this exposition from the Sage Śuka, the son of Vyāsa, who had the vision of Lord Hari, the soul abiding

1. VR : You will not feel the snake-bite as the causes of death cannot affect God and you who are absorbed in his contemplation.

VJ : Due to contemplation of God, Parikṣit would be in the proximity of God.

in all[1] King Parīkṣit, who (while in womb) was protected by Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) approached the lotus-feet of Śuka and bowed down with his head bent and palms folded.

The king Parikṣit requested:

2. My purpose in life (viz. of gaining spiritual wisdom) has been accomplished. I have been graciously favoured by your worship of merciful heart, as I have been made to listen directly (to the stories etc.) of Lord Hari who is the cause of the world[2] and have been enlightened in the means of attaining to him.

3. I do not consider it a wonder that the grace of those noble persons who have completely devoted their hearts to Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa) should be showered on ignorant beings who have been tormented by miseries.

4. We have heard from you the collection of this (*Bhāgavata*) Purāṇa in which is extolled and praised Lord Viṣṇu of hallowing renown.

5. Worshipful Sir ! Now I am not afraid of death either from Takṣaka or from other causes. I have entered (i.e. established my mind) in the fearless and supremely blissful Brahman, as guided by you.

6. O Brāhmaṇa sage ! Be pleased to permit me. I shall now control my speech and other senses and concentrate on the supra-sensuous Lord. Entering (i. e. establishing my mind which is rid of all cravings and desires into the Supreme Lord, I shall give up my body.

7. You have graciously shown to me the fearless and the supreme state of the Almighty Lord, the firm insight of the knowledge and realisation of which have completely wiped out my nescience and the effects and impressions caused by it.

Sūta said:

8. The worshipful Śuka, the son of Bādarāyaṇa who was thus addressed and worshipped by the king, took leave of the

1. Or : Who looked upon all as within himself or with equal outlook (ŚR).
2. Or : Who is eternal with no beginning or end.

king and departed along with other ascetics (who came to listen to the *Bhāgavata*.)

9. By force of his reason, king Parīkṣit also established his mind firmly with his Soul and meditated on the Supreme Brahman remaining breathless and motionless like a tree (trunk or a post.)

10. On the bank of the Gaṅgā, facing to the north and seated on a seat of Kuśa grass the end of which pointed to the east, the great Yogin who was completely devoid of attachment and all whose doubts had been resolved, was completely merged in the Brahman.

11. O Brāhmaṇas ! when the king became absorbed in Brahman, it was unnecessary and superfluous to kill him by snake-bite. In the meanwhile Takṣaka was directed by the revengeful and indignant son of Brāhmaṇa (sage Śamīka). While Takṣaka was going with the intention of killing the King, on the way he met (the Brāhmaṇa) Kaśyapa (who knew how to counteract poison).

12. With payment of money, he gratified the Brāhmaṇa who knew how to cure (all types of) poison[1] and made him go back. The serpent who was capable of assuming any form at will, disguised himself as a Brāhmaṇa[2] and bit the King.

13. Instantly the body of the royal sage who had become merged in Brahman was reduced to ashes by the serpent poison, while all embodied beings stood as mere witnesses.

14. There arose a loud hue and cry all over the earth, the sky and in all directions. For all gods, *asuras*, men, etc. became astonished at the event.

15. (But it was also a joyous occasion as King Parīkṣit was absorbed in the Brahman). Drums were sounded in the heavens; Gandharvas and Apsaras (celestial musicians and dancers) sang. Gods, expressing their approbation, sent down showers of flowers.

1. MBH : Ādi. 42.36-43 describes how Kāśyapa showed Takṣaka how he resuscitated the tree burnt to ashes by Takṣakabite.

2. The MBH *Ādi.* 43. 22-36 makes him mixed up as a worm in the fruits, presented to the King by Nāga sages.

16. Hearing that his father had been assassinated by Takṣaka, Janmejaya flared up with wrath. With the help of Brāhmaṇa priests, he started a sacrificial session in which he offered Nāgas as oblations into the fire, in the prescribed manner.

17. Seeing that even big serpents were being burnt in the raging fire-blaze of the serpent-sacrifice, Takṣaka became terror-stricken and sought the protection of Indra.

18. Not seeing Takṣaka (invoked and oblated) in the sacred fire kindled for the sacrifice, the king Janmejaya, the son of Parīkṣit, enquired why Takṣaka, the vilest of serpents, was not invoked as oblation to the fire.

19. "O King of kings ! It is Indra who is protecting Takṣaka as he has sought asylum with him. He has been protected and held back by Indra. Hence the serpent does not fall into the sacrificial fire."

20. Hearing that explanation, the highly intelligent son of Parīkṣit asked the officiating priests, "Why is not Takṣaka along with Indra invoked and made to fall into the fire (by you) O Brāhmaṇas ?"

21. Hearing that request of Janmejaya) the Brāhmaṇas invoked Takṣaka along with Indra in that sacrifice thus : "O Takṣaka ! Instantly fall into this (sacrificial) fire along with Indra, the leader of Maruts.[1]

22. In this way, due to the (superior) force in the harsh invocation of the Brāhmaṇas, Indra, along with his aerial car and Takṣaka, was dislodged from his position and became bewildered (in mind).

23. Observing that Indra, along with his aerial car and Takṣaka, was crashing down from the sky, Bṛhaspati of the Aṅgiras *gotra* (clan) (strongly protested and) remonstrated with the king.[2]

24. "O King of men ! This king of serpents cannot be killed by you, as nectar has been imbibed by him and he is hence immune from old age and death.

1. Who is accompanied by Marut (wind)—gods—VR. VJ.

2. As per MBH, *Ādi*. chs. 56-58 it is Āstika, the Yāyāvara who made Janmejaya to stop the sacrifice.

25. (If you still insist on burning him as he is the murderer of your father please consider that Life and death of a being and his (consequent) position in the other world—all is determined by his own actions (*Karma*). Hence, O King, (it is the *Karma*—the result of one's action and) no other person can be held responsible as the cause of happiness or misery of any other person.

26. When a being meets death through the agency of a serpent, a thief, fire, lightning, starvation, thirst, disease and such other causes, the victim is experiencing the fruit of his own Karma that is in the process of fruition.

27. Therefore, let this malevolently motivated sacrificial session involving violence to life be stopped, as serpents, in spite of their innocence, have been burnt O King ! (I however do not blame you for what you have done so far) It is the fruit of one's part action that is experienced by people.

Sūta said:

28. Thus appealed, the king respected the words of the great sage and said, "Let it be done so." He desisted from that serpent sacrifice and worshipped Bṛhaspati.

29. Such is this notable great deluding potency (Māyā) of Lord Viṣṇu. It is both incomprehensible and insuperable. It is due to the deluding force of this Māyā that beings, though rays or *aṁśas* of Viṣṇu succumb to passions (such as anger, etc.) which are the products of *guṇas* (like *rajas* and *tamas*) and do wrong to other fellow-beings.

30.* (Māyā is superable if you resort to Lord Viṣṇu). The notion such as 'This man is a hypocrite' which exists in the mind is Māyā. But it does not figure boldly or openly in the frequent discussions held by the exponents of the self in

*VJ. is more lucid :

When persons who, being experts in investigating into *Upaniṣads*, repeatedly carry on their enquiry or discussion about Paramātman, Māyā which has the capacity of deluding beings, does not wield any influence over Hari, though it may remain incomprehensible to others. Brahman cannot be comprehended even by the mind which is 'unstable' due to its apprehensions and doubts. Here the deities presiding over the mind or speech are implied and not the physical organ. Even these deities cannot comprehend *paramātman*.

their investigations about the self. (It is shown to exist somehow like one in a scared state of mind and does not function as a deluding potency). With relation to God there is no scope for various discussions or disputations which are based on Māyā as he is above that. Nor can the mind which is of the nature of creating ideations and doubts function in respect of God.

31. In relation to Him, no scope is there for the *Jīva* with its adjunct *ahaṁkāra* as its component and with *Karma* (action), materials bringing about Karma or its instruments and the fruit to be attained through the above two. He is above and unrelated to opposition or interruption (and hence does not oppose anybody or can be opposed by anybody). That being the nature of the self, the contemplative sage should discard these waves i.e. aberrations of *ahaṁkāra* and remain in the blissful state of *ātman.*

32. Persons who after due examination (of the true nature of things) desire to renounce everything that is not *Ātman* (using the words 'not that', 'not that') declare that the essential supreme nature of Viṣṇu is as (described) above. They have given up the false notion of (the identification of the body and soul called here as) 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness' with reference to their body and belongings. With full control over their body, senses and mind they embrace the essential nature of Viṣṇu in their heart and realize the *Ātman* by their power of meditation.

33. Only they can attain to the supreme nature of Viṣṇu, who are not touched by the evil notion of 'I' and 'mine' with reference to their body and house.

34. One should tolerate disparaging remarks and harsh words; he should not show disrespect to anybody; nor should he cherish enmity to any one for the sake of this (physical) body (which is to be cast off one day).

35. I bow to the worshipful and glorious Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa[1] whose intelligence easily grasps everything (*lit.* is unobstructible). It is by meditating upon his feet that I learnt this compilation *of Śrīmad Bhāgavata.*

1. Glorious Lord Kṛṣṇa—VJ.

Śaunaka said :

36. Be pleased to tell us into how many branches (or schools) were the Vedas divided by Paila and others (viz. Vaiśampāyana, Jaimini, Sumantu and Śuka) great-souled teachers of the Vedas, the disciples of Vyāsa!

Śūta said :

37. While god Brahmā, the occupant of the highest position in the creation, was meditating with well-composed mind, from the space (the sky-like vacuum) in his heart arose a sound. The same sound is even perceptible when the function of the sense of hearing is closed.

38. By concentrating on that sound (*nāda*)[1] O sage, yogins wipe out all the impurities of the mind caused by the *Adhibhūta*, the *Adhyātma* and the *Adhidaiva*[2] and attain to Liberation from *saṁsāra* (lit. the state from which there is no return).

39. From that *nāda* (sound) arose the sacred syllable *Om* which consists of three *mātrās* (viz. *a*, *u*, *m*,) the source of which is unmanifest[3] and shines (i.e. becomes manifest in the heart) by itself. That *Om* is the special index of the glorious Brahman, the Supreme Soul.

40. He (god Brahmā) hears the unmanifest syllable OM even when the auditory sense has ceased to work (as when the ears are closed) and whose cognition remains unaffected even when all senses become function-less[4]. (as in *Samādhi* or in deep sleep). It is that sacred syllable OM which, evolving from Paramātman, becomes manifest (audible) in the cavity of the heart and produces the great speech called the *Vedas*.

1. Concentration on the *Nāda* (sound) is a special Type of Yoga.

2. These terms are variously interpreted : Thus *dravya* or *adhi-bhūta* is taken as pertaining to the *bhūtas* or *elements* the body; *Kriyā* or *adhyātma* as organs of actions (VJ) but *karma*—merit as well as sin (VR); *Kāraka* or *adhidaiva* as sense of perception' (VJ) Sense-organs (VR).

3. *aprabhava* (i) The source of which is too subtle to be understood by those who are not adept in Yoga (VR).

(ii) Whose source is the unmanifest Hari (VJ).

4. This is not possible in the case of *Jīva* who depends on sense-organs (ŚR).

41*. It (*Praṇava* or OM) directly and comprehensively expresses the Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*), the *Brahman* itself which is its source. It is the eternal seed of all the *Mantras*, *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*.

42. It i.e. OM is constituted of three sounds: *A* and others viz. *U* and *M*, O most prominent member of the Bhṛgu clan. These sounds—*A*, *U* and *M* severally contain (the seed of) the triads of entities, viz. *guṇas* (modes of *prakṛti*, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), names (the *Vedas*—Ṛg, *Sāman* and *Yajus*), substances[1] (the three spheres or worlds known as *bhūḥ*—the earth, *bhuvaḥ*—the sky and the aerial region *svaḥ*—the heaven and states of consciousness (wakefulness, dream and deep sleep).

43. Out of the (above) three syllables, the glorious Lotus-born god Brahmā evolved the alphabets consisting of semi-vowels (*y*, *v*, *r*, *l*,) aspirants (*ś*, *ṣ*, *s*, *h*), vowels, consonants (viz. gutturals, palatals, cerebrals, dentals, and labials) short, long and prolated accents or sound measures.)

44. With the help of these sounds (letters of the alphabet) Brahmā, through his four mouths, gave expression to four Vedas together with the *vyāhṛtis* (*bhūḥ*, *bhuvaḥ*, *svaḥ*) and the sacred syllable OM. He intended to lay down the duties of the priests, viz., *hotā*, *adhvaryu*, *udgātā* and *Brahmā* officiating at sacrifice.

45. He taught the Vedas to his sons (like Marīci and others) who were Brāhmaṇa sages and made them experts in the Vedic pronunciation and intonation. They became the promulgators of *dharma* and taught the same, in their turn, to their sons.

*Both VR and VJ use the adjectives in this verse as qualifying the *Brahman* e.g. the Brahman who is the most powerful in its own essential glory. VJ states that previously *OM* is called 'a significant index (*liṅga*) of the *Brahman*, here it is described as its comprehensive (*vācaka*) expression and the seed of *Mantras* and *Vedas* which when pronounced and articulated properly have the potency to give the fruit of all Mantras : *acchinnatvenoccāryamāṇaṁ sarva-mantrādināṁ japtānām phala-dāna-sāmarthyaṁ janayati* /

1. *arthaḥ* . VR, as a Viśiṣṭādvaitin, proposes the following triad :

(i) *Jīvātman* deserves to be a part and parcel of *Paramātman*. (ii) He depends for shelter on *Paramātman* and is (iii) fit to be enjoyed by him.

46. During the course of the four Yugas those Vedas were handed down from generation to generation by their disciples who were strict in the observance of Vows. These Vedas were rearranged by great sages at the beginning of the Dvāpara age[1].

47. Observing that men are having decreasing span of life growing less and less energetic and becoming poorer in intellectual capacity, the Brāhmaṇa sages, as directed by Lord Viṣṇu, enthroned in their heart, re-arranged the Vedas.

48. Even in this (*Vaivasvata Manvantara* also, O sage, the glorious Lord, the Protector of the world was prayed by the rulers of various spheres like god Brahmā, Rudra and others to protect the path of righteousness.

49. (Responding favourably to their prayers) the Almighty Lord descended as the son of Parāśara and Satyavatī, out of a ray (particle) of *Sattva* which is but a part of the *Māyā*. He divided the Veda into four parts, O fortunate sage !

50. Just as (out of a heap of mixed up precious stones) precious stones of the same kind are assorted and kept in separate heaps, he (Vyāsa) selected and classified the Vedic Mantras as belonging to the category of the Ṛg, Atharvan, Yajus, and Sāman and thus compiled four *Saṁhitās* or collections out of those (formerly mixed up) *Mantras*.

51. The vastly intelligent Vyāsa summoned four of his pupils and entrusted to each of them one of the *Saṁhitās*, O Śaunaka.

52. As the tradition goes, he taught the first compilation called *Bahvṛca*[2] or the *Ṛgveda* to Paila and to Vaiśampāyana, the compilation called Yajurveda which (being a collection of prose texts to be recited at the sacrifice) is also called *Nigada*.

53. He taught the compilation of *Sāma-Veda* or the

1. ŚR corrects this statement by pointing out that it was at the end of the Dvāpara age, at the time of King Śantanu, that Vyāsa re-arranged the Vedas.

2. *Bahvṛc*—so called as it consists of the biggest number of Mantras.

Chandoga saṁhitā (compilation of *mantras* to be sung according to metre in which they are composed) to Jaimini. And the compilation of *Atharvāṅgirasi* or the *Atharva Veda* to his disciple named Sumantu.

54-56. (Dividing the *Ṛgveda* into two branches) the sage Paila taught that Saṁhitā to Indra-pramiti and Bāṣkala. Bāṣkala on his part divided the Saṁhitā taught to him in four branches and taught one each respectively to (his pupils) Bodhya, Yājñavalkya, Parāśara and Agnimitra, O descendant of Bhṛgu (i.e. Śaunaka). Indrapramiti, a man of controlled mind, taught his *Saṁhitā* to the learned sage Māṇḍūkeya (who was his son). Māṇḍūkeya's disciple was Devamitra who taught it to Saubhari and others.

57. Śākalya was Māṇḍukeya's son. He divided his *Saṁhitā* into five branches and imparted the knowledge of one each to his pupils, Vātsya, Mudgala, Śālīya, Gokhalya, and Śiśira.

58. The sage Jātūkarṇya was another disciple of Śākalya. He (divided his Saṁhitā into three parts) taught his *Saṁhitā* together with its *Nirukta* (etymological explanation of Vedic words) to his (four) pupils, Balāka, Paija, Vaitāla and Viraja.

59. Bāṣkala's son, Bāskali, carved out of all the above mentioned branches a new *Saṁhitā* called *Vālakhilya Saṁhitā* which was mastered and preserved by (his disciples) Bālāyani, Bhajya and Kāsāra.

60. These compilations (branches) of the *Bahvṛca* or the *Ṛgveda* were learnt and preserved by these Brāhmaṇa sages. He who listens to the classification of the Vedas is absolved of all sins. (Now follows the account of the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* of the *Yajurveda*).

61. It is traditionally reported that Vaiśampāyana had pupils called *Carakādhvaryus*.[1] For the sake of their preceptor, they performed a penance in expiation of the sin of *Brahmahatyā* (killing a Brāhmaṇa).

1. The term is variously explained : Pupils called
(i) *Carakas* and *Adhvaryus*
(ii) *Carakas* who became *Adhvaryus* (experts in the *Yajurveda*)
Caraka (1) One who observed a vow
(2) Pilgrims to places of holy water (VJ)
Adhvaryus—experts in conducting sacrifices. (VJ).

62. One of his disciples, Yājñavalkya, remarked (to Vaiśampāyana). "O worshipful Sir, what (insignificant) amount of reward (in the form of expiation of the sin) can be gained through the poor performance of penance by these weaklings? I alone can undergo such austere penance as will be extremely difficult for others to perform (and will alone absolve you of the sin of *Brahma-hatyā*)."

63. When (boastfully) addressed thus, the preceptor (Vaiśampāyana) got offended. He (peremptorily) ordered; "Get out. Enough of a pupil like you who contemptuously speak of Brāhmaṇa sages. Give up at once whatever you have learnt from me."

64. Thereupon, the son of Devarāta (Yājñavalkya) on his part immediately vomitted out the collection of *Yajurveda* passages (that he learnt from his preceptor) and left the place. And the sages saw the collection of the *Yajurveda* texts.

65. (At that sight) the sages were so enamoured of it (and greedily wanted to master as much of it as they could. But acceptance of vomition being disgraceful to Brāhmaṇas) they assumed the form of Tittira birds (francoline Partridges) and collected it. Hence the beautiful branches of the *Yajurveda* came to be known as *Taittirīyas*. (The origin of the branches called Kāṇva, Mādhyandina of the white Yajurveda is now explained).

66. Thereupon, in search of *Śruti* portions not known even to his preceptor, Yājñavalkya devoutly worshipped and prayed the sun-god, the Master of Vedas[1] as follows:

Yājñavalkya implored:

67. Salutations to the glorious sun-god denoted by the syllable OM[2]—The sun-god who, though one, abides in

1. *ŚR's quotation* :
Rgbhiḥ pūrvāhṇe divi-deva īyate, Yajurvede tiṣṭhati, madhye ahnaḥ
Sāma-vedenāstamaye mahīyate
Vedair aśūnyas tribhireti sūryaḥ ||

2. VJ : Salutations to the Supreme Lord denoted by the syllable Oṁ, the *Brahman* itself. You are endowed with six excellent attributes which show your supreme nature as applied to sages like Vasiṣṭha). You are eternal preceding all creation (*ādityāya*).

the form of *ātman*, in the whole of the universe, enthroned in the hearts of four categories of beings (viz. oviparous, viviparous, Sweat-born, sprouted from the earth i.e. the plants, etc.) beginning from god Brahmā down to a clump of grass but who (though inside like a *Jīva*) is not circumscribed by any condition, who like the limitless sky envelops the universe from the out-side as well in the form of Time. The almighty God maintains, all alone, the life and progress of the world by evaporating waters (during the summer) and releasing them back (as rain-showers during the rainy season) throughout years constituted of parts of time such as a moment, an instant, an eye-wink, etc. (This explains the *Vareṇyatva* stated in the first foot of the *Gāyatri-mantra*).

68. O Prominent god ! The creator of the world ! We devoutly and properly as per Vedic procedure) meditate upon that celebrated orb of yours which is shining over these. O god of blazing splendour ! You burn down all the sins and (the resultant) miseries as well as their seed (ignorance) in the case of those who worship (and contemplate upon) you as per prescriptions laid down in the Vedas. We worship you thrice a day (in the morning, the mid-day and the evening) as per rules laid down in the Vedas. (This explains the second foot of the *Gāyatri Mantra*).

69. You of your own accord become the soul, the inner controller of the multitudes of mobile and immobile beings in this world, which depend on you for their very existence and direct their minds, sense-organs, vital breaths which are distinct from the soul and hence inert matter. (This explains the third foot of the Gāyatrī).

70. Beholding that this world is swallowed up by an extremely horrendous boaconstrictor (of terrible jaws) called 'darkness' and is bereft of consciousness as if it is dead, you, being extremely tender-hearted, resuscitated it by your compassionate glance and directed it to attend to the course of performing their religious duties thrice every day which ultimately lead to the *summum bonum* and you go about like the sovereign of the world instilling terror in the hearts of the wicked.

71. On all sides, at every stage, you are worshipped by

the guardian deities of the cardinal points with presents in their lotus-bud-like joined palms.

72. Hence, as I am desirous of learning those texts of the *Yajurveda* which are fresh (i.e. not properly known to others), I approach and worship your lotus-feet which are bowed down by (Indra and other) rulers of the three worlds." Thus prayed Yajñavalkya.

Sūta said:

73. Being thus extolled and pleased thereby, the glorious Lord Hari i.e. the sun-god, assumed the form of a horse and out of grace, imparted to that sage the knowledge of those portions of the *Yajurveda* which were not stale (i.e. known to others).

74. That (spiritually) powerful sage classified hundreds of those *mantras* of the *Yajurveda* into fifteen branches, known as *Vājasanis* (They were called *Vājasani* as they were delivered very rapidly from the hair of his mane by the sun god in the form of a horse) Kāṇva, Mādhyandina and other sages learnt those branches.

(Now begins the topic of *Sāma-veda*)

75. Jaimini, the Chanter of the *Sāma-Veda* had a son called Sumantu who was (already) a sage. He had a son called Sunvan. To each of them, Jaimini taught a separate branch of the (*Sāma-Veda*) *saṁhitā*.

76. Jaimini had another disciple called Sukarmā who was a Brāhmaṇa of vast intellectual capacity. He classified the compilation of *Sāman* hymns into one thousand branches (*lit.* he made the tree of the *Sāmaveda* grow into a thousand branches).

77. Hiraṇya-nābha of Kosala (country) and Pauṣyañji—both disciples of Sukarman accepted (i.e. learnt) the entire *Sāmaveda*. So did another disciple Āvantya (a resident of Avanti) who was the most prominent knower of Brahma (Veda).

78. Pauṣyañji and Āvantya as well, each had five hundred disciples. They say that Pauṣyañji, Āvantya as well as Hiraṇya-nābha[1] had five hundred disciples who learnt as many

1. ŚR quotes *Viṣṇu* P. 3.6.4. b and 5 to support this.

branches of *Sāma*. They hailed from the northern part of the country and hence are called 'Northerners' though some call them "easterners".

79. Laugākṣi, Māñgali, Kulya, Kuśīda and Kukṣi—the (other) pupils of Pauṣyañji accepted (learnt) hundred compilations (Branches) of *Sāmaveda* each.

80. Kṛta, the disciple of Hiraṇyanābha taught twenty-four compilations (of *Sāma* hymns) to his pupils and Āvantya, a man of self-control, taught the remaining collections to his students.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Branches of the Atharva Veda : Characteristics of the Purāṇas[1]

Sūta said :

1. Sumantu was well versed in the *Atharva Vede*. He taught his collection (of Atharva hymns) to his disciple Kabandha[2]) who in his turn taught it to Pathya and Vedadarśa.

2. The disciples of Vedadarśa were Śauklāyani, Brahmabali, Modoṣa and Pippalāyani. (Vedadarśa divided the Saṁhita in four parts and taught them). Listen to the (names of) disciples of Pathya, O Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka). Kumuda, Śunaka, and Jājali, the expert knower of the *Atharva-Veda* (were the pupils of Pathya who divided the Saṁhitā in three parts and taught them).

3. Śunaka (born in the family of Aṅgiras) had two disciples—Babhru as well as Saindhavāyana. They studied the two collections (of the *Atharva*) their disciples—Sāvarṇya and others also (studied the same in their turn).

4. Nakṣatra-Kalpa, Śānti-Kalpa[3], Kaśyapa, Aṅgiras and

1. This chapter is closely similar to VP 3.6
2. Vide VP. 3.6.9.
3. As VP. 3.6.13-14 states *Nakṣatra-Kalpa, Śānti-Kalpa Veda-Kalpa, Saṁhitā-Kalpa* and *Āṅgirasa Kalpa* are the collection of Atharvan hymns and

others were the teachers of the *Atharva Veda*. O Śaunaka, now listen to the names of the teachers of the Purāṇic lore.

5. Traiyyāruṇi, Kāśyapa, Sāvarṇi, Akṛtavraṇa, Vaiśampāyana and Hārīta—these six are traditionally noted as the teachers of the Purāṇas.

6. These teachers learnt one Purāṇa collection each, by oral tradition, from my father (Romaharṣaṇa) who was a pupil of Vyāsa. While I, as a disciple of each of them, learnt them all.

7. I, Kaśyapa, Sāvarṇi and Paraśurāma's disciple Akṛtavraṇa—We four learnt the original four collections of *Purāṇa* from Vyāsa's disciple.

8. Now listen with intelligent attention the characteristics of *Purāṇas* as described by Brāhmaṇa sages in conformity to *Vedas* and *Śāstras*.

9-10. Those who are experts in Purāṇic lore declare that a Purāṇa is distinguished by the following ten characteristics[1] (or topics dealt with) : (1) Subtle creation (*Sarga*), (2) gross creation (*Visarga*), (3) Sustenance (*Vṛtti*), (4) Protection of the universe (*Rakṣā*), (5) Cause or the lust for Karmas (*Hetu*), (6) the periods of Manu (*Antara* i. e. *Manvantara*), (7) Dynasties of Kings (*Vaṁśa*), (8) Deeds of the Lord and dynastic kings (*Vaṁśānucarita*), (9) Physical annihilation (*Saṃsthā*) (10) The Last support or ultimate reality (*Apāśraya*). O Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka), some say that *Purāṇas* have five characteristics[2] which distinguishes between great and small *Purāṇas*.[3]

11. *Sarga* (Subtle creation) is (i. e. consists of topics like) the evolution of *Mahat* (the principle of cosmic Intelli-

sages like Kaśyapa, Aṅgiras preserved them. These *Kalpas* treat of rituals connected with the worship of Nakṣatras, *Śāntikarma* (propitiatory rituals) etc. Here the names of the Saṁhitās stand for the authors (ŚR).

1. Bh. P. Supra 2.10.3-7 has given these ten characteristics with some different nomenclature. For the discussion of these topics vide Vol. I. Introduction, pp. XVIII-XXXIV.

2. ŚR enumerates them as follows : *Sarga, Pratisarga, Vaṁśa, manvantara* and *Vaṁśānucarita*.

3. As the Intro. mentioned in the above note shows these ten characteristics can be epitomised into five. Hence these need not be regarded as a differentia between a *Mahā Purāṇa* and *Upa-Purāṇa*.

gence) from the agitation of and disturbance in the balance of equilibrium of the three *guṇas* of the Unmanifest *Prakṛti*—the Primordial Matter) leading to the evolution of three-fold *Ahaṁkāra* (of the *Vaikārika* or *Sāttvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa* types, according to the dominance of the particular *guṇa*) the evolutes of which are subtle elements (*bhūtas*), the sense-organs and their objects (viz. gross elements and the deities presiding over the sense-organs).

12. *Visarga* (gross creation) is the creation of the gross mobile and immobile nature resulting from the collective effects evolved out of *Mahat* and other principles charged with the potency of creation by the Supreme Person and dominated by the influence of previous Karmas (of the *Jīvas*) evolving in the manner of the continuation of a seed from a seed.

13. The immobile creation (e. g. food-grains, fruits, roots) and some products of mobile creation also form the sustenance of the mobile creation. And in the case of human beings, the sustenance is determined by their nature, desire and scriptural injunctions[1] (the earth is the real support or sustenance of mobile creatures as described in the fifth Skandha.

14. *Rakṣā* or Protection of the universe consists of the incarnations and the sportive acts (exploits, etc.) of Lord Viṣṇu, from age to age appearing among sub-human beings (e. g. the Boar incarnation), human beings (e. g. Paraśurāma, Rāma) sages (e. g. Kapila) and among gods, and the extermination of the haters of the three Vedas (e. g. demons).

15. *Manvantara* (Manu-period) is the period presided over by the particular Manu (e. g. Vaivasvata Manu at present), the set of gods, the sons of Manu, Indra, seven sages and the incarnations of Hari. Thus a Manvantara is characterized by the above six special features.

16. *Vaṁśa* (race) is the line or race of pure, blue-blooded kings born of god Brahmā and continued throughout the three

1. VJ. The sustenance is determined according to the will of men (e.g. fruits, grain, etc.) and to the prescriptions laid down in the Śāstras (e.g. *caru Puroḍāśa*).

divisions of time (viz. the past, present and future). *Vaṁśānucarita* is the history of these kings, and of their descendants.

17. The destruction of the universe created by Māyā[1] is of four types (1) Occasional or brought about by a particular cause, (2) *Prākṛtika* (of the *Prakṛti*), (3) Constant and (4) Absolute. This dissolution is called *Saṁsthā* by the sages.

18.* The *Hetu* (cause), the motive power or cause of the universe is the Jīva (individual soul). He is the doer of actions under the influence of Nescience or ignorance. From the point of those who emphasize his conscious or spiritual aspect, he is the enjoyer of the fruits of the balance of his *Karmas*, while from that of those who stress the *Upādhi* (conditioned existence) aspect, he is unmanifest i. e. without name and form before the creation.

19-20.** *Apāśraya* (The last support or ultimate reality) is *Brahman*. It is present as a witness to what is effected by Māyā, as in the three states of Jīva (viz. *Viśva*, *Taijasa* and *Prājña*) in wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless-deep-sleep and is also quite different or distinct from them as in *Samādhi*. Just as the basic matter (e. g. clay) is both related to and unrelated to its products (clay is found in all things made of clay and

1. The dissolution brought about by the *Māyā*.

*VR Through his ignorance Jīva commits acts both of merits and sins. It is for enjoying the fruits of those Karmas that the world is there. Thus he becomes the cause of the creation. Some opine that Jīva has always a balance of Karmas to be enjoyed (*bhukta-phala-karmāvaśeṣaḥ*) and is full of desire to enjoy, while others say that before creation he had no name or form but possessed the impressions of *Karmas* (*Vāsanā*).

VJ Interprets *anuśāyin* as 'one who enters into Paramātman at the time of deluge and sleeps and *avyākṛta* is disinterested (?) or immutable (*nirvikāra*) like the sky. The world is created for ths Jīvas to experience pleasure or pain as per their *Karmas*. Hence he is the cause of creation.

**VR : Brahman is present in all the products of *Prakṛti* and the states of *Jīva* but is not affected by it essentially. Brahman is unconnected.

VJ : Viṣṇu is the only support (*Apāśraya*) and none else. He is present in all states of *Jīva* but is not affected by them. He exists before, during and after these states (such as wakefulness and others). Brahman is both connected and unconnected with all states and substances. And hence their support. It, being without a second, is inferrable by invariable concomitance (*anvaya*) or the reverse of it (*Vyatireka*).

still it exists apart from them); or just as *Sat* (real existence) forms the substratum of the name and form, Brahman is related to all the (nine) stages[1] of living beings since their inception to death (as the substratum) and is distinct from them. (The *Apāśraya* is the highest goal of these characteristics of *Purāṇas*).

21. When the mind transcends the (above-mentioned) three states (of *Jiva*) either of its own accord (as in the case of sages like Vāmadeva who realized that this creation is Māyā and Brahman is the only reality)—or by the practice of Yoga (as with Kapila's mother *Devahūti*), then a person realizes *Ātman* (the self) (ceases to have any Vāsanās) and desists from worldly activities.

22. Sages who are well versed in ancient lore declare that eighteen *Purāṇas* whether big or small are distinguished by the ten characteristics (described above).

23-24. The names of the eighteen *Purāṇas* are : (1) Brahma, (2) Padma, (3) Viṣṇu, (4) Śiva, (5) Liṅga, (6) Garuḍa, (7) Nārada, (8) Bhāgavata, (9) Agni, (10) Skanda, (11) Bhaviṣya, (12) Brahmavaivarta, (13) Mārkaṇḍeya (14) Vāmana (15) Varāha, (16) Matsya (17) Kūrma and (18) Brahmāṇḍa.

25. O Brāhmaṇa sage (Śaunaka) : Thus has been related (to you) the account of the classification of Vedas into different branches by the sage (Vyāsa) and his disciples and pupils of those disciples. It (listening to this account) enhances the glory of Brahman (of the listeners, if devoutly and attentively heard.)

1. They are as follows : Entry into the womb (as a seed) gestation, birth, infancy (upto the age of five), boyhood (upto sixteen), youth (upto forty five), middle age (upto sixty), old age and death—*vide Supra* 11 22.46.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Mārkaṇḍeya's Penance and Praise of Lord Nārāyaṇa

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta ! May you live long. O virtuous one ! You are the proper guide to men who are wandering in the endless darkness (of *Saṁsāra*) as you show them the way out of it. You are the most eminent speaker. Be pleased to tell us one thing which we earnestly desire to know.

2. People say that the son of Mṛkaṇḍa, the sage (Mārkaṇḍeya) is blessed with a very long life and that he remained alive even when the deluge indicating the end of the Kalpa submerged (lit. swallowed up) the whole of this world.

3. (As per tradition) it was in this very Kalpa that the prominent descendant of Bhṛgu was born in our very family. And as far as we know, no deluge or destruction of all beings has taken place to this day.

It is further reported that while he was drifting along on the sea of cosmic waters, he saw the Supreme Person in the form of an extraordinary babe lying on a banyan leaf (with a shallow cavity).

4-5. This (the possibility of the above tradition) is a matter of grave doubt to us. Hence, we have got curiosity (about its veracity) O Sūta. O Yogin, you are respected as an authority on *Purāṇas*. Be pleased to clarify (and resolve) the above doubt.

Sūta said:

6. O great sage, the enquiry made by you is such as will dispel the misapprehension (in the minds) of the people in general; for while replying to your query the story of Lord Nārāyaṇa will have to be told and that will wash off the sins of the Kali age.

7. Having received consecration at the hands of his father by the investiture of the sacred thread (as per Śāstric injunctions), Mārkaṇḍeya in due course, studied the Vedas as prescribed in religious scriptures and in due course, came to

possess (the spiritual power, acquired by) penance and (mastery over) the Vedic Lore.

8. He observed the great vow of celibacy for life, was quiescent (as he brought passions under his control). He wore matted hair (on his head), bark garments, the sacred thread and the girdle of Kuśa grass. He carried a water jar of gourd and a staff in his hands.

9. He wore a deer skin and had a rosary of *Rudrākṣa* beads and *Kuśa grass*. For the enhancement of his disciplined life and merits, he worshipped Hari present in the (sacrificial) fire, the sun, his preceptor, Brāhmaṇas and within himself both in the morning and in the evening.

10. He brought food received as alms, both morning and in the evening, and offered it to his preceptor silently. If permitted by his preceptor, he partook of the food once (in a day) and observed fast if no permission was given (due to the arrival of an unexpected guest, etc.)

11. In this way, while absorbed in the performance of penance and Vedic studies, he engaged himself in worshipping Lord Hari for millions of years and conquered death which is extremely difficult to overcome.

12. By this (conquest over death) god Brahmā, Bhṛgu, god Śiva, Dakṣa and other sons of god Brahmā (such as Nārada and men, gods, manes and all other beings (in the world) marvelled greatly (at his wonderful achievement).

13. Possessed of austere penance, deep Vedic studies and self-control, he observed the great vow of life-long celibacy. All the distracting passions in his heart were destroyed. With his mind drawn within, that Yogin meditated upon the Supra-sensuous Lord Hari.

14. Even as the Yogin was engaged in concentrating his mind through the great Yoga on the Supreme person, a long period of time extending over six Manvantaras had passed away.

15. It is said that when Indra came to know of this (performance of penance) in the present seventh Manvantara, he became alarmed at it and began to create interruptions in it, O Brāhmaṇa (Śaunaka).

16. (with a view to interrupting his penance and pre-

cipitating his own fall) he deputed to the sage, divine musicians, celestial dancing girls, Cupid (god of Love), the presiding deities of the spring season and the gentle breeze from the Malaya mountain wafting (love-exciting) fragrance as well as greed and pride, the sons (or the products) of *rajas*.

17. All of them went to the northern slopes of the Himālayas where the river Puṣpabhadrā flows and to the slab of stone called Citra, O Lord (Śaunaka).

18. The premises of that holy hermitage were adorned with sacred trees (like Aśvattha) and creepers, densely occupied with families of holy Brāhmaṇa sages and were full of pools of holy crystal-clear water.

19. It was resonant with the melodious humming of intoxicated bees and loud with the cooing of joyous cuckoos. It was full of the vivacious movements of ecstatic dancing of the peacocks and of the flights of various birds in joy (displaying their delight).

20. Bearing with it the cool spray of mountain cascades and embraced by fragrant flowers (and hence wafting their sweet scent), the (southern Malaya) wind entered and blew gently exciting the passion of love (in the hearts of men).

21. The spring season manifested itself with the rising moon as the face of the night (i. e evenings beautiful with the rising moon), with rows of tender leaves and branches of flowers and clusters of trees entwined with creepers (as if in close embrace).

22. Followed by the celestial singers (Gandharvas) with companies of *artistes* experts in vocal and instrumental music, and accompanied with a troupe of divine ḍamsels, the god of love appeared with a bow and arrows.

23. Those servants of Indra saw the sage sitting steadfast with his eyes closed after offering oblations to the sacrificial fire, looking formidable (and hence unassailable) like fire in the human form.

24. The celestial damsels danced before him and the singers began to sing and the players of instrumental music played upon the Mṛdaṅga, lute, Paṇavakas and horns.

25. While the spring season (i.e. its presiding deity) and

son of *rajas* (Greed—were trying to agitate his mind, *Kāma* (the god of love) set his missile of five-pointed shaft[1] to his bow.

26-27. While Puñjika-sthalī (a celestial damsel in her role of a temptress was plying with balls (in the presence of the sage), her slim waist was as if afflicted (and hence unstable) under the weight of her full breasts, wreaths of flowers were dropping from her hair. Her eyes were (as if) wandering (i.e. she was constantly looking) this way or that way. While she was running after the balls the wind blew away her fine garment (*sārī*) as the zone (which was fastened round it) got snapped (and slipped).

28. Feeling confident that the sage is now (as good as) subdued, Smara (the god of love) discharged that shaft, but like all the endeavours put forth by an unfortunate person, his attempt (against the sage) proved futile.

29. Thus while committing that offence against the sage, they were being scorched by his spiritual lustre (and being afraid of what would be the consequence of their offence) they ran away as children do after rousing a snake, O sage.

30. There is certainly nothing wonderful in the case of the great-souled ones, O Śaunaka, that the great sage, despite his being thus attacked by the minions of Indra, was not affected by anger, infatuation and such other perturbing feelings resulting from *ahaṁkāra*.

31. Perceiving the paleness of expression (on the countenance) of Kāma and his troop of followers and hearing from them the spiritual splendour and power of the Brāhmaṇa sage, (even) the glorious lord of the celestial region (Indra) was extremely astonished.

32. In this way, while the sage was concentrating his mind on the Lord by means of penance, study of the Vedas and self-control, Lord Viṣṇu, in order to shower his grace on him, manifested himself in the form of sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

33-34. They (i.e. Lords Nara and Nārāyaṇa) were fair (white) and darkblue in complexion respectively; with eyes beautiful like fresh-blown lotuses and with four arms (each).

1. ŚR enumerates the stages of love-lornship such as fascination, agitation, intoxication or maddening etc. as the "points" of Kāma's shaft.

They were clad in deerskin and bark garments and wore the rings of the sacred *Kuśa* grass, and a sacred threefold thread (comprised of nine strands). They carried with them a water pot (of gourd or wood specially used by ascetics) and a straight bamboo staff, a rosary of lotus-seeds, a broom to brush aside insects (without harming them) and a handful of *darbha* grass[1] (representing the Vedas). They were of a high stature and by their halo of golden lustre refulgent like the flashes of lightening, they appeared like asceticism itself incarnate, and were worshipped by prominent gods.

35. Beholding the two sages, Nara and Nārâyaṇa, the two forms of the glorious Lord, he rose to his feet and most respectfully prostrated himself before them like a staff.

36. His body, senses and the mind became deeply satisfied and tranquil through joy caused by their blissful sight. His hair stood on their ends (at the thrill of joy) and eyes were full of tears. He could not even visualize them.

37. He stood up with his palms folded and humbly bowed to them. Out of ardent desire, he was as if embracing them. And in faltering accents, he welcomed those two Lords with words *Namo namaḥ* (Salutations ! Bow-to you both).

38. He brought (and offered) seats to them and washed their feet. He worshipped them respectfully, offering them arghya (articles of worship) pigment, flowers and incense.

39. When both of them were comfortably seated and appeared disposed to shower their grace on him, he saluted them again and submitted to those eminent-most sages (as follows :)

Mārkaṇḍeya submitted :

40. How is it possible for (an ordinary *Jiva* like) me to extol you (of infinite glory) O Almighty Lord ? The vital breath (*Prāṇa*) can pulsate when propelled by you and speech, mind and cognitive and conative senses of embodied beings begin to function with the throbbing of the life principle. This happens even in the case of great gods like the birthless god Brahmā, god Śiva as well as of mine : (though all beings from

1. Some annotators opine that the broom was of *darbha* grass.

god Brahmā are controlled by you as wooden dolls and are not free agents, but if they, with their controlled speeches or action worship you) you are the friend of the soul of those devotees (and not the friend of their bodies as the parents and other near relatives).

41. These two forms of yours, O glorious Lord, are for the protection, removal of the three types of miseries (viz. *ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika, ādhidaivika*) and for the conquest of death (i.e. the attainment of *mokṣa* or final emancipation from *saṁsāra*) of the three worlds. For the protection of the world, you assume various other bodies (such as the divine Fish, Tortoise, Boar and others). Even as a spider, you swallow up (i.e. withdraw within yourself) the whole of the universe after creating it.

42. I resort to the soles of the feet of that Protector and controller of the mobile and immobile creation. To a person who takes permanent asylum with them (the Lord's feet) the dirt[1] in the form of *Karmas* (merits and demerits) *guṇas* (and the consequent passions like lust, anger, etc.) and Time (and sufferings mentioned in the above verse) does not contaminate. Verily those sages who know the essence and the inner meaning of the Vedas extol, pay their respects with intense devotion, constantly worship and ever meditate upon them with the desire of attaining to them.

43. We do not know any secure and blissful place (or the *summum bonum*) to persons beset with fear on all sides, in all the worlds other than attainment of your feet, as you are the very embodiment of *Mokṣa* (emancipation from Saṁsāra), O Almighty Ruler ! Even the god Brahmā whose span of life and duration of position (as the head of the creation) last for two Parārdha years is terribly afraid of the Time-spirit (which is just a movement of your eye-brow). What need be said of other beings who are his creations ?

44. This being the case, I shall give up (attachment to) the body and (home, wife, son, etc.) belongings which are futile, unreal, contemptible, transient, which obscures the self (—but which is not ultimately different from the self but is basically

1. ŚR and VR note the v.l. *rujaḥ* 'diseases' (like karma, etc).

the self itself). And I shall resort to your feet as you are transcendent, the embodiment of the true (spiritual) knowledge, (or whose will is ever true), the preceptor or father of the *Jiva* (who by entering the *Jiva* controls him and makes him perform good acts and instructs him in spiritual knowledge). (It is only by betaking oneself to your feet that) one can attain all desired objects i.e. *Puruṣārthas* (such as *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*).

45. O Lord! Although the *guṇas* (*Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*)—the products of the Māyā—are the causes of the sustenance, creation and destruction of the universe, and are regarded as the sportive activities of yours, your Sāttvic manifestation (i.e. Viṣṇu form) alone leads to eternal profound peace in Mokṣa (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*). O friend of the soul, but not the other two (viz. Brahmā and Rudra) for they are the sources of miseries, delusion and fear to men.

46. It is hence that intelligent persons who have understood the truth in this world, worship your pure manifestation (viz. Śrī Nārāyaṇa) which is so dear to your devotees. The followers of the Pāñcarātra school believe that pure Sattva (and no other *guṇa*) is the manifestation of the Supreme Person, and that through Sattva alone is attained the abode of the Lord which is the state of absolute fearlessness and full of the bliss of realization of the self which cannot be attained by other two *guṇas*.

47. My salutation to the glorious Lord (of six excellences) the Inner Controller, all pervading as well as manifesting himself in the form of the universe, the creator and the preceptor of the universe, the supreme Deity revealed in the dual form of sage Nārāyaṇa of perfect spiritual knowledge and Nara the best among men, the purest existence, the controller of speech (in the form of Vedic lore) and the promulgator of the path of Vedas.

48. Even though you are present in a person's own sense-organs, vital airs, heart and objects of senses (coming in the range of his perception) as the Inner Controller, his understanding is so much covered (deluded) by your deluding potency (Māyā) and his intellect is bewildered in following the path of misguiding senses that he cannot cognize you. But such

a person (who is so much ignorant in the beginning) is able to know you directly on being enlightened into (the inner meaning of) the Vedas through you who are the preceptor of all.[1]

49. You are the Supreme Person whose vision or the knowledge that throws light on your real mysterious nature, is obtained only through the Vedas. Great sages of whom the unborn god Brahmā is prominent, are bewildered about your true nature, even though they are trying to realize you. You present yourself in a form or character conforming to the theories of all schools of thought. I bow to you who are the pure knowledge itself, concealed by the limiting conditions of the body and other environments.

CHAPTER NINE

The Lord Exhibits His Māyā

Sūta continued:

1. When the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa, the friend of (the sage) Nara, was eulogized in these words by the intelligent sage Mārkaṇḍeya, he became highly pleased and spoke to the descendant of the Bhṛgu race.

The glorious Lord said:

2. O excellent Brāhmaṇa sage, you have attained perfection (*Siddha-hood*) by virtue of your concentration of mind, through unswerving devotion to me and by your austere penance, study of the Vedas and self-control.

3. We (i.e. all gods) are highly pleased with you by your observance of the great bow (of life-long celibacy). May

1. According to VJ : even though a person may be deeply learned in the Vedas, he is by nature inclined to enjoyment of objects and his judgement is clouded by Māyā. It is by God's grace alone that knowledge about him is easily obtainable (*tvat-prasādena tvaj-jñānaṁ sulabham ityarthaḥ.*

you be happy and prosperous ! Accept any desired boon from me who am the Supreme Ruler of those capable of conferring boons.

The sage (Mārkaṇḍeya) replied:

4. Victory to you. O Ruler of gods of celestials (like Brahmā, Rudra) You are the remover of the agonies of those who earnestly resort to you. O Immutable Lord, that your Lordship have been gracious enough to reveal yourself to me is in itself the greatest boon bestowed on me. And that is quite enough for me.

5. Even great gods like Brahmā regard themselves as having achieved their objective in life when they get in their minds purified (and 'ripened') through Yoga, a (mental) vision of your glorious Lotus feet. That Supreme Lord has revealed himself within the range of my perception (before my very eyes).

6. O Lord with eyes beautiful like lotus-petals, I would, however, like to have a vision of your Māyā, deluded by whom the world along with the Protectors of the spheres like Brahmā, experience differences (such as gods, Subhuman beings, human beings, etc.) when you are the only Reality[1] (without a second and there is no basis for that experience).

Sūta said:

7. Thus devoutly praised and worshipped by the sage (Mārkaṇḍeya), the Almighty Lord assured, "Yes, you will see it", and smilingly returned to his hermitage at Badarī, O sage Śaunaka.

8-9. Mārkaṇḍeya continued to stay in his hermitage brooding over the promised vision (of Māyā). While contemplating he saw Hari revealed in the sacrificial fire, the sun, the moon, waters, the earth, the wind, the sky, in his own self and everywhere around him. He worshipped him with articles of worship conceived mentally. Sometimes he forgot to worship when he was overwhelmed and lost in the flood of loving devotion.

1. VJ : How *Sat* i.e. Brahman or yourself is quite distinct and different from all other things.

10. O pre-eminent member of the Bhṛgu clan ! On one occasion, while he was engaged in religious meditation in the evening on the bank of the Puṣpabhadrā, tempestuous wind suddenly began to blow.

11. Following the furiously roaring blasts of the winds, terrific clouds overcast the sky. Attended with flashes of lightning and deafening thunders, they poured volleys of rain as big as the axles of chariots.

12. Then, following the torrential downpour, were seen oceans in all the four directions around, surging forward, overflooding and swallowing up the earth, while roaring loudly with (mountain-like) high waves tossed up by stormy winds and with terrible looking alligators and awefully big whirlpools.

13. Seeing that the fourfold world of creatures (like mammals, plant-world, oviparous beings) along with himself are afflicted both inside and outside with waters that rose sky-high, with the scorching rays of the sun, blasts of the stormy winds and strokes of lightning and the whole earth is submerged in waters, the sage was deeply disturbed and afraid at heart.

14. Even as he was looking on (in consternation), the boundless ocean terrific-looking on account of (mountainous) waves, and with its waters tossed and whirling by tempestuous winds was filled by the pouring clouds, overflooded the earth and submerged it along with its continents, sub-continents and mountain-chains.

15. All the worlds including the earth, the sky, the celestial world, and the stellar and planetary systems along with their inhabitants, and all the cardinal points were sub-merged and lost in that deluge. The sage Mārkaṇḍeya alone survived. He was drifting with his matted hairs scattered and hanging like a mad, blind, person.

16. Sorely oppressed with hunger and thirst, troubled by crocodiles and whales, tossed and buffeted by stormy winds and waves, enveloped in endless darkness and overcome with fatigue, the sage drifted along and could not know the directions or the sky or the earth.

17. Sometimes he fell into a great whirl-pool; sometimes he was tossed at random by waves: at times he was bitten by acquatic animals who fought with each other while trying to catch hold of him.

18. Sometimes he was over-come with grief, sometimes with infatuation: sometimes he experienced pleasure, sometimes pain and at times fear. Sometimes he felt that he was about to die, while at times, he suffered from diseases and other troubles.

19. Innumerable (billions upon billions) years passed away (he felt) while he was being drifted and tossed in that deluge and his self (mind) was hypnotised by the Māyā of Viṣṇu.

20. While being tossed about at random (and thus wandering) in the waters of the deluge, he caught sight of a young banyan tree adorned with fruit and foliage on a summit of the earth (protruding over waters).

21. On the north-eastern branch of that tree and on (the cavity of) its leaf, he beheld an infant (as if) swallowing up the darkness by its brilliant splendour.

22-23. It was like a dark-emerald in complexion; its countenance was beautiful like lotus; it had a conch-shaped neck, broad chest, shapely nose and charming brows. It appeared graceful with its locks of curly hair moving to and fro by (the wind of) its breath; its beautiful ears like (the open side of) a conch, were adorned with pomegranate-like red flowers (or ear-rings of that shape and colour); its nectar-like white (sweet) smile was rendered rosy by the reddish splendour of its coral-like crimson lips.

24. The ends of its eyes were reddish like the interior of a lotus; its smiling looks and glances captivated one's heart; its belly, shaped like a leaf of a sacred fig tree, appeared beautiful with its deep navel covered with the throbbing folds of the belly which heaved up and down with its breaths.

25. The babe caught hold of its own lotus-foot with its hands of charming fingers, and placing it in its mouth, was sucking it.

26. The very sight of that infant, all his fatigue was removed and he felt refreshed. The lotuses in the form of his

heart and eyes as if blossomed with ecstasy; (through the thrill of joy) his hairs stood on their ends. Though he was overcome with awe to see that miraculous form (the wonderful baby), he (made bold and) approached the babe to make enquiries of it.

27. In the meanwhile, along with the inhaling of the baby, Mārkaṇḍeya, the descendant of Bhṛgu was drawn inside (the baby's) body like a mosquito. There (in the belly of the baby) he saw the entire universe arranged systematically as it was before the deluge—at which he was extremely surprised and confused.

28. With wonderment he saw therein the sky, the earth, the aerial region, hosts of heavenly luminaries, mountains and oceans, continents along with their sub-continents, the cardinal points, gods and Asuras, forests, countries, rivers, cities, quarries or mines, villages, pastoral habitations, hermitages (or stages in life-*āśrama*), (Varṇas) of people engaged in their own respective duties.

29. He further beheld there the five gross-elements (*bhūtas*) and their products, the Time with its various divisions such as *yugas*, *kalpas* and everything else that can act as the cause of the world—in short the whole universe was manifested here, as if it were a reality.

30. He also espied the mountain Himālaya, that very same river Puṣpavahā and his own hermitage on its bank and sages dwelling in his neighbourhood. Even as he was keenly observing that universe, he was exhaled out of the body of the child and fell in the sea of deluge.

31. He perceived once more the banyan tree growing on the summit of the (submerged) earth and the child that was lying on the hollow leaf and that he was being observed with its side-long glances accompanied with nectar like sweet smiles (by that mysterious child).

32. Then Mārkaṇḍeya who was over-exhausted perceived that child who, entering through his eyes, had enthroned himself firmly in his heart, proceeded to embrace it who was (no other than) the Supra-sensuous Lord Viṣṇu !

33. But that very moment, the infant who was the glorious Lord Viṣṇu himself, the absolute master of Yoga

who abides in the hearts of all instantly vanished from the sage like the desire (or undertaking) of an ungodly (or an unlucky) person.

34. O Brāhmaṇa sage ! Following the Lord, the banyan tree, the cosmic waters that deluged the whole world (and submerged it) disappeared in a moment and the sage found himself in his own hermitage as before.

CHAPTER TEN

God Śiva's Boon to Mārkaṇḍeya

Sūta said:

1. Having thus visualized the great magnificence of the *Yoga-māyā* (yogic deluding Potency) displayed by Lord Nārāyaṇa, Mārkaṇḍeya again sought asylum with him only (for protection).

Mārkaṇḍeya prayed:

2. I have be-taken myself to the soles of your feet which afford protection from fear (or *Mokṣa*—the real fearlessness in liberation from *Saṃsāra*) to those who resort to them as your Māyā[1] which apparently appears as enlightenment, deludes even the learned people (who have not sought asylum with you) into the egoistic feeling that they are really erudite and (spiritually) wise.

Sūta said:

3. While passing through the sky on his bull along with his consort Pārvatī and surrounded by his legions (of spirits

1. VR : Even the learned are deluded with their minds distracted by the ignorance caused by Māyā.

etc.) the glorious god Rudra[1] noticed Mārkaṇḍeya who sat motionless (meditating Hari).

4-5. When goddess Umā (Pārvatī) observed the sage, she requested god Śiva (the Lord of mount Kailāsa): "Be pleased to cast a glance at the Brāhmaṇa, O Lord, see how his body, senses and heart are perfectly controlled and unpurturbed like the sea, the waters and (multitudes of) acquatic animals in which have become motionless after the subsidence of the stormy wind. As you are the bestower of (boons granting) the accomplishment of (your devotee's) objects, may you be pleased to grant him the fruit of his penance.

The glorious Lord Śiva said:

6. This Brāhmaṇa sage does not at all covet any blessing or superhuman power (like *aṇimā, laghimā*) or even *Mokṣa* (*Liberation from saṁsāra*) as he has developed the highest devotion to the immutable, Supreme person (Lord Viṣṇu).

7. O beloved Pārvatī! Let us however have a talk with this virtuous sage; for meeting and association with pious persons is (in itself) the greatest gain.

8. Replying thus the glorious god Śiva, who is the resort of devotees, approached the sage as he was promulgator and preceptor of all lores, and is the In-dwelling Controller of all embodied beings.

9. (Being in spiritual trance) his mental activities were so much restrained that he forgot himself, the universe around him and hence, he could not perceive (god Śiva and his consort) the Rulers and Souls of all beings, even though they approached him personally.

10. Knowing his absorbed mental condition, Lord[2] Śiva the sovereign ruler of the universe, by his Yogic Power entered the cavity of his heart as air does through pores. The sage was surprised to see in his heart the sudden manifestation.

1. It was really Lord Nārāyaṇa who assumed the form of Śiva and consoled Mārkaṇḍeya who was exhausted (by his experience of the deluge—display of Māyā) ŚR.

2. According to a definition quoted by SD., *bhagavān* is one who is the knower of creation and destruction, coming and going (the past, present and future) of beings and with *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*.

11-13. He perceived god Śiva's entry into his heart and was astonished at the flash-like manifestion of that god of a high stature, with three eyes, ten arms, matted locks of reddish brown hair shining like streaks of lightning, appearing brilliant like the rising sun, wearing the skin of tiger (as an apparel) armed with a trident, a *Khatvāṅga* (a skull-topped club) a shield and carrying in his hands a rosary of (Rudrākṣa) beads, a *Ḍamaru* (an hour-glass-shaped handy drum) a begging bowl of (human) skull, a sword and a bow. Amazed at this sudden revelation of the god, he woke up from his trance to know what it was and whence it appeared.

14. The sage opened his eyes and perceived god Śiva the sole preceptor of the three worlds present (before him) along with his divine consort Umā and his attendants.

15. He respectfully worshipped god Śiva, along with his consort Umā and his attendants by giving them warm welcome offering them seats, water to wash hands and feet, sandal paste, wreaths of flowers, burning frank-incense and waving lights in the customary way.

16. He humbly submitted, "O Omni-present Lord, through your own majestic splendour you revel in your own blissful nature. It is because of you that the whole world feels happy. What service can I render to you, O Ruler of the Universe?

17* I bow to you who are all auspiciousness, devoid of *guṇas* (and hence tranquil), the embodiment of *Sattva* (in the Viṣṇu form) bestowing happiness on all. I salute you, the support of the *rajas* attribute (in the form of Brahmā). Hail to you (in the Rudra form) the embodiment of *tamas* but not terrific or deluded.

Sūta said:

18. Praised in this way, the glorious Lord, the foremost among gods and the resort of saintly persons, was highly pleased

* VR : Hail to you the bestower of auspiciousness on the world, one devoid of the six states of life (from conception to death); conferer of great happiness on all; constituted of pure *sattva* (you are Viṣṇu); comprised of *rajas* (you are god Brahmā); and formidable as an embodiment of *tamas* you are Rudra as at present.

with him. The gracious-minded god laughed heartily and spoke to the sage (as follows).

Lord Śiva said:

19. We three (gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and myself) are the Rulers of those who are competent to grant boon. Seek from us whatever boon you please. (You should not say "No to this) Our sight cannot be futile. A person can attain immortality (i.e. *Mokṣa*) through us (i.e. by virtue of seeing us).

20. Brāhmaṇas are by nature pious, tranquil, free from attachment, affectionate to all beings, constant in their devotion to us, above the feelings of envy and animosity and looking upon all as equals.

21. Guardians of the world along with the people, I, god Brahmā and the Supreme Lord Hari himself bow, worship and wait upon them.

22* We resort to (you) Brāhmaṇas as they do not perceive the slightest difference between me, Lord Viṣṇu and god Brahmā; nor do they so between themselves and other persons.

23. The sacred places (*tirthas*) consisting of (holy) water and gods made out of earth and stone (into which the presence of the deity is to be charged by invocation of mantras are not the real sacred places or gods as they purify after a long process of time. But you (Brāhmaṇa sages) purify at the very first sight only.

* VR : Those Brāhmaṇas (knowing that I or God Brahmā do not have a separate existence apart from Viṣṇu) do not perceive the slightest difference in Viṣṇu and us (I and god Brahmā) being connected with his body (*Brahmaśarīrake maccharīrake cācyute ca*).

VR states that the words—*ātman* and *jana* mean two different souls in unintelligent bodies. In his long commentary, he elucidates his *viśiṣṭādvaita* stance with reference to *cit*, *acit* and God.

VJ (i) Those wise Brāhmaṇas know that Hari is in me and also present in god Brahmā. Hence they do not see any difference between Hari and us (due to his presence in us). Hari abides as the Innercontroller (*antar-yāmin*) of all mobile and immobile creation. They see no difference in Hari and that creation (as Hari is the same in all).

(ii) They have no misunderstanding about me, Brahmā, mobile beings and immobiles. They do not identify us with Viṣṇu. They see each as is each factually (i.e. separate).

24. We pay obeisance to those Brāhmaṇas who preserve (in themselves) our (verbal) representation in the form of three Vedas by concentration of mind, meditation, performance of austerities, Vedic studies and self control (consisting of observance of silence, etc.)

25. At the very sight of and by merely listening (to your life and works) persons who have committed great sins and persons (even) of the lowest caste become purified. What need be said of persons who engage themselves in conversation with them (or praise or live in their company) ?

Sūta said :

26. The speech of god Śiva who wears the crescent moon as an adornment on the head, was so much over full with secrets of *dharma* and was a reservoir of sweet nectar (or was sweet like nectar to the ears) that the sage did not feel sated with it.

27. The sage was bewildered by the Māyā of Viṣṇu (and was made to revolve through the cycle of birth and deaths) and was put through an extremely severe trial. He felt that all his agonies had been completely removed by the nectarine speech of god Śiva. He addressed to him as follows :

The sage (Mārkaṇḍeya) said :

28. O how wonderful ! This sportive act of the almighty Ruler (of the universe) is incomprehensible to embodied beings like us, inasmuch as the Rulers of the universe (like Brahmā, Rudra) pay respect to and praise those governed by them.

29. Generally, in order to make people perform their religious duties, these teachers of embodied beings practise them and when these duties are performed by others they show their approbation, and praise the persons performing them.

30. Just as a magician is not affected by his magic creations conjured up by his enchanting power, the great prowess of the glorious Lord (in you) is not affected (lit. spoilt or tainted) by your acts (of bowing, praising us).

31.* Having evolved this universe by his will power, he entered it of his own accord in the form of an individual soul (*Jīva*) who, like a man in the state of dreaming, appears to be the agent of acts which are really brought about by *guṇas* (*guṇas* are the real cause or doers of acts not the *Jīva*).

32. Salutation to the glorious all powerful Lord (Śiva) who is comprised of three *guṇas* yet is their master (or the director). I bow to Him who is absolute, one without a second, the preceptor (or father) of the universe and the very embodiment of Brahman.

33. What other boon can I solicit from you when your direct vision is itself a boon, as by your vision a man is blest with all blessings and gets all his wishes realized.

34. I, however, seek one boon from you who are perfect and shower all desired objects (as blessings on your devotees)—May I cherish constant devotion to Lord Acyuta (Viṣṇu) to persons who are his votaries and also unswerving devotion to you.

Sūta said :

35. When Lord Śiva was thus worshipped and extolled in very sweet words by the Sage, he (though willing of his own accord to confer a boon) who was urged with approbation by his consort Pārvatī, spoke to Mārkaṇḍeya.

36. "O great sages, as you cherish (constant) devotion to Lord Viṣṇu (who is beyond the range of sense-preception) all your desires will be fulfilled. May you enjoy hallowing glory, immunity from old age and death to the end of the Kalpa.

* VR : The Lord as the Inner controller abides in the Jiva (individual soul). Being thus inseparably connected, he appears *as if* doing the acts, when factually the *Jīva* is the real doer—*iva-śabdena paramārthataḥ puṇyāpuṇyātmaka-Karma Kartṛtvābhāvaḥ paramātmani sūcyate.*

VJ : The Lord having created this universe by his volition has entered into it as *Antaryāmin* (i) while abiding therein he appears to be doing acts through senses like the *Jīva.* As a matter of fact, he is not affected by them, just as a person creating objects (like an elephant or a horse etc.) in a dream is factually unaffected by them (*lipto no bhavati*).

37. As you are invested with glorious lustre of Brahman may you be blest with the knowledge of the past, present and future and possess spiritual wisdom along with non-attachment and be the master (i. e. author) of one Purāṇa (now known as *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*).

Sūta continued :

38. Having conferred these boons on the sage, the three-eyed God departed telling (on the way) the austere penance and other meritorious acts of the sage and the display of Lord Viṣṇu's Māyā experienced by him.

39. That eminent-most descendent of Bhṛgu who has attained the glorious power of the great yoga (with spiritual knowledge and whose heart is merged in unflinching devotion to Hari (and has become as if one within) is still seen moving about on the earth.

40. In this way how the intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya experienced the miraculous power and glory of the Māyā of the Lord, has been described to you.

41. This (power exhibited by Māyā and experienced by Mārkaṇḍeya as extending over seven Kalpas as held in old tradition) was an accidental matter (a personal experience through the grace of Lord Nārāyaṇa and not a general experience of all. But some persons not knowing the working of the Māyā regard the deluge experienced by Mārkaṇḍeya as the regular process of appearance and disappearance of men (the creation and dissolution of the universe) which the Māyā of the Supreme Lord brings about repeating it from eternity.

42. O worthiest of the Bhṛgu race, he who listens to with wrapt attention or he who narrates this (account of Mārkaṇḍeya described to you and which concerns the glory of Viṣṇu) both of them will be rid of *Saṁsāra* produced by the latent effects of *Karman*.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Significance of the Various parts of the Lord's Image, The Retinue of the sun-God per month

Śaunaka said:

1. O (great) devotee of the Lord ! You are the most prominent among the versatiles (knowers of different Śāstras). You know the heart—the secret conclusions of the scriptures of different works on Tantra. (Our forebear Mārkaṇḍeya was expert in the Tāntric way of worshipping the Lord. We want to know the *tāntric* way he adopted for visualization of the Lord. Hence, we request your worship to discourse upon the following subject:

2. The Lord of goddess Śrī is essentially pure consciousness (and pure *sattva*). But when experts in (and authors of) *Tantras* deal with meditation and process of worshipping the Lord, they conceive him as possessed of limbs of the body (e.g. hands and feet) attended upon (by Garuḍa), armed with weapons (like the discus Sudarśana), adorned with precious stones and ornaments (like the Kaustubha gem).

3. O Sūta ! We are anxious to know the *Tāntric* course of active worship by becoming thoroughly proficient in which a mortal may attain immortality (*Mokṣa* as the sage Mārkaṇḍeya did). May God bless you. But be pleased to elucidate of what principles are they (limbs, attendants etc.) presumed to be constituted (and the origin of this conception).

Sūta said:

4. Having first bowed to my preceptors, I shall describe to you the various glorious manifestations of Lord Viṣṇu (such as the cosmic form—*virāṭ*) even though it is difficult to comprehend them—Forms which are (to some extent) described in details by (authoritative Tantras) teachers like the lotus-born god Brahmā and others (like Śaṅkara, Nārada) in the light of the Vedas and texts (*saṁhitās*), Tantras.

5. That celebrated cosmic form—*Virāṭ*—consisting of the sixteen modifications (viz. mind, five cognitive senses, five conative organs and five gross elements—*mahābhūtas*) is evolved

out of nine principles such as *Māyā* (or *Prakṛti*) and others eight, viz. *mahat* (the principle of cosmic intelligence), *sūtra* (the active aspect of *mahat*), *ahaṅkāra* (the cosmic ego) and five *tan-mātrās* (subtle elements). When the spirit or the intelligent Principle presides over it to activate it the three worlds make their appearance.

6. This verily constitutes the *Puruṣa* or *Virāṭ* (Cosmic) form. Of that Lord, the earth is regarded as his feet, the heavens, the head; the mid-air region, the navel; the sun, the eyes; *vāyu* (wind or air) his nostrils; cardinal points, as his ears.

7. His organ of creation, Prajāpati (the presiding deity of creation); the anus of the Lord is the (god of) death; the guardians of the spheres, his arms; the Moon (its presiding deity) is the mind; Yama, the eye-brows.

8. Modesty or Shyness, his upper lip; greed, his lower lip; the moonlight represents the (rightness of his) teeth; illusion is his smile; trees (i.e. the plant world), the hair on his body, and the clouds form the locks on the head of that Supreme Person.

9. According as the body of an individual human being is measured with reference to the dimensions and dispositions of the parts of his body, the dispositions and proportion of the personality of the Supreme Person are to be regarded similarly with reference to the spheres in the universe. (Thus a man is seven spans in height, the seven worlds such as *bhūr*, *bhuvaḥ*, etc. are to be presumed such 'spans' in the case of the cosmic person.)

10. The eternal (lit. unborn) Lord wears the pure consciousness of the Jīva under the name Kaustubha and the splendour radiated from it is the well-known streak of golden hair—*Śrī-vatsa* on his (right part of the) bosom.

11. He wears the *Māyā* constituted of many *guṇas* (*Sattva*, *rajas*, etc.) as the Vana-mālā (garland of five kinds of special flowers). His yellow silken garment (round his loins) is constituted of the Vedas; his sacred thread is the sacred syllable OM consisting of three syllables A+U+M.

12. The God wears the systems of Sāṅkhya and Yoga as the alligator-shaped ear-rings. He puts on as diadem the

highest position of god Brahmā which dispels the fear of all people and affords protection to the world.

13. The seat called Ananta (serpent Śeṣa) occupied by him is the Unmanifest Prakṛti. His lotus of seat constituted of *Sattva guṇa* which includes—the six divine excellences, viz. *dharma* (piety), *Jñāna* (knowledge), *Vairāgya* (renunciation, non-attachment) *aiśvarya* (universal dominion), *Śrī* (affluence) and *yaśas* (glory) and of divine powers (known as Vimalā, utkarṣiṇī, Jñāna, Kriyā, Yoga, Pahvī, Satya, Īśāna and Anugraha).

14-15. He wields the principle of *mukhya-prāṇa* or vital air accompanied by energy, fortitude and strength as his mace; the excellent conch symbolises the principle of water; his discus Sudarśana is the principle of power or fire; His sword clear like the sky is the principle of ether; a shield represents *Tamas*; His Śārṅga bow stands for the Time-spirit (Kâla) and the quiver (of arrows) consists of the principle of Karma (action).

16*. They (i.e. learned experts in traditional lore) state that the (cosmic) sense-organs are his arrows; the (cosmic) mind capable of activation is his Chariot; the subtle elements (*tanmātrās*) form the exterior of his Chariot; it is by particular positions of his fingers and hands (technically called *mudrās*) such as *Varadā, abhayadā*) that he confers blessings or gives protection.

17**. The particular place where the Lord is worshipped should be conceived as the orb of the sun or the inner Agni's sphere; initiation by a preceptor by imparting a *mantra* is the self-consecration rendering one eligible to worship the Lord; and the act of his worship is the means of absolving one's self of all sins.

* VJ Regards Pṛthvī (the earth) as the chariot of Hari and the five objects of senses are his manifestations. The objects of conative organs are his physical activities.

GS is not clear on the function of *tanmātrās*.

**VJ : The spot of Hari's worship should be *Cakrābja* and other sacred sport: the real consecration is the purification resulting from God's presence in the body; the worship of God is the means for absolving one's self of all sins.

18. (After explaining the 'Lotus-seat', the significance of the lotus play-fully held on the hand is explained. The Lord (*Bhagavān*) holds in his hand a lotus sportively; the lotus concretely represents the six characteristic implied in the term *bhaga* in *Bhagavān*[1]. The Lord has (by his side attendants holding) a *chowrie* and a fan representing Dharma and glory respectively.

19. O Brāhmaṇas ! The umbrella held over his head stands for his abode Vaikuṇṭha, the absolutely safe place (with no fear from *Kāla*, *Karma*, etc.). The *Veda* with its three divisions (*Ṛgveda. Sāman, yajus*) i.e. the sacrifices etc. prescribed in the Veda represents his carrier Garuḍa[2] who bears Yajña, the Supreme Person (Viṣṇu)

20. The inseparable energy or lustre of Lord Hari is the glorious Śrī, the goddess of affluence and beauty. Viśvaksena, the well-known commandant of Viṣṇu's attendants is the concrete representation of Pañcarātra and other Āgamic works, while the (eight) superhuman powers or attributes like *aṇimā* (capacity to assume atomic size) and others are the attendants at his door like Nanda (Sunanda, etc).

21* The Supreme Person (Nārāyaṇa) himself is manifested as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. He is to be worshipped and meditated in these manifestations[3].

1. The six distinguishing characteristics are enumerated in the following traditional verse : *aiśvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ / Jñāna-vairāgyayoścaiva ṣaṇṇām bhaga itiraṇā* // They are : Rulership, righteousness or religiosity, glory, affluence, wisdom and non-attachment.

2. The vedic authority quoted for this by ŚR, viz. the mantra *suparṇo'si Garutmān strivṛtte śiraḥ'*. is found in *Tait. Saṁhitā* 4: 1 : 10 : 5 (*Vaj. Saṁhitā* 12 : 4 and a number of Vedic texts.

* (The doctrine of Vyūhas, manifestation of the Lord and their worship is now explained—SR.)

3. VR explains that the following Vyūhas preside over the following states :

(1) Vāsudeva : Emancipated stage (*Mukti-avasthā*).
(2) Saṅkarṣaṇa : Dreaming state.
(3) Pradyumna : Wakefulness.
(4) Aniruddha : Dreamless deep sleep.
(5) *Śrīnārāyaṇa eva svayam mūrtibhedair upāsyaḥ*—ŚR.

22. That glorious Lord is to be contemplated (within one's own self) as Viśva, Taijasa, Prājña and the Fourth (ātman or *Vāsudeva*) associated with the states of wakefulness, dreaming, dreamless sleep and self-realisation. It is under aforesaid forms that he guides the functions connected with external objects, the mind, the false notions or ignorance and the knowledge that stands as witness to them.[1]

23. In this way the glorious Lord Nārāyaṇa with his foresaid limbs of the body, attendants, weapons and ornaments and in his above mentioned four manifestations (Vyūhas), viz. Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, assumes also the four aspects such as *Viśva Taijasa* and others—Yet he is the same glorious Lord Hari, the controller (of the universe).[2]

24. O prominent Brāhmaṇa! The above-described Lord is the source of the Vedas, the self-illuminating, omniscient, perfect in his own glory and essential blissfulness. It is (out of sportiveness) that under different designations (such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra) that he creates, protects and dissolves the universe by his own Māyā. But his consciousness remains unobstructed and unclouded. Though he is described (in *Śāstras*) as differentiated, he is really one and is realized as such by his votaries as being their own self.

1. The Lord, in the wakeful state, presiding over the Viśva stage, cognises external objects such as touch, sound. In this way this verse can be tabulated as follows :—

(1) Wakefulness—Viśva—*artha* (external objects)

(2) Dream-state—Taijasa—*indriya*.

(3) Dreamless sleep—Prājña—*manas*

(4) Turiya—The self Jñāna.
(Self-realization)

2. VR thinks that the above mentioned four forms of Nārāyaṇa are for the creation, protection, dissolution and liberation of the world. Thus Aniruddha creates, Pradyumna protects, Saṅkarṣaṇa destroys and Vāsudeva liberates the world. BP repeats the same.

VJ : *aṅgas*—the four forms of the Lord.

Upāṅgas—God Brahmā and other gods in whom the Lord's presence is prominent.

25. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the friend of Arjuna, the prominent leader of Vṛṣṇis, the fire unto the families of Kṣattriyas who were inimical to (and a burden) to the earth; O Lord of undiminishing energy and prowess; O Govinda (Protector of cows), whose hallowing glory is sung by the cowherd women of Vraja and servants i.e. devotees like Nārada and whose name and deeds are auspicious to hear! O Lord, be pleased to protect us, your servants (Votaries).

26. He who, rising early at dawn, purifies himself by taking a bath and with concentrated mind repeats the above-mentioned characteristics (of *aṅga*, *upāṅga*, etc.) of the Supreme Person, realizes Brahman as abiding in his own heart.

Śaunaka said:

27. As the glorious Śuka told the listening Parīkṣit (one protected by Viṣṇu) that a group of seven (pairs) consisting of sages, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nāgas, Yakṣas and Rākṣaṣas and presided over by the sun-god, carry out their duties each month (and are substituted by a new batch next month.)[1]

28. Be pleased to recount to us who are devout and faithful the names, functions of these along with their presiding deities and of Hari's manifestation as the indwellers of the sun-god.

Sūta said:

29. This (visible) sun-god who controls the world (by maintaining the course of life in it) and revolves in his orbit, is created by the beginningless Māyā of Lord Visṇu who abides as an indwelling soul of all embodied beings.

30. Though one without a second, it is Lord Hari, the creator of the world, the one soul of all people who is the sun-god. He is spoken under diverse names by the sages as he is the source of different Vedic rites.

31. O Brāhmaṇa Śaunaka! It is due to Hari's beginningless Māyā that Hari is spoken of in nine forms, viz. time, place activity, the doer, the instrument, duty or performance, sacred book, material substance (rice, etc.) and the fruit (viz. celestial world, etc.)

1. Vide Supra 5.21.18, P. 748.

32. In order to help the conduct and functions of the world, he assumes the form of Time (out of the nine mentioned above) and goes through his course in twelve months beginning with *Caitra* along with his twelve groups of attendants.

33. The sun-god, under the designation, *Dhātā*, Kṛtasthalī (the heavenly damsel), Heti, (the demon), Vāsuki (the serpent), Rathakṛt (the Yakṣa), Pulastya (the Sage) and Tumbaru (the Gandharva)—all these run the world in the first month (Caitra) or Madhu.

(In the following verses the names of the sun and his attendants are given in the same order as in verse 33 above).

34. Aryamā, Puñjikasthalī, Praheti, Kachhanīra, Athaujā, Pulaha and Nārada—these run the month of Vaiśākha or (Mādhava).

35. Mitra, Menakā, Pauruṣeya, Taksaka, Rathasvana, Atri, and Hāhā—these run the month of Jyeṣṭha (or Śukramāsa).

36. Varuṇa, Rambhā, Chitrasvana, Śukra, Sahajanya, Vasiṣṭha and Huhū—these run the month of Āṣāḍha (or Śucimāsa).

37. Indra, Pramlocā, Varya, Elāpatra, Śrotā, Aṅgirā and Viśvāvasu—these run the month of Srāvaṇa (or Nabhomāsa).

38. Vivasvān, Anumlocā, Vyāghra, Śaṅkhapāla, Āsāraṇa Bhṛgu and Ugrasena—these run the month called Bhādrapada or (Nabhasya).

39. Puṣā, Ghṛtācī, Vāta, Dhanañjaya, Suruci, Gautama and Suṣeṇa—these run the month of Māgha. (or Tapo-māsa).

40. Parjanya, Senajit, Varcā, Airāvata, Kratu, Bharadvāja and Viśva—these run the month named Phālguna or (Tapasya).

41*. Again, Aṁśu, Urvaśī, Vidyuc-chatru, Mahāśaṅkha Tārkṣya, Kaśyapa and Ṛtasena—these run the month of Mārgaśīrṣa (or Saho-māsa).

* There is a change in the usual order of the names of these months. ŚR attributes it to the change of Kalpa though the explanation is not convincing, so do GS and GD follow SR. VR and BP suggest us to adjust the order of *ślokas*.

42. Bhaga, Pūrvacitti, Sphūrja, Karkoṭaka, Ūrṇa, Āyu and Ariṣṭanemi—these run the month of Pauṣa (or Puṣyamāsa).

43. Again, Tvaṣṭā, Tilottamā, Brahmāpeta, Kambala, Śatajit, Jamadagni and Dhṛtarāṣṭra are the presiding set in the month of Āśvina. (iṣambhara).

44. Viṣṇu, Rambhā, Makhāpeta, Aśvatara, Satyajit, Visvāmitra and Sūryavarca—these run the month of Kārttika (or Ūrja-māsa).

45. These constitute the glory of the sun-god, who is no other than Lord Viṣṇu himself. Those who remember them both in the morning and in the evening, day after day are rid of their sins by them.

46. This celebrated sun-god courses round this world in each of the twelve months (of the year) along with his attendants (mentioned above), and promotes and expands goodness of the mind (or intellect helping people to perform religious rites), securing their happiness here and bliss hereafter (This reminds one of the *Gāyatri mantra*).

47. Sages who attend the sun-god (as members of his *entourage*) praise him with the hymns from the *Sāmaveda*, *Ṛg-Veda* and *Yajur-veda* pertaining to his glory. Gandharvas sing songs (in praise of him). The celestial damsels dance before him.

48. The Nāgas (Serpents) bind the chariot fast (like cords), Yakṣas make the chariot ready; the mighty Rākṣasas push the chariot from behind.

49. (The group of) sixty thousand pure-minded (tiny) Vālakhilya sages (who are always with the sun-god all the year round) proceed ahead of him and extol the Almighty God with panegyrical hymns.

50. In this way, the eternal (beginningless and endless), birthless, glorious Lord Hari divides himself (into twelve forms, each presiding over the sun (for the period of one month) and protects the world in every Kalpa.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A Synoptic Review of the twelve Skandhas of Śrimad Bhāgavata

Sūta said:

1. Salutation to the great virtue in the form of devotion to Lord Hari. Hail to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the creator of the universe. Having bowed down to Brāhmaṇas (who are devoted to God). I now enumerate the eternal courses of righteousness.

2. Here has been narrated to you the miraculous story (in the form of this *Bhāgavata*) of Lord Viṣṇu, about which you asked me and which is really to the good of human beings (and is fit to be related and listened to in the assembly of pious persons).

3. Here has been glorified Lord Hari who destroys the sins of all; who is Nārāyaṇa, the controller of sense-organs and is the protector of his devotees (or Sātvatas)

4. Here has been described the Supreme attributeless Brahman which is the source as well as the end of all creation; also the topic of spiritual knowledge and realisation as well as means of realising them.

5. Here has been delineated in details the Yoga or discipline of Devotion (which is both a means and an end in itself,) as well as renunciation (*Vairāgya*) which is brought about and thus depends on devotion. Then follows the story of the birth, etc. of king Parīkṣit which has been preceded by the story of the previous births of Nārada.

6. The vow of the royal sage Parīkṣit to fast unto death due to the curse imprecated on him by a Brāhmaṇa, the dialogue between king Parīkṣit and the prominent Brāhmaṇa Śuka (Here ends the first Skandha).

7. The ascent of the soul to higher regions when departed from the body through Yogic process; the dialogue between Nārada and god Brahmā; the description of the incarnation of god Viṣṇu in a serial order; the cosmic evolution from Prakṛti from the beginning.

8. The conversation between Vidura and Uddhava and that between Vidura and Maitreya; an enquiry regarding the

compilation of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the dormant state of the Supreme Man during *Pralaya.*

9. Then follows the description of the evolution of the universe from Prakṛti by the disturbance of its *guṇas*, the evolution of the seven categories which are both the cause and the effect as well as their modifications; then follows the formation of the egg of the universe from which Virāṭ Puruṣa was evolved.

10. The nature of Time both gross and subtle; the blooming of the cosmic lotus; (containing 14 worlds—*bhuvanas*) lifting up of the earth from the bottom of the ocean and slaying the demon Hiraṇyākṣa.

11-12. Creation of the celestial world; the subhuman beings and of the subterranean regions; creation of Rudras; the constitution of one half of his person as male and the other half as female by god Brahmā, from which was born Manu called Svāyambhuva and of Śatarūpā the ideal first woman; the progeny of the wives of Kardama, the Lord of Creation.

13. The descent of the glorious Lord as the great-souled Kapila; the dialogue between the intelligent Kapila and his mother Devahūti.

14. The creation of the nine Lords of creation (*Prajāpatis*); interruption in the sacrifice of Dakṣa; the account of kings Dhruva, Pṛthu and Prācīnabarhis.

15. The conversation with Nārada; the story of king Priyavrata; and then O Brāhmaṇas, the account of Kings Nābhi, Ṛṣabha and Bharata.

16. Description of island-continents and their subsections called Varṣas and seas separating the continents; the mountain-systems and the river-systems in this continent described; the disposition of the stellar system (stars, planets, etc.) and the arrangements of the subterranean regions and of hills.

17. The birth of Dakṣa from Pracetas; the progeny of his daughters, viz. gods, demons, human beings, sub-human beings (beasts, etc.) trees, birds, etc.

18. The birth and death of Vṛtra, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ and that of the two sons of Diti, viz. Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇya-

kaśipu and the story of the noble soul Prahlāda (Here end Skandhas—VI & VII).

19. A connected account of the fourteen Manvantaras; deliverance of the king of elephants (from a giant Crocodile); Various incarnations of Viṣṇu such as Hayagrīva and others.

20. Viṣṇu's descent like the divine tortoise, the divine fish, Narasiṁha (Half man—half lion); the churning of the ocean of milk for obtaining nectar by gods and demons.

21. The great war between gods and Asuras; a description of royal dynasties; the birth of Ikṣvāku and his race as also of the great-souled Sudyumna.

22. Here have been described the stories of Ilā and of Tārā; the history of the solar race of kings such as Śaśāda, Nṛga and others.

23. The narrative of Sukanyā, the daughter of Śaryāti and of the highly intelligent Kākutstha and of Khaṭvāṅga, of Māndhātṛ, of sage Saubhari and of king Sagara.

24. The story of Rāma, the king of Kosala which eradicates all sins; Nimi and his giving up of his body; the origin of the race of Janakas.

25. The account of Paraśurāma, the chief of the Bhṛgu clan, and his wiping out the Kṣattriya race; the account of the lunar race which started from Purūravas, the son of Ilā and of Yayāti and Nahuṣa.

26-27. The accounts of Bharata, the sun of Duṣyanta, of Śantanu and his son. The race of Yadu, the eldest son of Yayāti has been described—the race in which the Lord of the universe under the name Kṛṣṇa took his incarnation; his birth in the house of Vasudeva and growing up in Gokula.

28. The innumerable and miraculous deeds of the enemy of *Asuras*, viz. of Kṣṇa have been described: drinking up of the life of Pūtanā along with the milk in her breast, the kicking up of Śakaṭa while a child.

29. Crushing of the demon Tṛṇāvarta as well as of Baka and Vatsa and of Dhenuka along with his brother and slaying of Pralamba.

30. Protection of the cow-herds from the encircling forest conflagration; subjugation of the great serpent Kāliya and the deliverance of Nanda.

31. The observance of the Kātyāyanī vow by Gopa girls whereby Lord Kṛṣṇa was pleased (and granted a boon) : Showering of grace on the wives of Brāhmaṇa sacrificers; the repentance of Brāhmaṇas for not recognising the real nature of the Lord.

32. Lifting up of the mount Govardhana; Indra and the heavenly cow Surabhi worship Kṛṣṇa and bathe him in milk; Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (*Rāsakrīḍā*) with Gopīs during several nights.

33. Slaying of the evil-minded Śaṅkhacūḍa and of demons Ariṣṭa and Keśin; arrival of Akrūra; subsequent departure of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

34. The wailing of Gopīs of Vraja; visit to different places in Mathurā; killing of the elephant (Kuvalayāpīḍa) and of Muṣṭika, Cāṇūra, Kaṁsa and others (his eight brothers).

35. Restoring to his preceptor Sāndīpani his dead son; good offices to the Yādava clansmen at Mathurā.

36. Annihilation of the armies brought by Jarāsandha many times, with the help of Uddhava and Balarāma, O Brāhmaṇas; killing of the king of Yavanas through Mucakunda; founding of the city of Kuśasthalī or Dvārakā.

37. Bringing of heavenly Pārijāta tree and the celestial assembly hall called Sudharmā; taking away of Rukmiṇī by Hari after destroying the enemies in a battle.

38. Yawning of god Śiva while fighting with Kṛṣṇa in defence of Bāṇa; chopping of Bāṇa's arms in the battle; killing of Naraka the king of Prāgjyotiṣa and taking away of the girls detained by him.

39. The killing of Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka, Śālva and of the wicked-minded Dantavaktra; the destruction of the monkey Dvivida, Pīṭha, Mura and Pañcajanas and others.

40. The power of the above kings and demons and their slaying; burning of the city of Vārāṇasī; lightening of the burden of the earth by making the Pāṇḍavas as his instruments.

(Here ends the Tenth Skandha)

41. The complete destruction of his own race under the pretext of Brāhmaṇa's curse; the wonderful dialogue between Uddhava and Vāsudeva.

42. In that dialogue, the entire range of the science of *Ātman* as well as the decisions regarding the duties of various classes of society and the stages in life (*Varṇas* and *Āśramas*); the Lord's withdrawal from the mortal vision by the power of Yoga.

(Here ends the eleventh Skandha)

43. The characteristics of the four Yugas and the conduct of the public in them; perversity of men in the Kali age, four types of deluges (Pralaya), three types of creations.

44. Casting off his body by the intelligent royal sage Parīkṣit, the classification of Vedas into different branches by the sage Vyāsa, the sacred story of Mārkaṇḍeya. The disposition of the limbs and weapons of Supreme Person and the ruler of the world as the Sun-god.

45. In this way, O great Brāhmaṇas, whatever I have been asked by you about the sportive activities, incarnations and other acts of the Lord have been described to you by me in all details.

46. A person who involuntarily and unintentionally utters loudly "Salutations to Hari" while falling (in a well, etc.), stumbling (on a staircase, etc.), being afflicted or after sneezing, become rid of all sins.

47. It is the experience of saintly persons that when his name or praise is devoutly chanted or his glory is listened to with devotion, the Infinite, glorious Lord enters their heart and definitely shakes off cleanly and completely all the sins, just as the sun dispels darkness or (if you doubt the sun's ability to reach inside caves or cavities the Lord does so) like the tempestuous winds scattering the clouds.

48.* They are indeed futile utterances and unrighteous stories (leading to hell) which do not speak of Lord Viṣṇu (who is above sense-perception). That alone is (how really happy it is to state that) alone is auspicious and meritorious which extol the Lord's excellent attributes.

* GS alternately explains : The stories which do not deal with the theme of the Lord may be true but are fruitless. They may be interesting but they incur sin and are the cause of hell. The stories of good persons (not related with the Lord) are also devoid of merit and the narrator though

49. That alone is beautiful and attractive (even it be like the Lord's entry in the bear Jāmbavān's den); that alone is sweet (though unpalatable to devotees such as Rāma's abandonment of Sītā); that alone is ever fresh giving newer delights every time (although the incident or the theme is age-old); that alone is the eternal festivity and source of joy to the mind (even if it be painful like the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa); that alone is the means of drying up the ocean of grief of human beings even though it creates non-attachment towards close relatives like husband or son).

50.* The speech composed of words with rhetorical beauty but which seldom describes the world purifying glory of Hari, is regarded like a pleasure worthy of enjoyment for worldly persons, where pure-minded ascetics who dwell in (are merged in the Supreme Spirit (Brahman) never like to stay, like swans from the Mānasa lake, who have beautiful dwelling places, do not find pleasure in pools that are the pleasure resorts of crows alone. Where there is Lord Hari, there are the pure sinless saints.

51. That out-flow of words which though not properly composed in every verse, makes good people (saints) hear, sing, and praise the names (which are as if) imprinted with the glory of the Infinite Lord, destroys the sins of the people.

52. Knowledge, (though) actionless and pure, (if) devoid of devotion to the imperishable Lord (Viṣṇu) does not appear sufficiently bright (i.e. does not result in proper. "direct" knowledge. And how can again the action which is always unblissful, even though (performed) without any desire of its fruit, appear

expressing the truth in sweet words is not a pious story-teller. On the other hand, imaginary stories glorifying the Lord are 'True'. Though they are ruinous to the house-holder stage, they are auspicious. Stories of the Lord abducting the wives of others told by low-minded people are also meritorious as they describe the excellence of the Lord (*Bhagavataḥ para-dārāharaṇādikam adhamair apuṇyatvena kathitam api tadeva puṇyaṁ yatas tad bhagavato guṇasyaiva na tu doṣasya udayo yasmāt*

* Verses 50, 51, and 52 are practically the same as supra 1.5.10,11,12. Thus repetition is made at the beginning and the end of the Bh. P. to establish emphatically the greatness of *Bhakti* (devotion), just as the *bījas* of a great *mantra* are uttered at its beginning and end—GS : VD.

bright (i.e. will have purificatory effect if it is not dedicated to God).

53. The exertions undergone for carrying out the prescribed religious duties pertaining to one's *Varṇa* (class in society) and *Āśrama* (stage in life), penance, Vedic studies, etc. are for the sake of reputation or affluence. But by singing of and listening to the excellences of the lotus-feet of Śrīdhara (Lord Viṣṇu) unfailing remembrance thereof is ensured.

54. Non-forgetfulness (i.e. constant memory) of the lotus-feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa annihilates all evils and inauspiciousness; it deepens the tranquillity of the mind and enhances mental purity and devotion to the Supreme Soul; it promotes spiritual knowledge along with self-knowledge and dispassion.

55. Highly fortunate you are, O prominent Brāhmaṇas, in that you have enthroned in your heart the supreme Nārāyaṇa to whom no other god is superior and who is the Inner Controller of all beings and worship him with constant devotion.

56. I have also been reminded of the lucid enlightenment of (the knowledge about) the nature of the soul in the (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) which I heard from the lips of the great sage Śrī Śuka in the assembly of those great sages who assembled to listen to it, when king Parīkṣit determined to observe his vow to fast unto death.

57. O Brāhmaṇas ! In this way has been narrated to you the great glory of Lord Vāsudeva whose exploits are worthy of being recounted, as it exterminates all evils and inauspiciousness.

58. He who with concentrated attention, and faith and devotion recounts this (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) continuously (every day) or for a period of three hours or for a minute and he who listens to it with faith and devotion purifies his inner soul (and not the physical body as in a bath).

59. He who hears it on the twelfth or eleventh day of every fortnight of the lunar month, will be blest with longevity; while he who reads it with devotion observing a fast (all the while) absolves himself of all sins.

60. Observing fast and exercising all the while perfect self-control, a person who reads this compilation (of the *Bhāga-*

vata Purāṇa) at holy places like Puṣkara, Mathurā and Dvārakā, is freed from the fear of *Saṁsāra*.

61 The gods, sages, siddhas, manes (ancestors), Manus and Kings bestow all the desired boons and the objects on a person who chants it, listens to the chanting or glorifies it.

62. A Brāhmaṇa who reads this Purāṇa gains the same blessings technically (by the ancients as) "streams of ghee, honey and milk", as one who gets after studying the Vedas (*Ṛg-veda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Yajurveda*).

63. O Brāhmaṇas ! A person who, with a controlled and pure mind, studies this compilation called the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, attains to that supreme abode (Mokṣa or Vaikuṇṭha) which the Lord described (in this *Purāṇa*) as a fruit of it.

64. On studying this compilation of the *Bhāgavata*, a Brāhmaṇa gets insight into spiritual knowledge (known as *ṛtambharā prajñā*) a Kṣattriya attains sovereignty over the whole earth engirdled by the seas; a Vaiśya becomes the Lord of wealth (like Kubera) while a Śūdra is absolved of sins.

65. Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Ruler of all, who is the destroyer of the mass of sins and impurities of the Kali age, is not so often extolled and sung in other Purāṇas. But on the contrary, in this Purāṇa, the glorious God who abides in all (the universe) has been glorified at every step, as the occasion of the stories (about him) demanded it (or is sung in every account of this work.)

66. I bow to Lord Acyuta who is unborn and endless or infinite, the principle of consciousness (or the Supreme Self), the embodiment of the power that is capable of creating, sustaining and dissolving the universe, and who is so great that rulers of heaven like gods Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, and others cannot eulogise him with proper comprehension.

67. Salutations to that eternal Lord, the God of gods whose essential nature is absolute, pure consciousness, who, through the instrumentalities of his nine potencies (viz. Prakṛti, Puruṣa, Mahat, Ahaṅkāra and five *tan-mātrās*) has evolved in himself the abode for all mobile and immobile beings.

68. I humbly bow down to Śukācārya, the son of Vyāsa, who destroys all sins Śuka—whose mind was firmly established in the Supreme bliss of *ātman*, and has hence given up the

notion of difference and diversity, but whose heart was fascinated and attracted by the stories of the sportive acts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the unconquerable, and who out of grace extended this Purāṇa which is a light unto the Truth about him.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The extent of Each of the Eighteen Purāṇas :
The Glory of the Bhāgavata.

Sūta said :

1. Salutations to the Almighty Lord whom gods Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra and Maruts extol with divine hymns; whom the *Sāma*-chanters sing by Vedas and their Aṅgas,[1] according to the *Pada* and *Krama* methods, and by the Upaniṣads; whom the *Yogis* visualize with their mind absorbed in him through deep meditation and whose end (the entire truth about whom could not be fathomed by the hosts of gods and demons.

2. May you be protected by the breaths (*lit.* wind created by the inhalation and exhalation of air while breathing) of the Lord who assumed the form of a divine tortoise and fell adozing as he (his back) was being scratched and consequently soothed by the ends of the rocks of mount Mandara revolving on it (as it moved while churning the ocean for nectar). As an effect of the still unexhausted impetus communicated by the (ingoing and out-coming) breaths, there take place flow-tide and ebb-tide, and constant rise and fall of waters ceaselessly continue and the sea has no respite.

3. Now you learn from me the number of verses in each Purāṇa and their total number and the main theme and the object of the Purāṇa concerned. Hear from me the procedure

1. *Aṅgas*: accessories of the Veda, viz. *Śikṣā* (phonetics) *Kalpa* (Pertaining to the rituals and prescription of rules for ceremonial and sacrificial, *Vyākaraṇa* (Grammar), *Chandas* (Prosody), *Jyotiṣa* (Astronomy), *Nirukta* (Etymology)

to be followed in gifts (of the copy of the *Bhāgavata*), the importance of giving it and also of reading or reciting it, etc.

4. The *Brahma Purāṇa* consists of ten thousand verses (*Ślokas*), the *Padma Purāṇa*, fifty thousand, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* twenty-three thousand and *Śaiva* i.e, *Śiva Purāṇa*, twentyfour thousands.

5. *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* contains ten and eight (eighteen) thousand *Ślokas* (verses); the *Nārada*, twentyfive thousand; the *Mārkaṇḍeya*, nine thousand, the *Agni* fifteen thousand and four hundred verses.

6. The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is comprised of fourteen thousand and five hundred verses; The *Brahma Vaivarta* Purāṇa, eighteen thousands, the *Liṅga* Purāṇa, e even thousands.

7. The *Varāha Purāṇa* contains twentyfour thousand, the *Skanda Purāṇa*, eighty one thousand, one hundred verses, and the *Vāmana*, eleven thousands.

8. The *Kūrma Purāṇa* consists of seventeen thousands; the *Matsya Purāṇa*, fourteen thousands. The *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, nineteen thousand verses, while the *Brahmāṇḍa* has twelve thousand *Ślokas*.

9. Thus the extent (the total number of verses) of the Purāṇic compilations is four lakhs i.e. four hundred thousands out of which *Śrimad Bhāgavata* contains eighteen thousands.

10. It was due to his graciousness that this *Purāṇa* was at first revealed by Lord Viṣṇu to god Brahmā who was sitting on a lotus grown out of Viṣṇu's navel and was afraid of Saṁsāra.

11. The *Śrimad Bhāgavata* contains, at the beginning, in the middle and at the end, discourse on the value of dispassion. It has been giving delight to pious persons as well as to celestials with the nectar of numerous episodes, glorifying the sportive activities of Lord Hari.

12. Its main theme is the quintessence of all the *Upaniṣads* (which form the last division of the Vedic texts) which is characterised by (the declaration of) complete one-ness, identity between the absolute Brahman and the *ātman* (*Paramātman*). It is one without a second. And its only object is to secure *Mokṣa*.

13. He who, on the full moon day of Bhādrapada, offers as a gift a copy of the *Bhāgavata* placing it on a throne of gold, attains to the highest abode.

14. Other *Purāṇas* impress (lit. spread their lustre) in the assembly of the righteous, so long as this great and glorious work called *Bhāgavata* does not appear there.

15. *Śrimad Bhāgavata* is really accepted by all as the essence of all the *Upaniṣads*. He who is satiated by drinking deep into the sweet nectar (of its teaching) does not find delight and interest in any other thing.

16. Just as the Gaṅgā is the foremost and the holiest among rivers, or Lord Viṣṇu, among gods or as god Śiva among the devotees of Viṣṇu (Śiva is the greatest devotee of Viṣṇu) the same is the position of *Śrimad Bhāgavata* among *Purāṇas*.

17. O Brāhmaṇas! Just as the holy place Kāśī is unexcelled in all the sacred places, similarly, out of all the *Purāṇas*, there is no *Purāṇa* which can equal (much less surpass in excellence) *Śrimad Bhāgavata*.

18. (This) *Śrimad Bhāgavata* is a *Purāṇa* without any blemish. It is so dear to the devotees of Śrī Viṣṇu. In it has been glorified lucidly and sweetly, the pure knowledge symbolizing the Supreme Brahman as characterised by Reality, consciousness and bliss, which is free from any taint of Māyā and is attainable only to the *Paramahaṃsas*—ascetics of the highest order. In this has been clearly elucidated withdrawal from and hence cessation of all Karmas accompanied with spiritual knowledge, renunciation and intense devotion (to God). He who with a devoted heart listens to it, reads it constantly, and is given to contemplate over it, is liberated (from *Saṃsāra*).

19. Let us meditate upon that supreme Spirit who is real, absolutely pure (unsullied by Māyā), free from impurities, untouched by sorrow, free from birth and death and hence eternal—that Supreme Spirit (manifested in the form of Nārāyaṇa) graciously revealed this incomparable Light of knowledge (in the form of *Śrimad Bhāgavata*) to god Brahmā formerly, at the beginning of creation, and through him, he passed it on to the divine Sage Nārada, and through him to

the sage Kṛṣṇa (Dvaipāyana), and through him to the most prominent Yogin, Śrī Śuka aud through him to king Parīkṣit (Viṣṇurāta) out of compassion and grace for him.

20. Hail to the glorious Lord Vāsudeva who is the witness (to everything), who out of grace narrated this *Bhāgavata* to god Brahmā who was desirous of *Mokṣa* (Liberation from *Saṁsāra*).

21. Salutations to the sage Śuka, the Lord of Yogīs who is the embodiment of Brahman, who enabled king Parīkṣit bitten by the serpent in the form of *Saṁsāra* to attain liberation from *Saṁsāra*.

22. O Almighty Lord, God of gods, you are our protector. Be pleased to direct us that way so that (unflinching) devotion to your feet may be engendered (in our hearts) in every birth (of ours).

23. I bow to that Supreme Hari, loud chanting and glorification of whose name completely annihilates all sins, and salutation to whom relieves one of all woes and miseries.

APPENDIX

Marāṭhī Commentators of the Bh. P.

(A Note)

In translating the X and XI Skandhas of the Bh. P., I have freely utilised two standard commentaries in Marathi—KD. or Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇava's *Harivaradā* on the X Skandha, and EK. or Ekanātha's *Ekākāra Ṭikā* on the XI Skandha.

Maharashtra has a long tradition of the study and interpretation of the Bh. P. — even before ŚR, as ŚR. respectfully mentions Bopadeva (13th Cent A.D.) from Maharashtra. There are two schools of interpreting the Bh. P.—the orthodox, the early exponent of which is Bopadeva and this school is represented by a number of Maratha saints like Ekanātha, Bahirā (Bhairava) Jātaveda, Janī Janārdana, Śiva Kalyāṇa, Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇava and others ; the other School is that of the Mahānubhāva sect like Bhāskara Bhaṭṭa (author of 'Uddhava Gītā') and others.

The most famous commentator of the orthodox school was EK. (Ekanātha) *Circa* 1533—1599 A.D. This scholar saint—social reformer of the 16th Cent. A.D. was not only the greatest writer of his time, but even to-day, he is second to Jñāneśvara in the realm of Marathi literature. EK. lived at Paiṭhaṇ, the ancient capital of Maharashtra of the Sātavāhana period. He adorned whatever he touched. He took the romantic episode of the marriage of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī from the Bh. P. and his *Rukmiṇī Svayaṁvara* is still unsurpassed and girls who wish to get their marriage settled at the earliest still read it devoutly. Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇva, the most famous commentator on the X Skandha of the Bh. P. has bodily incorporated the whole of this work (*Rukmiṇi Svayaṁvara*) out of respect for EK., his spiritual predecessor. EK. wrote a number of Vedāntic treatises. But his *magnum opus* is his commentary on the XI Skandha of the Bh. P. He explained each and every verse of the XI Skandha in 18,000 *Ovi* verses in Marathi. The Pandits of Benares where EK. wrote this commentary in 1573 A.D.

warmly appreciated this work. As the legend goes (as in the case of ŚR's Com. on the Bh. P.) EK's commentary was adjudged as the best by the presiding deity of Benares.

Though EK. pays high tributes to ŚR, he differs from him on many points, a few of which are recorded in the footnotes here. EK's commentary is a synthesis of philosophy and poetry presented to the masses in chaste, lucid Marathi. None of the fifteen SK commentators of different schools of Vedānta (published in the Bhāgavata Vidyapeeth Ahmedabad's edition) could surpass him in the flight of imagination and felicity of expression. It is a fond dream of the present writer to render it into English for non-Marathi knowing readers.

EK. wrote a voluminous work on the *Rāmāyaṇa*. His allegorical description of the various customs and classes of society, known as *Bhāruḍa* is sociologically important.

EK. practised the teaching of Bh. P. and is still respected as a great saint in Maharashtra.

Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇava (KD.)

KD. (1674-1740 A.D.), the author of the monumental Marathi commentary, *Harivaradā* (42,000 verses in the *Ovi* metre) on the X Skandha, is a spiritual descendant of EK. KD's spiritual genealogy is as fellows :—

Ekanātha→Cidānanda→Svānanda Svāmi→Govinda Guru →Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇava. His Original name was Narahari, but his habit of loudly remembering God as "Kṛṣṇa Dayārṇava" led people to re-christen him as KD. His two immediate (spiritual) predecessors were important officers in the service of Śivājī the founder of the Maratha Kingdom and his son Sambhājī (1680-89 A.D.). KD. himself had to go through the fiery ordeal of Aurangzeb's ruthless attempt to crush the newly founded Hindu Kingdom till his (Aurangzeb's) death in 1707 A.D.

KD. does not state how far he is indebted to his Maratha *pūrva sūris* like Bahirā (Bhairava) Jātaveda, Śiva-Kalyāṇa who wrote 25,806 *Ovi*-verses and 1,25,000 *Ovi* verses respectively on the X Skandha, and it is difficult to ascertain it as the

above-mentioned works are still unpublished. But *Hari-varadā* shows the encyclopaedic knowledge of KD.

KD. began to write this commentary at the age of fifty-four, as he was advised to sing of the Lord as a remedy for his serious Malady. And like the ancient EK. poet Mayūra, he was cured of it by the time he completed the first half of the X Skandha. *Harivaradā* reflects a high standard of achievement in blending poetry with philosophy and other disciplines then current in Maharashtra.

KD. completed X. 87.23 of the Bh.P. and passed away on 13th November 1740. The remaining portion was completed by his disciple Uttama-Śloka in 1743.

SANĀTANA GOSVĀMĪ (SG.)

SG. and his brother Rūpa Gosvāmī belong to the Gauḍīya school of Vaiṣṇavism. They were Brahmins from Karnatak in the South, who attained influential official positions in the Muslim Court of Gauḍa with a muslim title. This led some scholars to believe that they were muslim converts. But as S. K. De points out, "The stupendous Śāstric learning as well as the Vaiṣṇava disposition of the two brothers undoubtedly prompted Caitanya to select them as the apologists of his faith" (*Vaiṣṇava Jaith and Movement*, P. 73 Foot note 2). The contribution of SG. in building up the Gauḍīya School of Vaiṣṇavism is substantial. Unfortunately his commentary on the Bh. P. is published in the Bengali script. I had to depend on the excerpts of SG. published in the Devanāgarī script in the Vrindavan edition of the X Skandha. And even the excerpts testify to the great scholarship of SG. In the interest of the understanding of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in other parts of India, one wishes the Gosvāmis of Vrindavan to bring out a Devanāgarī edition of SG.'s work.

INDEX

In the following Index the 1st (Roman) figure indicates the number of the Skandha, the next (Arabic) figure, the number of the Chapter and the next (Arabic) figure or figures, the number of the verse or verses. In case no number be given after the No. of the Chapter, that shows that the whole chapter deals with that topic. For example on page 1, *Abhimanyu* III.3.17 means *Abhimanyu* is mentioned in the III Skandha, 3rd chapter, verse No. 17. Aila Gītā—XI.26 indicates that it is in the XI Skandha 26th Chapter (the whole of the chapter deals with it).

Abhimanyu—Son of Arjuna and Subhadrā; married Uttarā and Vatsalā; son of Parīkṣit—III.3.17 ; IX.22.33; Kills Bṛhadbala—IX.12.8.

Action—See *Karma*

Adhi-bhūta)
Adhi-daiva) —II.10.14
Adhyātma)

Ādi-Śeṣa—or Śeṣa—Son of Kaśyapa & Kadrū; described and praised—V.25. 1-15; VI.16.30-32; Citrasena's praise—VI.16.34-48.

Aditi—Daughter of Dakṣa; wife of Kaśyapa ; Her sons—Twelve Ādityas (Sun-gods)—VI.6.25, 38; observed *Payovrata*—VIII chs 16 & 17; Vāmana born of her—VIII. 18.1; Śrīkṛṣṇa restores her earrings—X.59, 38.

Āditya—The Sun-gods—12 in no.—VI.6.39; XII.11.30—50.

Advaita—IV.7.50-54; 9.33; VII.9. 30-32; X.3.18; 14.22.

Agastya—Son of Pulastya. His mother Havirbhuk and brother Viśvavāh. He belongs to Svāyambhuva age—IV.1.36; gives curse to Indradyumna—VIII.4.10; destroyed by the curse of Mahādeva. Reborn in the present age in a jar of ghee from the lustre of Mitra and Varuṇa. Therefore known as *Kumbha-yoni* and Maitrāvaruṇi—VI 18.5 His wife Lopāmudrā and son Idhmavāha.

Āgnidhra—Son of Priyavrata and Barhiṣmati—V.1.25; married Purvacitti (an Apsaras) had nine sons by her—V.2.2-20.

Āhuka—Son of Punarvasu; father of Ugrasena and Devaka—IX.24.21.

Āhuki—Āhuka's sister—IX.24.21.

Aila-The celestial elephant

Aila Gītā—IX.26.

Airāvata—The celestial elephant—VIII.8.4; X. 25.7.

Aja— (i)Daśaratha's father—IX.10.1.
(ii) One of the eleven Rudras—son of Bhūta-prajāpati and Sarūpā—VI.6.17.
(iii) Son of Pratihartā—V.15.5.

Ājagara—N. of a sage. Discussion with Prahlāda—VII.13.11-45.

Ajana or Jina—Father of the Buddha —I.3.24.

Ajamīḍha—Son of Hastin—Father of Bṛhadiṣu, Nīla—Family transformed into Brāhmaṇa—IX.21.21-30.

Ajāmila—The story of—VI.1.21-68; Efficacy of God's name—VI. chapters 2 & 3.

Aja-nābha—old name for India—V. 7.3.

Ajātaśatru—(i) Yudhiṣṭhira—I.13.30. (vide Yudhiṣṭhira)
(ii) A king in Kali age—XII.1.6

Ajita—Son of Vairāja—became the divine Tortoise—VIII.5.9-10 ; Churning the ocean for nectar—VIII.7.

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Bindusaras—A *tīrtha* near the Sarasvati—place of Kardama's penance —III.21.35-39; sage Kapila stays here—III.25.5; Balarāma's visit—X.78.19.
Brahmā—Four-headed god—born out of Viṣṇu's navel—I.3.2, III.8.15-16 ; His penance—II.9; Praises the Lord —II.6.35-45; III.9.1-25; X.2.26-42, X.14.1-40; Creates by will power 10 sons like Marīci III.12.22; Lust after his daughter —III.12.28; Svāyambhuva Manu born from him—III.12.52-53; Assumes and renounces various bodies—III.12.28-53; Viṣṇu as Divine Boar born from his nose—III.13.18 Goes to Śiva and praises him—IV.6.8-53; Expounds philosophy to Priyavrata—V.1.11-19; grants boon to Hiraṇyakaśipu—VII.3.18; carries off Kṛṣṇa's cattle and cowherds—X.13 ; Requests Kṛṣṇa to return to His region —XI.6.21-27.
Brahma-datta—Son of Nipa and Śuka's daughter Kṛtvī—IX.21.25.
Brahma-rāta—Another name of Śuka —I.9.8; II.8.27.
Brahma-sāvarṇi—The 10th Manu, son of Upaśloka—VIII.13.21-23.
Brāhmaṇa—The 1st class out of four classes (*varṇas*) ; His importance—III.14.41 ff; 16.2-11; IV.21.36-43; V.5.23-27; VII.14.41-42; X.64. 32-43; 80-28-33; 86.51-57; His duties—VII.11.13-14; XI.17.40-41; characteristics —VII.11.21; XI.17.16; livelihood—VII.11.14, 16, 18, 20; effect of curse—I.7.48; Substitute for his capital punishment I.7.57.
Brahmāṇḍa—(i) a *Mahāpurāṇa* of 12000 verses—XII.13.8;
(ii) The Universe—II.5.34; 10.10 ff; III.6.1-6.
Many in number—III.11.39-40, XI.16.39; Made of gold—III.20.14.
Brahma-vaivarta—A *mahāpurāṇa* of 18000 verses—XII.13.6.

Bṛhadaśva—(i) Son of Śrāvasta of of Ikṣvāku race—IX.6.21
(ii) Son of Sahadeva of the Solar race—IX.12.11
(iii) A sage-visitor to Bhīṣma —I.9.6.
Bṛhadbhānu—(i) Viṣṇu's incarnation in the 14th Manvantara—VIII.13.35
(ii) Son of Kṛṣṇa and Satyabhāmā —X.61.10.
(iii) Son of Pṛthulākṣa of the Lunar race—IX.23.11.
Bṛhadrāja—Son of Amitarāja of Solar dynasty, father of Barhi—IX.12.12-13.
Bṛhanmanas—Son of Bṛhadratha, father of Jayadratha —IX.23.11.
Bṛhadratha—(i) Son of Devarāta of Mithilā and father of Mahāvīrya—IX.13.15
(ii) Son of Uparicara—Vasu; father of Kuśanābha and Jarāsandha —IX.22.6-8.
(iii) Son of Timi in Pāṇḍava dynasty, father of Sudās—IX. 22.43.
(iv) Son of Pṛthulāśva of the solar race—IX.23.10-11.
(v) The 9th Maurya king—XII. 1.15.
Bṛhaspati—(i) In Svāyambhuva Manvantara, son of Aṅgiras —one of the seven sages in Svārociṣa Manvantara. In the present Age, son of Aṅgiras and Śraddhā—IV.1. 34-35; made a calf while milking the earth—IV.18.14; The preceptor of gods, but Indra insults him and he leaves Indra's side—VI.7.-2-17; Budha, born of his wife Tārā from Soma—IX. 14.4-14; His son Kaca—IX. 18.22.
(ii) The Planet Jupiter—V.22.15.
Bṛhatī—(i) Wife of Devahotra — mother of Viṣṇu's future incarnation in Devasāvarṇi era—VIII.13.22.
(ii) Name of a Vedic metre—born of god Brahmā—III.12. 46.
Bṛhatsena—(i) Son of Sunakṣatra, father of Karmajit—IX.22.47;
(ii) Son of Kṛṣṇa and Bhadrā —X.61.17.
Budha—Mercury (The Planet) born of Soma and Tārā, quarrel of about his fatherhood—IX.14.4-14; married Ilā—father of Purūravas—IX.15; A planet—V.22.13.
Buddha—Viṣṇu's incarnation —I. 3.24 ; II.7.37.

(C)

Caitra—Name of a month—XII.11. 33.
Caitraratha—Pleasure-garden of Kubera—V.16.14; IX.14.24.
Cakṣu—(i) The eye—its creation and presiding deity—II.6.3 ; III.6.15; 26.38. 48.
(ii) Son of king Sarvatejas and Ākūti —A Manu — married Naḍvalā and had 12 sons —IV.13.15.
(iii) The Oxus—A branch of the divine Gaṅgā—V.17.5.
(iv) A son of king Anu of the Lunar race—IX.23.1.
Cākṣuṣa—(i) The 6th Manu—son of Viśvakarmā & Kṛti VI.6; but VIII.5.7 states him to be Cakṣu's son.
(ii) Son of Khanitra; father of Viviṁśati—IX.2.24.
(iii) Name of gods in the 14th Manvantara—VIII.13 34.
(iv) Name of a Manvantara (see (i) above).
Camasa—Son of Ṛṣabha and Jayanti —V.4.11; XI.2.21; Teaches Bhāgavatism to Vasudeva—XI.5.2.18.
Campa—Son of Hārīta; the founder of the city of Campā (near modern Bhagalpur)—IX.8.1.
Cāṇakya—The exterminator of Nanda dynasty—XII.1.2.
Candra—(i) The sphere of the moon—V.22.8.-10 also see Soma.
(ii) A son of Viśvarandhi and father of Yuvanāśva—IX.6. 20.
(iii) A son of Kṛṣṇa and Nilā alias Satyā—X.61.13.
(iv) Son of Atri and Anasūyā ; married 27 daughters of Dakṣa—IV.1.33.
Candra-bhāgā—The Chinab, also a name of the Bhīmā—V.19.18.
Candra-bhānu—A son of Kṛṣṇa and Satyabhāmā—X.61.10.
Chandra-gupta—Founder of Maurya dynasty—XII.1.13.
Cāṇūra—Athlete of Kaṁsa—killed by Kṛṣṇa—X.43.31-44; 44.17-23.

Caraka—A pupil of Vaiśampāyana —XII.6.61; performed austerities for his *guru*.
Cāru—Son of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇi—X.61.9.
Cāru-candra— —do— X.61.9.
Cāru-deṣṇa— —do— X.61.8.
Cārugupta— —do— —X.61.8.
Cāru-mati—Daughter of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇi—X.61.24.
Cātur-māsya—(i) Son of Savitā and Pṛśni—VI.18.1
(ii) A kind of sacrifice—V.7.5.
Cātur-varṇya—Division of society in 4 classes—II.1.37 ; 5.37; III.6. 30-33; VII.11.13-15.
Cedi—Son of Uśika of Romapāda race, father of Damaghoṣa—IX.24.2
Chandas—Vedic metres like Gāyatri and others, created by Brahmā—II.6.1; III.12.45-46.
Chāyā—Wife of Vaivasvata Manu—children : Śanaiścara (The presiding deity of the Saturn), Sāvarṇi —a future Manu and daughter—Tapati married to Saṁvaraṇa—VI. 6.41.
Churning of the sea—The sea—churning of—the story—VIII.7.9; VIII. 8 to 12 chapters.
Citra-ketu—(i) Son of Vasiṣṭha & Ūrjā—IV.1.40.
(ii) King of Śūrasena—VI.14.9; Chief queen Kṛtadyuti—tragic tale of her son — 14.28-46; Nārada initiates him—15.27 ; Heads Vidyādharas—16.28; praises the Lord—16.34-48; ridicules Śiva 17.4; Pārvati's curse—17.11-24 ; born as Vṛtra—17.39.
(iii) Son of Lakṣmaṇa — IX.11.12
(iv) Son of Devabhāga—IX.24-40
(v) Son of Kṛṣṇa & Jāmbavati—I.61.12.
Citralekhā—Uṣā's friend—Kumbhāṇḍa's daughter—smuggles Aniruddha in Uṣā's palace by her Yogic power —X.62.14-23.
Citrāṅgada—Son of Śantanu and Satyavati killed by a Gandharva—IX.22.20-21.
Citra-ratha—(i) Another name of Dhruva—IV.10.22
(ii) Son of Gaya and Gayanti; married to Ūrṇā; son Sanrāṭ —V.15.14.
(iii) Son of Supārśva of Videha; father of Kṣemadhi —IX.13. 23.
(iv) Another name of Romapāda; the foster father of Daśaratha's daughter Śāntā whom he gave to Ṛṣya-śṛṅga—IX.23. 7-10.
(v) Son of Ruśeka of Yādava clan; father of Śaśabindu — IX.23.31.
(vi) Vṛṣṇi's son; paternal uncle of Akrūra—IX.24.15-18.
(vii) Son of Nemicakra of Pāṇḍava race—father of Kaviratha—IX.22.40.
Citra-sena—(i) Son of Manu—Deva-sāvarṇi — VIII.13.30
(ii) Son of king Nariṣyanta, of the solar race—IX.2.19.
Citti—alias Śānti, Daughter of Kardama and Devahūti; wife of Atharva—III.24.24; IV.1.42.
Cow's Gift—The gift of—IX.4.33.
Creation—and Puruṣasūkta—II.6.1 ff. —of Tattvas and deities—III.5.27-37; 26.1.
—of Aṇḍa—egg of the Universe—III.6.6-11-18, III. 8.13; IX.20.1.
—Tenfold; III.10 (chapter)—of the Lotus—III.8.14-21; 10-5; 20.16
—of Brahmā, Avidyā, Sanaka—III.12.2.
—of Yakṣas, Rāsasas—III. 20.19.
Cyavana—(i) Son of Bhṛgu and Pulomā—blinded by princess Sukanyā who married him—IX.3.2-9; youth restored by Aśvins— 3.11-23; Aśvins offered Soma, Indra's rage, Indra discomfited—3.24-25.
(ii) Son of Mitreya of the Lunar race—IX.22.1
(iii) Son of Suhotra of the Lunar race, father of Kṛtin—IX. 22.5.

(D)

Dadhici alias Dadhyaṅ—Son of Atharvaṇa and Citti, also called Aśvaśiras—IV.1.42; VI.9.52; Gives up body from the creation of Vajra —VI.10.1-12.
Dakṣa—(1) Born from Brahmā's thumb—III.12.23; married Prasūti, the daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu—IV.1. 11, 47—begot 16 daughters—IV.1.48; curses Rudra at Viśvasṛja's sacrifices—IV.2.5-19; countercursed by Nandiśvara IV.2.20-26; coronated as the

chief Prajāpati—IV.3.2; performs Bṛhaspati sacrifice—IV. 3.3; His daughter Sati, Śiva's consort, visits this sacrifice, is insulted and commits suicide—IV.4.7-29; Virabhadra beheads him — IV.5.22-24 ; Revived with a goat's head—IV.7.8; this Dakṣa of the Svāyambhuva period gives up his body—IV.30.48.
(ii) Born again in Cākṣuṣa Manvantara—from Prācetasas and Māriṣā—IV.30.48-49 ; VI. 4.17; praises the Lord—4. 23-24; marries Asikni—4.51 ; sons Haryaśvas turn recluse as per Nārada's advice — VI.5.1-34 ; curses Nārada—5.35-43 ; had sixty daughters and gave them in marriage to Dharma, Kaśyapa, Candra, Bhūta, Aṅgiras and Kṛśāśva and Tārkṣya (Kāśyapa)—VI.6.1-45.
(iii) Son of Citrasena, father for Mīḍhvān—IX.2.19.
(iv) Son of Uśīnara—IX.23.3.

Dakṣa-sāvarṇi—The 9th Manu—son of Varuṇa—VIII.13.18.

Dakṣiṇā—Daughter of Ruci and Ākūti—married Yajña—had 12 sons called Tuṣita gods—II.7. 2; IV.1.3-7.

Dakṣiṇāgni—One of the sacrificial fires. From this Bhṛgu created Ṛbhu gods in Dakṣa's sacrifice—IV.4.32.

Damaghoṣa—Son of king Cedi and Śrutaśravā (Vasudeva's sister) —father of Śiśupāla—VII.1.17; IX.24.39-40.

Dantavakra—Son of Vṛddhaśarmā (king of Karuṣa) and Śrutadevā (Vasudeva's sister)—IX.24.37; killed by Kṛṣṇa—X.77.37 ; 78.1-10.

Darśa—(i) Son of Dhātā (the 7th Āditya) and Sinīvāli—VI.18. 3.
(ii) Son of Śrīkṛṣṇa and Kālindi —X.61.14.

Daśaratha—(i) Son of Mūlaka, father of Aiḍabiḍa—IX.9.41.
(ii) Son of Aja of the solar race, father of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna——IX.10.1-3. His daughter Śāntā married to Ṛṣyaśṛṅga —IX.23.7-10.
(iii) Son of Navaratha—IX.24.4.

Datta or Dattātreya—Son of Atri and Anasūyā—I.3.11, II.7.4; an incarnation of Viṣṇu IV.1.15, 33; His disciple king Kārtavirya—IX.15.17.

Deluge—Four types—XII.ch. 4.

Devas—(Gods)—Praise the Lord—III.19.30; IV.1.56-57; VI.9.21-45; XI.4.9-11; 6.7-19; Report Dhruva's penance to Viṣṇu—IV. 8.81; fight with Asuras—VIII. ch. 10; defeated and desert Svarga —VIII.15. 24-32.

Devahūti—Daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu and Śatarūpā—III.12.55 ; married to Kardama—III.1.22.19-22 her beauty III.23. 30-37; her married life III. ch. 23 ; mother of Kapila—III.24.6; Kapila imparts Sāṅkhya śāstra —III. chs. 24-33; Devahūti goes to Mokṣa—III.33.12-30.

Devaka—(i) Son of Yudhiṣṭhira and Pauravi—IX.22.30
(ii) Son of Āhuka; brother of Ugrasena—maternal grand father of Kṛṣṇa—IX.24.21.

Devaki—Daughter of Devaka; Vasudeva's consort—IX.24.23; Her marriage—X.1.29; Kaṁsa tries to kill her —X.1.35; imprisoned with Vasudeva—X.1.66; her six sons killed by Kaṁsa—X.2.4 ; The Lord enters her womb—X.2.18; God Brahmā praises the Lord in her womb—X.2.26-40 ; Devaki's eulogy of the Lord —X.3.24-31 ; 85.29-31; Released by Kṛṣṇa from prison—X.44.50; meets Yaśodā at Syamantapañcaka —X.82.36 ; Meets her dead sons through Kṛṣṇa's grace—X.85.53; Death—XI.31.19.

Deva-mīḍha—(i) Son of Kṛta(ti) ratha; father of Vistṛta—IX.13.16
(ii) Another name of Vidūratha, father of Śūra—IX.24.27.

Devala—A sage, son of Kṛśāśva and Dhiṣaṇā—VI.6.20; I.7.45; cursed the Gandharva Hūhū—VIII.4.3.

Devāpi—Son of king Pratīpa—Śantanu's brother—Renounced the world—IX.22.12-17; stays at Kalāpagrāma to re-establish the religion—XII.2.37-38.

Devarāta—(i) Son of Suketu, father of Bṛhadratha—XI.13.14-15
(ii) Another name of Śunaḥśepa —IX.16.30-32
(iii) Son of Vidarbha king Karambhi, father of Devakṣetra—IX.24.5.

Deva-sāvarṇi — The 13th Manu—VIII.13.30-32.
Devayāni—Daughter of Śukra and Ūrjasvati—V.1.24-34 cursed by Kaca—IX.18.22; thrown into a well by Śarmiṣṭhā—saved by Vayāti—married him—IX.18.6-33.
Devotee—See *Bhakta* and *Ekāntin*
Devotion—See *Bhakti*
Dhanvantari—(i) Viṣṇu's incarnation—born while churning the ocean for *amṛta*—I.3.17 ; VIII.8.31-36; II.7.21
(ii) Author of Āyurveda—son of Dirghatamas—IX.17.4-5.
Dharma—(i) Righteousness—1st *Puruṣārtha*—I.5.9. Its four feet—I.17.24 ; its conversation with the earth goddess—I.16.18-37 ; 17.17 ; Parīkṣit saw only one leg and relieved him from Kali—I.17.2, 44; Deterioration of—III.12.35 ; 41; in Kali—XII.3.18-24.
(ii) A Prajāpati born from Brahmā's breast—III.12.25 ; married 13 daughters of Dakṣa and his progeny—IV.1.49-59; VI.6.4-10; married to Sunṛtā—begot Satyasena, the Lord's ray—VIII.1.25.
(iii) Son of Gāndhāra; father of Dhṛta—IX.23.15
(iv) Son of Haihaya, father of Netra—IX.23.22
(v) Son of King Pratiśrava and father of Uśanas—IX.23.34
(vi) *dharma-śāstra*—VI.1.40, 10. 45.34.
Dharma-sāvarṇa—The 11th Manu—VIII.13.24.
Dhātā—(i) God Brahmā—I.1.22
(ii) Son of Bhṛgu and Khyāti, married to Āyati, son of Mṛkaṇḍa—IV.1.43-44.
(iii) One of the 12 sun-gods ; parents—Kāśyapa and Aditi—VI.6.39; had 4 wives and his children—VI.6.39, VI. 18.3.
(iv) The sun in the month of Caitra—XII.11.33.
Dhenuka—Name of an *asura* in the donkey form—killed by Kṛṣṇa—X.15.20-36.
Dhṛtarāṣṭra—Son of Vicitravīrya and Ambikā (through Vyāsa)—IX.22.24-25; Queen Gāndhārī; Princes Duryodhana and others; Renounces the world and dies in the forest—I.13.18-59.
Dhṛṣṭa-ketu—(i) Son of Sudhṛti, father of Haryaśva—IX.13.15
(ii) Son of Satyaketu, father of Sukumāra—IX.17.9
(iii) Son of Dhṛṣṭadyumna—IX22.3
(iv) King of Kaikeyas, married Vasudeva's sister Śrutakirti—IX.24.38.
Dhṛṣṭa-dyumna—Drupada's son, father of Dhṛṣṭaketu—IX.22.3.
Dhruva—(i) Son of Uttānapāda and Suniti—IV.8.8 His biography—IV. chs. 8-12.
(ii) Topmost region—V.23.1-9.
(iii) One of the Vasus; married to Dharaṇi—VI.6.10-12.
(iv) Son of Vasudeva and Rohiṇi IX.24.46.
(v) Son of king Rantibhāra—IX. 20.6.
Dhyāna (Meditation)—II.1.19 ; 2.8-13; III.8.23-31; 15.38-42; III.21. 9-11; 28.13-33; IV.7.20-21; 8.44-51; VI.4.33-40; VIII.6.3-7; X. 3.9-10; 35.2-25; 39.44-55 ; 51. 1-3; 25-7; XI.14.36-41 ; XI.27. 39-49; XII.9.22-35.
Dilipa—(i) Son of Aṁśumān; father of Bhagīratha—IX.9.2
(ii) Son of Ṛṣya; father of Pratīpa—IX.22.11.
Dirghatamas—Son of Rāṣṭra ; father of Dhanvantari — IX.17.4 ; Fathered Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga etc. from Bali's spouse—IX.23.5.
Diti—Daughter of Dakṣa, married to Kaśyapa—VI.6.25; courted husband at the wrong time and gave birth to Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu—III. chs. 14 & 15; III.17.2-20 ; For begetting a killer of Indra observes Puṁsavana vow—VI.18.23-55 ; Indra cuts the child in the womb in 49 parts and they are born as Marut gods——VI.18.61-72.
Divodāsa—(i) Son of Bhīmaratha; father of Dyumān—IX.17.6
(ii) Son of Mudgala of Purū race; father of Satyadhṛti and Ahalyā—IX.21.34; 22.1
Draupadī—Drupada's daughter—IX.22.2-3; Her sons—IX.23.28-30; grieves for her killed sons ; Arjuna consoles—I.7.15 ; requests Arjuna to release Aśvatthāman—I.7.42-48 ; sees Kṛṣṇa's queens—X.83.6; Goes to heaven—I.15.50.

Droṇa—(i) Name of a mountain—V.19.16.
(ii) One of Vasus; married Abhimati—children Harṣa, Śoka—VI.6.11; Reborn as Nanda and Yaśodā—X.8.48.
(iii) Preceptor of Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, married Kṛpī; father of Aśvatthāman—I.1.4; III.3.14.

Drupada—Son of Pṛṣata; father of Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Draupadī—IX.22.2-3.

Durgā—Yoga-māyā; ordered by the Lord to incarnate —X.2.6-12.

Durmada—(i) Son of Bhadrasena, father of Kṛtavīrya, Kṛtavarmā—IX.23.23
(ii) Son of Vasudeva and Rohiṇī —IX.24.46.
(iii) Son of Vasudeva and Pauravī —IX.24.27.

Durvāsas—Son of Atri and Anasūyā —a ray of god Siva—IV.1.15-33; Indra defeated by his curse—VIII. 5.16; His encounter with Ambarīṣa and discomfiture—IX.4.35-59.

Duryodhana—Eldest son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra—IX.22.26; studied under Balarāma—X.57.26; His daughter Lakṣmaṇā abducted by Sāmba—X. 68 ; confused in *Maya sabhā* —X.75-37; Thigh broken by Bhīma—I.7.13.

Dusyanta—Son of Raibhya of Puru race; married Śakuntalā; father of Bharata—IX.20.7-26; Adopted as son by Marutta but again returned to his Paurava family—IX.23.18-19.

Dvārakā—Old name Kuśasthalī—Kṛṣṇa's capital built by Viśvakarmā—X.50; X.52.5; overflooded by the sea after Kṛṣṇa's death—XI.30.47.

Dvipas—continents seven in No.—V.1.31-32; Their rulers—V.1.33.

Dyumān—(i) Son of Vasiṣṭha and Arundhatī—IV.1.41.
(ii) Son of Svārociṣa Manu—VIII.1.19
(iii) Son of Divodāsa, also called Pratardana; father of Alarka —IX.17.6
(iv) Śālva's minister—fights with Pradyumna—X.76.26 ; is killed—X.77.3.

(E)

Ekacakra—A demon, born of Kaśyapa and Danu—VI 6.31.

Ekādaśca Rudras—Son of Bhūta & Sarūpā—VI 6.16-18; but Rudra—born of Brahmā's angry eye—III.12.7-15.

Ekala—Son of Kṛṣṇa and Kālindī—X.61.14.

Ekāntin—The best of devotees—III.15.48-49; VI.9.48; VII.10.11-12; VIII.3.20; IX.2.11-13; X.23. 26-27; XII.10.20.

(G)

Gada—(i) Son of Vasudeva and Rohinī—I.14.28; III.1.35: IX 24-46.
(ii) Son of Vasudeva and Devarakṣitā—IX.24.52.

Gajendra—King elephant — VIII. 1.30; King Indradyumna cursed by Agastya—VIII.4.6-13; The story—VIII.2 Caught by an alligator—VIII.2.27-33; prays Viṣṇu —VIII.3 ; released by Viṣṇu—VIII.3.33; references to release—II.7.15, III.19.35, XI.4.18.

Gandhamādana—(i) A Mount to the north of India—V.16.10
(ii) Name of monkey—IX.10.19.

Gāndhārī—Dhṛtarāṣtra's queen—I.8.3 ; 9.48; IX.22.26, Immolation with Dhṛtarāṣtra—I.13.50-57.

Gandharvas—A tribe of demigods—their creation—III.10.27; 20-38.

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Garuda—Son of Kāśyapa and Vinatā —VI.6.22; defeats Kāliya serpent —X.17.1 ff; cursed by Saubhari—X.17.9 ff., carried Kṛṣṇa to Prāgjyotiṣa—X.59; His wings sang vedic hymns—III.21.34; carried Viṣṇu to Gajendra—VIII.3.32.

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(ii) alias Sāṅga; son of Havirdhāna—IV.24.8
(iii) Son of Nakta and Druti; married to Gayantī—V.15.6 ; sons Citraratha etc.—V.15.14
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(*H*)

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(ii) An incarnation of Viṣṇu—X.2.40
(iii) A mind-born son of Brahmā —IV.8.1
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Hanumān—stays in Kimpuruṣa Khaṇḍa; praying Rāma—V.19. 1-8; II.7.45; IX.10.19.
Hari—(i) Viṣṇu's *avatāra* to rescue Gajendra —II.7.15-16; His parents—VIII.1.30 ff.
(ii) Son of Ṛṣabha and Jayantī——V.4.11; XI.2.21; imparts spiritual knowledge to Nimi—XI.2.45-55.
Hari-Hara—Their one-ness — IV. 7.50-54.
Hariścandra—Son of Triśaṅku, father of Rohita—IX.7.7-9 His offer of Śunaḥśepa to Varuṇa *vice* Rohita —IX.7.9-21.
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Havirdhāna—Son of Antardhāna and Nabhasvatī—IV.24.5; married Havirdhānī alias Dhiṣaṇā and has six sons—IV.24.8.
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Hayagriva—(i) An incarnation of Viṣṇu—II.7.11; His Mantra —V.18.2; H. praised— 18. 5.6; VII.9.37.
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Himālaya alias Himavān—Marks the Northern border of India—V.16.9; (The presiding god of the mountain) married Menā IV.7.58; story of his daughter's birth, etc. —IV.7.62-65.

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(ii) Ruler of the above Varṣa after Āgnīdhra married Meru's daughter Śyāmā —V.2.19-23.
(iii) The 6th Varṣa or subcontinent in Jambūdvīpa—V.16.8.

Hiraṇyakaśipu—Son of Kaśyapa and Diti—married Kayādhū—III.2.20; Story of his previous birth—His sons Prahlāda and others—III.15. 2.35; VII.1.37-42; Penance and praise of Brahmā—VII.3.1-38 ; conquest of *Svarga*—VII.4.7-20 ; Tortures his son Prahlāda —VII. 5.33-44. Killed by Nṛsiṁha—VII. 8.28-30.

Hiraṇyākṣa—(i) Son of Kaśyapa and Diti—brother of Hiraṇyakaśipu—III.17.2.17. His previous birth as Viṣṇu's attendant and curse—III.15. 2-35; VII.1.37-42. married Rusābhānū—VII.2. 19. Fights with Varuṇa—III.17.26-31. fight with the Divine Boar III. 18.2-21; III.19.2-25 ; Killed by Varāha—III.13. 22; III.19.26-29.
(ii) Son of Śyāmaka and Śūrabhūmi of Yadu race—IX. 24.42.

Hiraṇya-nābha—Son of king Vidhṛti —because a Brāhmaṇa Vedic scholar, disciple Jaimini—Teacher of Yājñavalkya and his son Puṣya —IX.12.3-5; taught Sāmaveda to Kṛti—IX.21.28; Regarded as a true knower—VI.15.5.

Hri—Daughter of Dakṣa, wife of Dharma Prajāpati, son Praśraya —XI.1.52.

House-holder's life—III.12.42 ; V.14. 32-35; VII.12.11; 14.1.26; 15. 1-11; X.70.4-13 (Kṛṣṇa as a householder); XI.17.38-54 ; This life censured—V.14.32.

Hūhū—A Gandharva—son of Ariṣṭa; turned by Devala's curse into an alligator—VIII.4.3.

(*I*)

Iḍabiḍā or Obilā—Daughter of Tṛṇabindu and Alaṁbuṣā, wife of Vaiśravasa—Mother of Kubera.

Ikṣvāku—Son of Vaivasvata Manu and Śraddhā—VIII.13.2, IX.1. 11 ff. His sons enumerated—IX.6.4.

Ilā—(i) Dakṣa's daughter; wife of Kāśyapa—VI.6.25
(ii) Ilā *alias* Sudyumna, son-cum-daughter of Ikṣvāku—IX.1. 16; mother of Purūravas—IX.14.15.
(iii) Queen of Vasudeva—IX.24. 45-49.
(iv) Daughter of Vāyu; Dhruva's queen—IV.10.2.

Ilāvarta—Son of Ṛṣabha; ruled Ilāvṛtta—V.4.10.

Ilāvṛta—(i) Son of Āgnidhra ; ruler of Ilāvṛta
(ii) Name of a sub-continent in Jambūdvipa—V.16.7; 17. 15-24; a male entrant in this is transformed into female——V.17.15.

Ilvala—A demon—brother of Vātāpi —VI.18.15.

Indra—King of gods in each Manvantara. They are 14 as follows: Yajña, Rocana, Satyajit, Triśikha, Vibhu, Matra (dra) dyumna, Purandara, Mahābalı, Adbhuta, Śambhu, Vaidhṛta, Ṛta-dhāman, Divaspati, Śuci. At present Purandara rules the heaven. His wife Śaci and son Jayanta—I.14. 37. Cut Diti's foetus in 49 parts who became *marudgaṇas*—VI.12.32; sends damsels to sages—XI.4.7; paid homage to Kṛṣṇa—X.25.1 ; An *aṁśa* or ray of God—XI.16.13.

Indra-loka—Described VII.4.8-18, VIII.15.12-22. Indra worships Kṛṣṇa—X.24.8-13.

Indra-dyumna—King of Pāṇḍyas—VIII.4.6-13; became king elephant: *vide* Gajendra.

Indra-sāvarṇi—14th Manu—VIII. 13.33.35.

Indra-sena—(i) A mountain in Plakṣadvīpa—V.20.4
(ii) Son of Kurca and father of Vītihotra —IX.2.19.

Indrāṇi—Indra's queen—Śaci, Reduced King Nahuṣa to a serpent —I.14.37, VI.13.16.
Indriyas (Sense-organs)—II.1.29 ; senses of Virāṭ and the presiding deities—II.6.1-14; 10.17-32; III. 6.12-25; Presiding deities of our senses—II.5.30-31.
Irāvān—Son of Arjuna and Ulupī —IX.22.32.
Irāvati- (i) Parikṣit's queen—I.16.2
(ii) Wife of Bhavarudra—III.12. 13
Īśa—(i) Son of Vatsara and Svarvithī—IV.13.12
(ii) Month of Aśvina—XII.11.43.
Īśāna—A mountain in Plakṣadvīpa —V.20.26.
Īśā-vāsya upanisad—An exposition of the—VIII.1.9-16.

(*J*)

Jaḍa Bharata *vide* Bharata.
Jagatī—a Vedic metre—created out of Brahmā's bones—III.12.45.
Jahnu—(i) Son of king Kuru; father of Suratha—IX.22.4
(ii) Son of Hotraka; drank up the Gaṅgā—IX.15.3
Jaimini—Disciple of Vyāsa—Knower of the Sāma Veda—I.4.21; XII. 6.53; His son Sumanta and pupil Sukarmā—XII.6.75, 76; another pupil—Hiraṇyanābha—IX.12.3-4.
Jalakrīḍā—Water sports
(i) Kardama with Devahūti— III.23
(ii) Celestial damsels with men —IV.6.23 ff.
(iii) Kārtavīrya with his queens —X.15.20.
(iv) Courtesans with men at the time of Yudhiṣṭhira's final ablution at sacrifice—X.75. 14 ff.
Jamadagni—Son of Ṛcika and Satyavati; married Reṇukā, sons Paraśurāma and others—IX.15.11-13; killed by Kārtavīrya's sons—IX. 16.9-15.
Jāmbavān—Challenged Viṣṇu to fight—VIII.21.8 ; carries off Syamanta jewel and Kṛṣṇa's duel with him—X.56.14-25 ; Praises the Lord—X.56.26-32.
Jāmbavatī—Daughter of Jāmbavān, married Kṛṣṇa—X.56.32; 83.10; Her sons—X.61.11-12.
Jambū-dvīpa—India—at the centre of the earth—V.16-19; surrounded by salt seas, ruled by Āgnīdhra—V.1.33; consists of nine *varṣas*—V. 16.6 and eight subcontinents—V. 19.30-31.
Janaka *alias* Vaideha, Mithila—Son of Nimi; father of Udāvasu—IX. 13.13.
Janamejaya—(i) Son of Parīkṣit ; father of Śatānika—IX.22.35-37 ; His serpent sacrifice—XII.6. 16-28.
(ii) Son of Sṛñjaya—IX.23.2
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Jarāsandha—Son of Bṛhadratha; had 5 sons—IX.22.8-9; His first encounter with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa —X.ch. 50 (VJ. chs 51, 53), sets fire to Pravarṣaṇa mountain in order to burn Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma —X.52.10; killed by Bhīma—X.72; III.3.10.
Jaya—(i) Son of Vatsara and Svarvithī—IV.13.12.
(ii) Door-keeper of Viṣṇu—III. 16.2; Sanaka cursed both Jaya and Vijaya—III.15. 12-35; Thrice born as Asuras —VII.1.39-45; their description—III.15.27-28 ; cursed by Lakṣmī—III.16.30.
(iii) Son of Purūravas; father of Amita—IX.15.1-2
(iv) Son of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Bhadrā —X.61.17
(v) Son of sage Viśvāmitra—IX. 16.36.
(vi) Son of Yuyudhāna—IX.24.14.
Jayadratha—(i) Son of Brhatkāya— —IX.21.22
(ii) Son of Brhan-manas of Romapāda dynasty—IX.23.11 ff.
Jayanta—(i) Son of Indra and Śaci VI.18.7
(ii) Son of Dharma Prajāpati and Marutvatī—a ray of Vāsudeva; also named Upendra —VI.6.8
(iii) Kṛṣṇa's brother—I.14.28
(iv) Attendant of Viṣṇu—VIII. 21.16.
Jiva—Individual Soul—I.3.32 ; 7.5, 24; II.5.14; III.12.46: How enmeshed in saṁsāra—XI.10 ; His births and deaths—XI.22 ; His panga at birth—III.30.12-15.
Jvara (fever Śaiva)—X.63.23
Vaiṣṇava
Jyāmagha—Son of Rucaka; marries

Śaibyā, son Vidarbha—IX.23.35-39.

(*K*)

Kadrū—Daughter of Dakṣa—married Kaśyapa—children serpants —VI.6.22.

Kailāsa—Name of a mountain, Rudra's residence—V.16.27 Its description—IV.6.9-30.

Kāla—Time : Nature—III.10.10-14, Dimension : Measure—III.11.1-14; X.3.26.

Divisions of T. III.11; power of T.—I.7.14; 13.16-41; III.11-15, 37-41, III.29.40-45; 30.1-2; IV.11.19-21; VIII.6.19; 21.19-24; IX.4.53 ; XI.6.15.

Kalāpa-grāma—A village near Badrinath where Maru and Devāpi, last kings of solar and Lunar races stay to establish Dharma after Kali Age—IX.12.6; XII.2.37.

Kali—President of the Kali age, controlled by Parīkṣit I.16.4; 17. 28; Beginning of the Kali age—I.15.36, 18.6 XII.2.29, Blemishes of K. XII.2.1-16; *Yugadharmas* of K. characteristics—XII.3.24; 30; Means to counteract K. XII.3.44-51; A great virtue of K.—XII.3. 51 ff.

Kālindī—(i) Śrī Kṛṣṇa's queen——X.58.17-29; X.83.11; Her sons—X.61.14.
(ii) Name of the Yamunā—III. 4.36.

Kāliya—The serpent—Punished by Kṛṣṇa—II.7.28; III.2.31; X ch. 16.

Kalki—An *avatāra* of Viṣṇu—I.3.25; XII.2.16.

Kāma—Presiding deity of desires : Son of Saṅkalpa—VI.6.10; Born from Brahmā's heart—III.12.26. K. censured—V.14.4, VII.15.15-21.

Kāmadhenu—The Wish-yielding cow see Havirdhānī.

Kaṁsa—Son of Ugrasena—IX.24.24; marries Jarāsandha's daughters——X.50.1, an *aṁśa* of Kālanemi——X.51.42; tries to kill Devaki—X.1.35, Kills Devaki's children——X.4.3, Nārada instigates K.—X.1.62-64; sends Akrūra to bring Kṛṣṇa—X.36.27. killed by Kṛṣṇa —X.44.34-38, III.3.1.

Kapila—(i) Founder of Sāṅkhya system, son of Kardama and Devahūti—II.7.3; III.23. 6ff, III.chs 24 & 26, imparts spiritual knowledge to Devahūti—III. chs. 25-33, burns down sons of Sagara—IX.8.10.
(ii) Name of a mountain in Kuśadvipa—V.20.15.
(iii) A branch of Meru—V.16.26.
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Karabhājana—Son of Rsabha and Jayantī—V.4.11. Teaching to King Nimi—XI.5.20 ff.

Kardama—Sage born of Brahmā's shadow—III.12.27 ; Penance on the Sarasvatī—III.21.6 ff., marriage and honeymoon with Devahūti—III.22.15; 23.10-47; His son—Kapila—III.24.26; Praises the Lord—III.21.13; 24.27; renounces the world—III.24 41.

Karma—K.-Yoga—XI. ch. 20; path of K. decried—IV.25.3; V.5.5, VI.9.49; 16.60; VII.7.28; X.23. 38-52; XI.5.6: 20.9, 26-28.

Karṇa—Son of Kuntī and the Sun-god brought up by Adhiratha—IX. 23.13.

Kāṣṭhā—(i) A measure of Time—III.11.7.
(ii) Dakṣa's daughter—Kaśyapa's wife—mother of hoofed quadrupeds—VI.6.25, 29.

Kāśyapa—(i) Son of Marīci and Kalā—IV.1.13; married 13 daughters of Dakṣa — VI. 6.25 ff; married his two grand-daughters—VI.6.34-36. Also called Tārkṣya—married 4 daughters of Dakṣa VI.21-22.
(ii) Another epic sage—XII.7.5.

Kātyāyanī-Vrata—Vow to get a desired husband—X. ch. 22.

Kaustubha—A precious stone, churned out of the sea, worn by Viṣṇu—VIII.8.5.

Kavi—(i) Son of Ṛṣabha and Jayanti —V.4.11; teaching to Nimi XI.2.33-43.
(ii) Alias Kāvya—Śukrācārya—Preceptor of Asura's-daughter Devayānī, sons Śanda and Amaraka—VIII.5.1; IX. 18.5-25.
(iii) Son of Bhrgu and Khyāti; father of Uśanas—IV.1.45.
(iv) Son of Vaivasvata Manu—IX.1.12; His panance—IX. 2.15.

(v) Son of Kṛṣṇa and Kālindi—X.61.14.
(vi) Son of Priyavrata—V.1.25.
Kayādhū—Hiraṇyakaśipu's queen—VI.18.12; stays in Nārada's hermitage in pregnancy—VII.7.12 ff.
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(ii) A demon in a horse-form : killed by Kṛṣṇa—X.37.1-7.
Khāṇḍava—A forest burnt by Arjuna—I.15.8; X 58.25; 71.45.
Khaṭvāṅga——Son of Viśvasaha—IX.9.41; father of Dirghabāhu——IX.10.1 attains Mokṣa—II.1. 13 ff.
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(ii) A subcontinent in Jambūdvīpa, Ruled by Kimpuruṣa—V.2.19 19.1-8.
(iii) A tribe of demigods—III. 20.45.
Kīrtimān—Son of Vasudeva and Devakī—X.1.54-57
Kratu—(i) A Brāhmaṇa sage born from Brahmā's hand—III. 12.23; married Kriyā, daughter of Kardama; sons Vālakhilyas—IV.1.39.
(ii) Son of Ulmuka—IV.13.17.
(iii) Son of Kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavatī—X.61.12
Kriyā—(i) Kardama's daughter, Kratu's wife—III.24.23. ; her sons—Vālakhilyas—IV.1. 39.
(ii) Dakṣa's daughter; wife of Dharma, their son Yoga—IV.1.51.
(iii) Wife of a sun-god called Vidhātṛ—VI.18.4.
Krodha—(i) Born from Brahmā's eyebrows — III.12.26. Son of Lobha (Avarice)—son's Durukti (words of abuse) and Kali (Quarrel)—IV.8.3.
(ii) Anger : Its bad effects—I.18. 29; IV.11.7, 31-32.
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Kṛśāśva—(i) A *prajāpati*; married two daughters of Dakṣa—VI.6.20.
(ii) Son of Barhaṇāśva; father of Senajit—IX.6.25.
(iii) Son of Sahadeva of the Solar race, father of Somadatta—IX.2.34.
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(*L*)

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(*M*)

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(ii) A demon; founder of Mathurā —iX.11.14.
(iii) Son of Kārtavīryārjuna; father of Vṛṣṇi—IX.23. 27-29.
(iv) Son of Devakṣatra—IX.24.5
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Māyāvatī—Kāmadeva's wife; reared up Pradyumna and married him—X.55.8-13.

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(ii) A son of Vasiṣṭha and Arundhatī—IV.1.41.

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(*N*)

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(iii) Name of Viṣnu's attendant— VI.4.39; VIII.21.16.
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(ii) Son of Dharma and Mūrti—an incarnation of Viṣṇu—I.3.9; II.7.6; gods obstruct his penance XI.4.6-16.
(iii) Son of Ajāmila—VI.1.24-29.
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(*O*)

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(*P*)

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Pālaka—Son of Pradyota, a king of Magadha—XII.1.3
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(ii) A *Prajāpati*, father of Asikni —VI.4.51.
(iii) A demon, son of Saṁhrāda and Kṛti—VI.18.14.
Pañca mahābhūtas—Gross elements:-their creation—II.5.25-30; III. 5.31-36.
Pāṇḍu—Son of Vyāsa from Vicitravirya's queen—IX.22. 25; married Kunti and had five sons from deities —IX.22.27-28.
Parāśara—(i) Vyāsa's father—1.4. 14; 19.9; II.7.45.
(ii) Pupil of Indrapramiti—XII. 6.54-55.
Pārijāta—A heavenly tree churned out of the Milky ocean —VIII.8-6; Kṛṣṇa takes it to Dvārakā—III.3.5 vide X Skandha Appendix 65th ch. in VJ.'s Text.
Parikṣit—Son of Abhimanyu and Uttarā, married Irāvati—I.16.2; sons—Janamejaya and others—IX.22.33-35 ; listened to the *Bhāgavata*—I.3.42; protected by the Lord while in womb—I.8.14; III.3.17; vision of the Lord in womb—I.12.7-10; His birth—I. 12.12; coronated—I.15.38; performs three horse-sacrifices—I.16.3-11; sees the state of Dharma in the Kali Age and controls Kali—I.17; goes out a-hunting—1.18.24 ff; cursed by the sage—I.18.32-37; final fast —I.3.43; 19.5; death by Takṣaka-bite—XII.6.12-13.
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Pradyota—Son of Śunaka ; a king of Magadha—XII.1.3.

Pradyumna—(i) Son of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇi—X.55.1-2; thrown by Śambara into the sea and reared by Māyāvatī (Rati) kills Śambara—X.55 & 56; marries Rukmavati and their son Aniruddha—X.61.18 ; fights back Śālva-X.76 and 77; Killed at Prabhāsa XI.10.16

(ii) Son of Cākṣuṣa—IV.13.16.

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(ii) Son of Anenas, father of Viśvarandhi—IX.6.20;

(iii) Son of the Manu Tāmasa—VIII.1.27

(iv) Son of Rucaka—IX.23.35;

(v) Son of Citraratha—IX.24.18.

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